



Out of Hours Emergency Repairs Policy

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Cadder Housing Association Ltd.
20 Fara Street
GLASGOW
G23 5AE

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Out of Hours Emergency Repairs Policy

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Out of Hours Emergency Repairs Policy

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Cadder Housing Association ('The Association') is a registered social landlord, which took ownership of its properties through stock transfers from Scottish Homes in 1994 and 1998 with the aim to improve the living conditions for residents in the Cadder area in the north-west of Glasgow. It operates on a 'not for profit' basis and is run by an elected Management Committee consisting mainly of local residents who employ a staff team to manage the Association on a day to day basis.
- 1.2 This Policy will address the strategic aims of the Association as it shapes the delivery of the out of hours emergency repair service. In line with the following objectives it will:
- Facilitate the provision of a high quality out of hours emergency repairs service that is continually responsive to the expectations of our tenants and other customers;
 - Maintain the financial viability of the Association through contributing to sound business planning, control and achievement of best value in all that we do.
- 1.3 This document outlines the delivery of out of hours emergency repairs In line with legislative and good practice requirements, whilst being fair, and non-discriminatory. The policy has also been assessed to ensure compliance with the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy and meets this standard.
- 1.4 The Scottish Housing Regulator states that Housing Associations manage their business to ensure that tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and that tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done. This Policy aims to meet this objective in dealing with out of hours emergency repairs.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy will concentrate on the reporting and delivery of out of hours emergency repairs.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this policy, emergency repairs are defined as repairs where a failure in a component or element of the fabric of a building has arisen which can result in a risk to safety, danger to health and to prevent serious damage to the building or total loss of services to the tenant.

An example of this, may be a failure in the central heating system, an uncontrollable leak in a property or being locked out of a property.

- 2.3 Other maintenance and improvement work is covered by specific policies including the Reactive Repairs Policy and Cyclical Maintenance and Gas Safety Policy
- 2.4 Designated staff and key holding responsibilities for Out of Hours Emergency situations are detailed in the Out of Hours Emergency Policy approved by Management Committee on the 23 February 2017

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are to outline our ambition in delivering a first class out of hours emergency repairs service to our customers. The policy will be supported by robust procedures and work instructions that will reflect the decision of the Committee in relation to this policy.
- 3.2 Key principals of the policy are outlined as follows:-
 - The policy makes it easy and accessible for tenants to report out of hours emergency repairs.
 - The policy makes it easy for factored owners to report communal out of hours emergency repairs.
 - The policy will be made available in different formats on request
 - The policy will be made available in different languages upon request
 - The policy meets our statutory obligations and regulatory requirements.
 - The policy is implemented to complement and support other maintenance initiatives within the Association.
 - The policy makes provision for testing the quality and tenant satisfaction of work undertaken.
 - The policy expects findings in quality and satisfaction matters, to continually inform changes to working practices aimed at improving our service.
 - The policy makes allowances for the recovery of money in relation to rechargeable out of hours emergency repairs. A further policy will be developed to provide additional guidance in this area.
 - The policy meets our obligations in relation to performance reporting to the Scottish Housing Regulator.
 - The policy is supported by a series of procedures and work instructions reflecting the operational activity that supports the policy whilst outlining employee roles.
 - The Policy is adequately funded to ensure all aspects of this service area can be delivered.

4.0 Equal Opportunities

4.1 We will not unfairly discriminate against any person within the protected characteristic groups as contained within the Equality Act 2010. To ensure equal access to the information contained in this policy for all, we are happy to provide copies in Braille, in larger print, translated into other languages or on tape to you or anybody that you know upon request and where practicable.

4.2 The Association through the Out of Hours Emergency Repairs Policy will act to provide services in a manner that encourages equal opportunities and complies with all relevant equal opportunities requirements.

4.3 As with all Association policies and practices, the Association will adhere to Outcome 1 of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (*Equalities*):

‘Social Landlords perform in all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services’.

5.0 Legal and Good Practice Framework

5.1 The legislative requirements include the need to comply with the range of Health and Safety duties imposed upon landlords and various landlord responsibilities set out in the 2001 and 2010 Housing (Scotland) Acts. Various contractual terms are imposed via relevant tenancy, occupancy and management agreements. The Association shall ensure all its practices accord with these terms and requirements.

5.2 Section 31 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter which sets the standards and outcomes that all Social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect on the 1st April 2012 and this sets out 16 standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when delivering housing services. The Charter was reviewed during 2016. The revised charter was approved by Parliament and has been in effect since the 1st April 2017. The relevant Outcomes associated to this policy are:

- Outcome 1 (Equalities)
“Social Landlords perform in all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services’.
- Outcome 2 (Communication)

‘Social Landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides’.

- Outcome 5 (Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements) is most relevant to this policy, as it specifically deals with repairs maintenance and improvements. Outcome 5 states:
‘Social Landlords manage their businesses so that tenant’s homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done’.

5.3 From the 1st April 2013 all Local Authorities and Housing Associations (Registered Social Landlords (RSL’s)) in Scotland must collect and report on information on a range of indicators developed by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) in support of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. There are key indicators that are used to compare and contrast service delivery across the sector. Each Association is required to report on these in the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).

This Policy will ensure that our practice and procedures monitor our performance against these indicators and we continually review results and seek improvements. These indicators will be included in reports for our Finance, Audit and Performance Sub-Committee and Management Committee and will be supported by commentary on performance.

The specific indicators in relation to out of hours emergency repairs are:

- Indicator 11 - Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs.
- Indicator 16 - Percentage of tenants who had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.

5.4 The Housing Scotland Act 2001, covering Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreements, puts Landlords under an obligation to ensure that the house is kept wind, watertight and habitable. The agreement also extends to providing an out of hours emergency repair service for tenants within a specified timescale which this policy does.

5.5 This policy is aligned to Standards 2, 3 and 5 of the Scottish Housing Regulator’s (SHR) Regulation Framework:

- Standard 2
‘The landlord is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities’.

- Standard 3
'The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being and economic effectiveness'.
- Standard 5
'The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity'

6.0 Strategic Aims & Association values

6.1 This Policy is aligned and informed by the Association's Strategic Aims for 2016-19 and its Values. These are:

6.1.1 Strategic Aims:

- provide a high quality housing service that is continually responsive to the expectations of our tenants and other customers;
- To engage and build relationships with our customers to ensure our service and activities meet their needs and aspirations of our tenants and other customers;
- To invest in our people to ensure they have good knowledge and skills to excel in their role within the Association;
- Pursue development, regeneration and wider role initiatives in close working with key partners with the aim of improving Cadder, as well as the quality of life and living conditions of tenants and residents in Cadder; and
- Maintain the financial viability of the Association through sound business planning, control and achievement of best value in all that we do.

6.1.2 Association Values:

The Association identified core values associated with our commitment to improve the 'customer journey' in our services, which was integral to our achievement of Investors in People (Silver) accreditation in July 2015. These values (Our 4 'Cs') are:

- ✓ Customer Focussed
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Caring
- ✓ Commitment

7.0 Control of Payments and benefits

- 7.1 The Association's Entitlement, Payments & Benefits Policy describes the entitlements, payments or benefits that our staff members are able to receive. It also describes what is not permitted during working practice and the arrangements that we have in place to ensure that the requirements of this policy are observed.
- 7.2 Association staff may have to instruct follow-on works following the emergency repair being completed by the out of hours emergency contractor. Follow-on work may be required within the properties of a 'connected person'. 'Connected people' are defined as follows:

Group 1 Members of your household	Group 2 People closely associated with you	Group 3 Others you need to consider
Anyone who normally lives as part of your household, whether they are related to you or not, including spouses/partners who work away from home and sons and daughters who are studying away from home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, parents-in-law and their partners • Sons and daughters; stepsons and step-daughters and their partners • Brothers and sisters and their partners • A partner's parent, child, brother or sister • Grandparents, grandchildren and their partners • Someone who is dependent on you or whom you are dependent on • Close friends 	<p>Other relatives (e.g. uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews & their partners)</p> <p>Other friends (e.g. someone you are acquainted with socially, neighbours, business contacts/associates)</p>

- 7.3 Members of staff who require to instruct follow on works will ensure the customer is not included in the above categories. Should the customer be a connected person an alternative member of staff will carry out an assessment of the requirements of the work and log in line with the guidelines for the categories of repair.
- 7.4 Staff members of the Trade Team employed by The Association will not be instructed to carry out follow on works in properties occupied by

members of the above groups. This avoids any conflict of interest in relation to the scope of works being carried out.

8.0 legislation

The out of hours emergency repairs policy meets with the relative legislative and good practice requirements in relation to the duty of care towards contractors employed by the association who provide the emergency service and tenants in properties in which they carry out works. This includes:

8.1 Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974

Under this Act, employers must conduct their work so their employees will not be exposed to health and safety risks. Employers must also provide information to other people about their workplace which might affect their health and safety. Thus there is a requirement to pass information regarding asbestos and any other hazards to employees and contractors where relevant when working in our premises/properties. Works in this category may emergency roof repairs where materials such as fascias/soffits may have asbestos containing materials.

8.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

These regulations require employers to assess health and safety risks to employees and third parties, such as residents who may be affected by our activities and make suitable arrangements to protect them. For the purpose of this policy, requirements also apply to the contractor delivering the out of hours emergency works. The regulations stipulate the need to:

- Carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks for all work activities
- Record the assessments
- Implement the necessary control measure
- Appoint competent persons
- Set up emergency procedures
- Provide information and training
- Work with others sharing the workplace

8.3 legislation in relation to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 which only allow qualified gas engineers to work on any gas appliances or installations.

8.4 Ensure compliance with the UK National Standard for the safety of electrical installations, British Standard (BS) 7671 which contains the regulations for the maintenance of electrical installations so as to ensure the safety and proper functioning for the intended use.

8.5 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases or Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

All employees and contractors of Cadder Housing Association are duty bound to report any incidents that occur during works carried out and is detailed within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

9.0 Out of hours emergency repairs budget

9.1 The Association will make financial provision for the delivery of the out of hours emergency repairs service. Costs will be included in the reactive repairs budget on an annual basis.

9.2 The budget will be based on the historical and forecast repair demand. Legislation, performance targets and anticipated price increase in labour and materials markets will also be taken into account.

9.3 We will establish a financial profile for each quarter. Each quarter will have profiled demand which will represent the estimated number of out of hours emergency repair orders budgeted for in that quarter and subsequently measured against an actual demand received

9.4 The budget will be monitored, based on information provided by the Finance and Corporate Services Manager. The Maintenance Manager, will provide a budget position statement within the performance report for the Finance, Audit and Performance Sub-Committee.

10.0 Out of hours emergency repairs

10.1 The Scottish Social Housing Charter defines emergency repairs as follows:

‘Repairs necessary to prevent serious damage to the building, danger to health, risk to safety or risk of serious loss or damage to the occupier’s property’.

Repairs of an emergency nature are carried out until works are completed to remove the emergency nature of the repair, either to ‘make safe’ or a permanent repair to resolve the issue. By ‘made safe’ we mean a repair necessary to prevent injury to the occupier or to prevent further damage to the building;

10.2 Repairs can include common building elements such as emergency roof repairs where water ingress into properties needs contained to prevent damage to the fabric of the property. Such repairs are classed as ‘common’ repairs.

10.3 Examples of emergency repairs to tenanted properties include, but are not limited to the following:

- Uncontainable water leak into property from roof area
- Need to gain access to a tenants property as keys have been misplaced. Note : factored owners will not receive this service as it is not classed as a 'common ' building repair
- Unsafe power or lighting sockets or electrical fittings;
- Loss of electric power
- Loss or part loss of gas supply
- A blocked flue to an open fire or boiler
- External windows, doors or locks which are not secure
- Loss or part loss of space or water heating if no alternative heating is available
- Toilets which do not flush (if there is no other toilet in the house);
- Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans (if there is no other toilet in the house)
- A blocked sink, bath or basin
- Loss of water supply
- Significant leaking or flooding from a water or heating pipe, tank or cistern which cannot be suitably contained

10.4 Our contractor will attend within 6 hours to make safe only or restore services. A follow up Urgent or Routine job line may be created by the association to fully complete the repair by the association on the next working day, with this repair being allocated an appropriate timescale to complete.

11.0 Reporting an out of hours emergency repair

11.1 The Association will provide the opportunity for tenants and factored owners (factored owners for communal building repairs only) to report repairs during office hours and when the office is closed. Repairs can be reported to the office anytime, Monday to Thursday 9am to 4.30pm and Friday 9am to 4pm. Any emergency repairs required out with these times, during public holidays or the festive office closure period will be reported to the Out of Hours Emergency Contractors.

11.2 When our offices are closed. Tenants and factored owners who phone our office, will listen to a message, advising if their repair request is an emergency, they should phone the out of hour's contractor.

11.3 Reports of emergency repairs required will be assessed by the call centre operative and actioned appropriately:

- If the repair is an emergency, as defined in section 10.0, an operative will attend within the current target time-scale of 6 hours.
- The call centre operative may determine the repair is not an emergency and not instruct an operative to attend. Should the customer be unsatisfied with the decision not to attend, they should address their concerns through the Associations complaints policy (as detailed in section 18.0)
- Emergency repairs carried out will be reported to the Associations office the next working day for any relevant follow-on work to be instructed.

11.4 Customers can arrange for an appropriate representative to report emergency repairs on their behalf. Customers who wish to put this in place can arrange to speak to a member of staff or arrange for a home visit to be carried out to discuss this arrangement.

12.0 Out of hours emergency repairs contractor

12.1 The Maintenance Manager will ensure that the Association has agreed an out of hours' service with appropriate contractors registered on the Association's list of contractors. This will include the following contractors:

- A multi-trade contractor to carry out emergency repairs such as joinery, plumbing and high access work
- A Gas Safety and maintenance Contractor to carry out emergency repairs to gas central heating systems and associated pipework and appliances

12.2 Exercises to identify external contractors to provide the out of hours emergency repairs service will be carried out in accordance with The Associations current Procurement Policy to ensure compliance with current legislative and regulatory requirements in our procurement of services, supplies and goods.

13.0 Landlord and Tenant/Factored Owner Responsibilities

13.1 This policy outlines the repairs responsibilities of the Association in fulfilling our out of hours emergency repair obligations in accordance with the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and relevant legislation to ensure a high quality repairs service is provided to our tenants.

13.2 There may be occasions where an emergency repair request is not progressed to a works order as situations may arise where the Association has no repair obligation to carry out certain work and this includes and is not limited to:

- Repairs required as a result of alterations or improvements the tenant has carried out. The Associations Tenant Alterations, Improvements and Compensation Policy details tenants obligations for alterations and improvements.
- Emergency repairs to electrical goods including and not limited to washing machines, cookers and microwaves
- Emergency repairs to items such as kitchen units, wall shelves and other items not provided by The Association
- Emergency repairs to lighting installed by the tenant

13.3 Emergency repairs required within factored properties managed by the Association are the responsibility of the property owner to carry out. Emergency repairs to 'common areas' of the building which will be attended to by the Association include but is not limited to:

- Communal pipework which is choked such as communal areas of soil stacks or external foul water drainage pipework
- Roof repairs where there is an uncontrollable leak causing damage to the fabric of the building

Repairs required to internal elements of the fabric of their property are the owners responsibility to have carried out.

13.4 For emergency repairs, there may be occasions when a repair is deemed to be re-chargeable due to misuse by tenants or their guests to the property. An example of this is an emergency repair to gain access to a tenanted property as the tenant has misplaced their keys. The Associations Re-chargeable Repairs Policy details tenants obligations in relation to rechargeable repairs which includes repairs being carried out during the out of hours emergency service.

13.5 Tenants who fail to meet their financial obligations to pay rechargeable repairs could find their future prospects for housing affected with the Association or other landlords. They will also be the subject of our arrears recovery procedures, which could involve formal court action.

14.0 Quality Control / Inspection

14.1 The inspection resources required for the post inspection and quality control procedure for repairs must be proportionate to the activity in particular work areas. Emergency repairs will be included in the following samples of post-inspection visits to ensure the out of hours contractor is carrying out the appropriate work to a satisfactory standard;

- 10% of external contractors completed jobs (random sample)
- 100% of complaints about emergency repairs

14.2 An assessment of the completed job will rank the completed task as being satisfactory or not satisfactory.

- 14.3 All post inspection results will be analysed for emerging trends. If the trends identify problems in the delivery of service the appropriate corrective action will be taken.

15.0 Tenants Satisfaction

- 15.1 Repairs and maintenance is often the main service area which tenants are likely to encounter therefore we recognise the importance of collecting information on tenants opinion of the service being provided. Our experience over time has proven that we receive a higher response from tenants responding to a text message rather than returning a questionnaire by post.
- 15.2 We will continue to explore alternative methods of gathering customer satisfaction in relation to reactive repairs to ensure all customers have the opportunity to provide feedback on the reactive repairs service.
- 15.3 Each week, we will send a text message to all tenants who have had a completed work order. The text will be sent via our SDM repairs module, requesting that the tenant provides information on their assessment of satisfaction, in relation to their completed repair.
- 15.4 SDM will retain details of all messages sent and returned allowing us to retain details for reporting purposes. Results will be analysed from returned messages and identify any negative responses.
- 15.5 We will contact tenants who returned negative responses by telephone to discuss their repair experience. If dissatisfaction cannot be resolved in that call, an appointment will be made for a post inspection to be carried out.
- 15.6 The customer satisfaction analysis coupled with the results from our post inspections will allow us identify any failure trends in our repairs service.
- 15.7 The Maintenance Manager will determine the most appropriate action required to prevent a reoccurrence of common failure themes.

16.0 Out of hour emergency repair Performance

- 16.1 Repair performance will be reported internally to the Finance, Audit and Performance Sub-Committee and externally to the Scottish Housing Regulator in our Annual Return on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- 16.2 Repair performance measures reported internally will include information on out of hours emergency repairs carried out.

16.3 The Maintenance Manager will monitor the performance of the out of hours emergency contractors and will meet with them to discuss performance issues and other matters relating to working for the Association. The frequency of meetings with contractors will be determined by the type of works being carried out, the results of Key Performance indicators and the quality control inspections status of their contract.

17.0 Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

17.1 The Association is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR), which came into force on 25 May 2018. The Association will therefore follow procedures that aim to ensure that all employees, Committee members, contractors, agents, consultants, partners or other persons involved in the work of the Association and who have access to any personal data held by or on behalf of the Association, are fully aware of and abide by their duties and responsibilities under GDPR.

18.0 Complaints

18.1 The Association aims to provide a first class service to all of its tenants and customers. We will therefore strive to keep service complaints to an absolute minimum by aiming to agree a resolution quickly with the customer and learn from the resolution to develop the service we provide. When early resolution is not agreed and a complaint is received we will also consider if we can learn from these complaints to help improve service.

18.2 In the event a complaint is received in relation to an out of hours emergency repair, this will be assessed at stage 1 of the Association's complaints' procedure. Stage 2 of our complaints procedure will attend to complaints that require further investigation on issues that customers continue to be unhappy with after completion of stage 1. We will investigate stage 1 and stage 2 complaints within 5 and 20 working days respectively.

18.3 Not all investigations will be able to be completed within 20 working days. For example, some complaints may be so complex that they require careful consideration and detailed investigation beyond the 20 day limit. However, these would be the exception and we will always try to deliver a final response to a complaint within 20 working days. We will notify customers if we require more than 20 working days to complete our investigations.

18.4 Once the investigation stage has been completed, tenants of The Association have the right to approach the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) if they remain dissatisfied.

18.5 The SPSO considers complaints from people who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of our complaints procedure. The SPSO looks at issues such as service failures and maladministration (administrative fault), as well as the way we have handled the complaint.

18.6 SPSO Details:-

In person: SPSO
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

By post: SPSO
Freepost EH641
Edinburgh
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact: www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Mobile site: <http://m.spsso.org.uk>

18.7 Where an owner is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they are entitled to contact the Housing and Property Chamber, First-tier Tribunal for Scotland:

Housing & Property Chamber
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland
Glasgow Tribunals Centre
20 York Street
Glasgow, G2 8GT

Telephone - 0141 302 5900

E-mail - HPCadmin@scotcourtribunals.gov.uk

Web-site - www.housingandpropertychamber.scot

18.8 You can obtain a copy of our complaints procedure by telephoning 0141 945 3282, e-mailing – enquiry@cadderhousing.co.uk or by calling into our office. Details of our complaints procedure are also available on the website www.cadderha.co.uk).

19.0 Review

19.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years, with the next review scheduled for August 2021 or earlier if required to take account of: -

- Legislative, regulatory and good practice requirements
- Association performance
- The views of tenants and staff
- Strategic Aims and Association Values