



VHA Policy

Document

LONG TERM MAINTENANCE POLICY

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VECTIS HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

LONG TERM MAINTENANCE

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

January 2015

VECTIS HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

LONG TERM MAINTENANCE

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

The sixth strategic objective of the VHA Business Strategy (2013-2018) refers to the completion of planned improvements to our properties.

This document sets out the criteria under which such a project will be undertaken.

2. Context

The Board and staff of Vectis recognise the importance of maintaining housing stock in good condition for the long term.

Such activity has the following perceived benefits:

- i. Satisfied and suitably motivated residents
- ii. Cost-effective against routine maintenance (good business sense)
- iii. Association esteem amongst the wider community
- iv. Maximise useful life of the assets and maintains equity values
- v. To meet Government criteria on Decent Homes Standards, energy efficiency, and associated legislation
- vi. To meet regulatory requirements

The process comprises two distinct projects:

1. Internal modernisation of facilities, fixtures, and fittings
2. External work

3. The Policy

The Board has set out its policy on asset management in clear terms within Section 4 of the Operational Objectives of the current Business Strategy (the Plan). There are individual policies which break-down the approach as between responsive repairs, cyclical maintenance, and planned improvements incorporating major repairs. This document deals with the last of these.

There are relatively few homes in ownership, and as a consequence officers are generally well acquainted with the condition of each of them.

Apart from isolated properties acquired individually as 'Existing Satisfactory Purchases', and 29 houses on the Kent Estate in East Cowes built between 1950 and 1956, the Association has no owned stock constructed earlier than 1980.

Because of their age, the nature of their construction, and the responsive and cyclical maintenance work undertaken hitherto, the overall external condition of housing stock is

satisfactory, with no urgent need of major repair. The Board is satisfied that, within the time frame covered by the Plan, there is no requirement to undertake any detailed programme of this nature.

During the course of the Plan, however, the existing stock condition survey will be fully reviewed and updated in preparation for such work beyond this time.

At the same time, adequate reserves for such work will be put aside, by transfer from surpluses generated annually through the ordinary course of business.

All estate housing stock constructed between 1950 and 1993 will be the subject of a planned interior improvement programme, the nature of which is described under Section 4.3 of the Plan.

Individual properties constructed before 1950 will be included in the programme.

In accordance with the policy on resident involvement, residents will be individually and fully consulted over the substance of the project, and choices on certain design features will be offered, provided they are within budgetary provision.

The work will be reviewed at the conclusion of each individual scheme, and any improvements to the process assessed and implemented for subsequent schemes, as appropriate.

This Policy has been reviewed on the basis of sound background information, and takes into account the satisfactory outcomes of the activity to which it relates, since its original implementation.

Formal procedures, including work assessments, are detailed in the next section of the document.

PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Stock Condition Survey

In establishing the criteria for planned maintenance, we will work from our Stock Condition Schedule, as updated. This reflects the differing deterioration rates of elements of properties, a set of standard requirements including components and materials, and the likely cost in respect of which funds should be set aside in advance of any planned programme of work arising.

Key Considerations

The following factors are taken into account when assessing project criteria:

- Whether to upgrade or redesign an element rather than replace with like for like, will be based on stock condition information
- Alternative, more cost effective components, to reduce future maintenance problems (low maintenance materials)
- Ensure wherever possible, that the component or fitting being used should at the very least be available until completion of the works, and at best for a number of years beyond, if possible, at least for the expected life cycle time
- Co-ordinate the programme with cyclical programme to avoid waste
- Planning work for the right time of year/weather conditions/temperature

- Agree programme of work and delivery with contractor/ partnering team
- Consult and plan with Contractor/partnering team to reduce cost, improve planning and reduce impact/disruption on the tenant
- Resident consultation when planning work
- Offer tenants choice on selected elements of refurbishment
- Monitor and report:
 - tenant satisfaction levels
 - contractor performance
 - quality of work
 - time/cost values
- Consider legislative issues in planning development of the programme ie Decent Homes, HSSRS, Energy Efficiency, Asbestos and DDA
- Legal implications – (partnering process can be at odds with certain legislation). Check current legislation. (Leaseholders may have maintenance liabilities and should be carefully consulted).

Long Term Maintenance

PROCEDURES

1. Preliminaries

- 1.1 Property Services Manager (PSM) to visit the project location with the Property Services Officer (PSO)
- 1.2 PSM and/or PSO to prepare basic specification
- 1.3 PSM and/or PSO to consult with tenants on general proposals
- 1.4 Consider contract route

2. Pre-Contract

Subject to the relevance of any of the caveats below, follow normal tendering procedures, or:

- 2.1 Set brief for project.
- 2.2 Prepare specification/schedule of works ensure current legislation accounted for.
- 2.3 Revert to tenants with final specifications and arrangements
- 2.4 Obtain tenders/estimates for component parts of project.
- 2.5 Assess viability and value for money.
- 2.6 Draft contract if required. (over £50,000)
- 2.7 Send letter to tenants advising of proposed work and arrange meetings with each
- 2.8 At such meetings, discuss proposed programme of work and offer the opportunity to make a choice on:
 - decoration colour scheme,
 - worktops,
 - wall tiles,
 - floor covering,
 - ironmongery, and
 - door type

- all from given selections, and subject ultimately to available budgetary provision.

When choices have been made, provide detailed list to tenant and obtain signature and date, allowing them 5 days to change their mind regarding these choices. Allow 14 days notice, for the opportunity to raise any concerns and/or requests.

Offer decorating vouchers to those who prefer to undertake the internal decorating element of the project themselves (Refer also to that policy).

Offer the opportunity to visit a completed kitchen and to speak with another tenant who has had the work done.

If a tenant is clear in not wanting the work undertaken (with the exception of work which is required through legislation), we will not undertake the work to the property until it becomes void. Consideration **may** be given for part of the work to be undertaken if that is the tenant's wish.

Consider whether tenants will need to be decanted and accordingly make arrangements either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Access and programmes to be agreed between the contractor and the PSM/PSO.

3. Contract

- 3.1 Agree programme strategy with contractors and agree detailed schedule of work - identify work to be undertaken within a given time scale. Properties which are the most problematical or have the lowest energy rating will generally have priority, although tenants with registered disability may take precedence.
- 3.2 Consult as necessary with local Planning Office, Fire Officer, Health & Safety Executive regarding any legislative issues which may be relevant.
- 3.3 At least ten days prior to commencement, tenants should be advised of:
 - Timescale – start and anticipated completion dates
 - Name of contractor/s
 - Names of contacts and telephone numbers
 - Access arrangements
 - If applicable, any compensation and/or re-housing arrangements
 - The likely effect on their home during the work
 - Advice on protection of their possessions during the work
 - Complaints procedure
 - Warning about potential delays
 - Tenant satisfaction feedback arrangements
- 3.4 Prior to work commencing at a property, the contractor will meet on site with the PSM and tenant in order to agree the final work schedule and any variations. Photographic condition schedule of tenant's fixtures and fittings may be undertaken. The contractor will arrange access with tenants.

- 3.5 Officers will visit regularly and discuss with contractor and tenants, progress, variations (which should be minimal), work standards. PSM to ensure workmen are keeping to our Code of Conduct and H&S requirements.
- 3.6 Any work which may subsequently be found necessary but not included on the schedule of work, should be brought to the attention of the PSM as soon as is reasonably possible. This work will be agreed prior to the work commencing, between the contractor and the PSM who will issue a written Variation Order (VO).

4. Post-Contract Events

- 4.1 Within seven days of completion, a satisfaction questionnaire will be sent to residents to determine how satisfied they were with the:
 - 1. Quality of workmanship
 - 2. Provision of the overall project
 - 3. Project management
 - 4. Service provided by the Contractor
- 4.2 Specific KPI's will also be measured including:
 - 1. Overall satisfaction with works – 95%.
 - 2. Works delivered on time – 95%.
 - 3. Works delivered within budget – 90%.
 - 4. Defects at handover – less than 2.
- 4.3 Within one month of completion, officers will meet with contractor/s to discuss the project and evaluate performance indicators.
- 4.4 An inspection by the PSM will be made at the end of the contract/defects liability period (previously agreed). Upon a satisfactory report from the PSM to the Chief Executive, the retention (if applicable) will be released.
- 4.5 The Stock Condition register will be updated