

Report to Cabinet
10 July 2013
Report of Deputy chief executive (Operations)
Subject Review of housing repairs policies

Item

7

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval of the council's revised housing responsive and planned/cyclical maintenance policies.

Recommendation

To approve the following policy reviews for tenants and leaseholders of the Council:

- (1) Responsive maintenance policy.
- (2) Planned and cyclical maintenance policy.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority "Decent housing for all", "Value for money services", and the service plan priority to deliver an efficient maintenance service to tenants and leaseholders.

Financial implications

The policies will help to determine expenditure against the existing housing budgets set for responsive and planned maintenance contracts for 2013/14 and future financial years.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Housing

Contact officers

Chris Rayner, Head of property services, NPS Norwich Ltd 01603 213208

Rachael Warnes, Business improvement team leader, NPS Norwich Ltd 01603 213157

Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. In its capacity as a landlord the council has a legal duty under certain legislation to ensure that its housing stock is well maintained and fit for human habitation. This duty includes obligations such as the tenants “right to repair” as well as certain expectations such as the operation of an order prioritisation/appointment system. NPS Norwich is tasked with discharging this duty on the councils behalf.
2. Both policies specifically refer to repairs and maintenance carried out for tenants and leaseholders of the council managed by the housing service. All references within the policy document referring to tenants or customers are council housing tenants and/or leaseholders, and all references to council are referring to the council in its landlord capacity.
3. Leaseholders and tenants have certain maintenance obligations and these responsibilities are set out in the leaseholder and tenant handbooks respectively.
4. Both policies are revisions of existing policy documents.
5. The policies will next be reviewed within three years to ensure the service continues to meet current legislation and addresses any further changes within service areas.

Policy

6. The policies set out the responsive and planned/cyclical maintenance services provided by Norwich City Council to tenants and leaseholders. They cover the standards that customers can expect from Norwich City Council and the responsibilities that customers have in relation to taking care of their home.
7. The policies support the overarching Asset Management Strategy.

Policy revisions

8. The main revision to responsive maintenance policy is the introduction of an emergency/non-emergency appointment based system, which moves away from the previous system of allocating an individual priority code to each order. The new system is more tenant focussed, and will encourage the correct use of the emergency code for genuine emergencies. All other repairs will be allocated an appropriate appointment slot in line with the urgency of the repair and the availability of the resident.
9. This revision was approved by the tenant’s repairs and recharges sub-group.
10. The main revision to the planned maintenance policy is the change to ensure that both planned and cyclical maintenance are now included in one policy.

Consultation

11. The policies have been developed in conjunction with the following stakeholders:
(1) NPS Norwich (formerly property services)

(2) Customer surveys

(3) Other relevant council officers

Equality

12. The diversity impact assessment, which forms part of the responsive maintenance policy, does not highlight any equality implications.

13. The planned and cyclical maintenance policy did not require an impact assessment following a test of relevance.

Legal implications

14. The responsive maintenance policy has been reviewed by NPLaw and is in line with the terms of the tenancy agreement. There were no legal implications from the review of the planned maintenance policy.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	10/07/2013
Head of service:	Chris Rayner
Report subject:	Responsive repairs and maintenance policies for Norwich City Council tenants and leaseholders
Date assessed:	19/06/2013
Description:	Responsive repairs and maintenance policies for Norwich City Council tenants and leaseholders

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policies ensure that the council makes the best use of its financial resources whilst meeting the needs of its customers. Any works carried out will be deemed necessary and appropriate, as well as practicable depending on the age and condition of the asset.
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment	
Positive	
N/A	
Negative	
N/A	
Neutral	
N/A	
Issues	
N/A	

POLICY	RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY	
DATE ISSUED: July 2013	REVIEW DATE:	July 2014
ISSUED BY: NPS Norwich Property Services Team		
<p>PURPOSE OF POLICY</p> <p>This policy covers the responsive repairs service provided by Norwich City Council to tenants and leaseholders. It applies to works to individual properties and communal areas. This policy supports the overarching Asset Management Strategy.</p> <p>Providing an effective responsive repairs service is an essential part of excellent housing management. Customers consistently cite the repairs and maintenance service as one of their key priorities.</p> <p>Two critical aspects of the service are customer service and value for money. As such, this policy is intended to help ensure that available resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible in maintaining homes to the highest possible standard, and that our customer's needs are central to the delivery of the service. It will also assist in ensuring that the responsive repairs and repairs service continues to improve by providing a basis for consistent decision making and resource allocation.</p> <p>The policy sets out the service standards that customers can expect from Norwich City Council and also the responsibilities that customers have in relation to taking care of their home. Appropriate performance targets and monitoring regimes will be established to ensure that the service delivery is meeting customers' aspirations as well as achieving value for money.</p>		
<p>AUTHORISATION</p> <p>It is anticipated that this policy will be approved by Cabinet in July 2013. It delegates the authority to assess individual cases to NPS Norwich, and where appropriate, and reasonable to do so, agree exceptions to the policy.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and the authority to agree revisions will be delegated to the deputy chief executive (operations).</p>		
<p>RELEVANT LEGISLATION INFORMING THIS POLICY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11) 2. The Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 (Section 20) 3. The Defective Premises Act 1972 4. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 5. Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 6. The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994 		

CONTRIBUTES TO CORPRATE PRIORITIES

The policy helps to meet the corporate priorities 'to make Norwich a city with decent housing for all' and 'to provide value for money services'.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Norwich City Council aims to deliver an efficient and high quality responsive maintenance service to all its residents. A key objective of the policy is to ensure that the service is delivering best value. It is imperative, therefore, that appropriate performance targets and budgets are established to ensure that the service delivery is meeting customers' aspirations as well as achieving value for money.

The overall aim of the responsive repairs policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective management of responsive repairs to the council's housing stock.

The specific objectives of the policy are:

- to provide a fair, efficient, prompt and cost effective responsive repairs service which is clearly understood by all stakeholders including staff, customers, contractors and elected representatives

- to promote understanding of all stakeholders responsibilities in relation to responsive repairs
- to achieve high standards of customer care
- to ensure that the repairs service is provided consistently and equitably to all customers
- to manage performance within the responsive repairs service and achieve continuous improvement
- to provide a service which reflects the commitment to equality for all tenants and which takes into account the particular needs of vulnerable groups

The principles behind the policy are:

- that tenants and other stakeholders are involved in, and consulted on the development of the service and its operational procedures
- that through supervision, monitoring, and feedback from the tenants (compliments and complaints) the service is continually improved
- that communication with tenants is available in a range of formats, is clear, appropriate and easily understood
- that the repairs service is supported by appropriate training for council staff and contractors that tenants and leaseholders also comply with their obligations:
 - carry out repairs and decorations which they are responsible for,
 - promptly report repairs when they are identified,
 - give access to staff and contractors to enable works to be completed

2. THE EXTENT OF THE SERVICE

A key purpose of the responsive repairs policy is to set out in detail those works that are provided by Norwich City Council as part of the repairs and maintenance service. Both the council and its tenants (or leaseholders) have responsibilities for maintenance of the housing stock. The obligations of all concerned are set out in the tenancy agreement (or, for leaseholders, the lease agreement). The council also provides supplementary guidance and explanation in handbooks etc.

3. LIMITATIONS TO THE SERVICE

There are a number of circumstances under which repairs may be restricted to only the most urgent or emergency repairs. These circumstances may include:

- where the tenant has a Right to Buy application being processed
- where the repair is due to be completed as part of an on-going or future programme of planned maintenance
- where the repair has arisen due to damage caused by the tenant or a visitor to/member of the tenants household, unless the customer wishes to pay for the council to carry out the repair work
- where there is a history of abuse, threats or violence toward Norwich City Council staff or its contractors

4. PROCUREMENT

Responsive maintenance services will be procured in accordance with the council's financial regulations and (where possible) in accordance with modern procurement practices. Contractors will be selected according to their ability, capacity to undertake the works, financial viability, insurance cover and previous experience and success in this area. The council will have regard to a potential contractor's policies and practice in respect of equal opportunities, health and safety and data protection. The council has adopted the principles set out in the Egan Report and will seek to procure work on a partnering basis where appropriate.

5. REPORTING REPAIRS

Norwich City Council provides a number of different ways to report a repair in order to make reporting repairs as easy as possible. The ways in which repairs can be requested are as follows:

- By telephone – 0344 980 3333.
- Online - there is a quick and easy way to report non-urgent responsive repairs online. For heating repairs at www.gasway-norwichcitycouncil.co.uk and for all other repairs at www.norwich.gov.uk
- By e-mailing us at listening@norwich.gov.uk
- In writing to Norwich City Council, St. Peters Street, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH
- In person at the customer contact centre in city hall from 08:45 to 17:00 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday only) or from 13:00 to 17:00 on Wednesdays.

We also have an out of hour's repairs services for emergencies only. This is accessed by calling 0344 980 3333.

6. CATEGORIES OF REPAIRS – TARGET TIMESCALES

Norwich City Council has 4 timescale targets for carrying out responsive repairs. The timescales for attendance are based on the urgency of the work:

Emergency repairs - An emergency repair is one that if not attended to would cause danger to life or property or extreme discomfort to the tenant. We aim to attend to make safe within 24 hours (depending on the nature of the emergency) and where possible, carry out a full repair. See below for further detail.

Urgent repairs – we aim to attend within 7 days by appointment. These are repairs that may affect the tenant's ability to live comfortably in their home. This would include (for e.g.) partial loss of heating, or partial loss of electricity.

Routine repairs – we aim to attend within 28 days by appointment. These are repairs for non-urgent failed or damaged items that do not adversely affect the tenant's use of their home. This would include e.g. larger repairs, major plastering repairs, or repairs involving specialist or non-stock materials.

Long term repairs – we aim to attend within 60 days by appointment. These are repairs for non-urgent failed or damaged items that do not adversely affect the tenant's use of

their home and where the arranging and completion of works may take longer than average. This would include, e.g., replacing large sections of fencing.

Where it is not possible to keep to an agreed timescale or appointment we will notify the resident and arrange an alternative.

Planned repairs – some types of repairs offer the potential to be batched into planned work programmes. In these instances repairs may be deferred until the programme starts. The tenants concerned will be kept fully informed about the progress of their request and during that period, all possible efforts will be made to combine similar work in convenient locations into planned programmes.

7. OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY REPAIRS SERVICE

Norwich City Council does carry out some repairs outside routine working hours but only those repairs that are categorised as emergency repairs and that become apparent to the resident out of office hours.

The tenant handbook provides details of how to contact the out of hour's service and which repairs will be carried out. In most cases, the work will be limited to making the problem safe and returning to deal with it during normal working hours.

8. APPOINTMENTS

Norwich City Council will offer customers an appointment for all works excluding emergency repairs. Appointments are provided during the following times as follows:

- 08:00 to 20:00 hours Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)
- 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays (smaller routine repairs only, excluding bank holiday weekends)

In the event of multiple visits being required, Norwich City Council will offer an appointment for the first visit and our contractor will discuss future access arrangements directly with the tenant at that first appointment.

A morning, afternoon or "school run" (avoiding typical school drop off and pick up times) appointment can be booked for a particular date and this will be reported to Norwich City Council for monitoring purposes.

If the tenant misses a pre-agreed appointment, the job will be cancelled and a card left at the property by the contractor informing the customer of that fact and that the repair will need to be reported again to Norwich City Council. In such situations, tenants may be charged for any additional costs incurred.

If the appointment is to deal with an emergency e.g. a serious water leak causing damage to the fabric of the property or it is a health and safety risk, it may be necessary to force access to the property. Further information for tenants on forced access to properties is in the tenancy agreement section 11.4.

9. ASSIGNING / CHANGING THE PRIORITY OF ORDERS

Although Norwich City Council operates the repair response times set out above, and will always respond to genuine emergencies as quickly as possible, it recognises that there will be certain circumstances where a more immediate response is required to repairs, which are normally not emergencies.

Where customers report repairs by phone, assessing such need is not always straightforward. Even face-to-face situations can present challenges. The policy of Norwich City Council is based on putting the health and safety of customers first, and on applying a 'fail safe' approach. As such, the priority of normal non-emergency repairs will be upgraded by the person receiving the request, where they feel that that it is necessary in order to avoid a significant detrimental impact on health.

The information provided by the customer will be accepted at face value, but in the event that that information is subsequently found to be false, then the customer may be re-charged with the additional cost associated with upgrading the order.

10. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

Refer to rechargeable repairs policy.

11. TENANTS OWN IMPROVEMENTS

Refer to tenants own improvements policy.

12. REPAIRS TO COMMUNAL AREAS

As well as responsibility for repairs to individual properties, Norwich City Council is responsible for some repairs to communal areas both inside blocks of flats and outside on estates, as well as council owned garages and parking posts.

13. LEASEHOLDERS

Under the terms of the lease, leasehold customers are responsible for some repairs to their home; generally internal ones. The council is also responsible for some repairs to leasehold homes; generally external ones. The council retains responsibility for maintaining the structure and outside of leasehold blocks/properties and all shared areas in and around them.

Leaseholders contribute towards the cost of the council repairing and maintaining the building through their annual leasehold service charge bill. The percentage that each individual leaseholder contributes towards repairing and maintaining the building is set out in the lease. The lease explains which repairs and repairs work the council carries out and which areas of repairs the leaseholder is responsible for in greater detail.

The leaseholder handbook provides a general summary of those repairing responsibilities. The council must normally consult leaseholders about work that it may be proposing, but only when the likely contribution to an individual leaseholder is going

to be more than £250. The rules on leaseholder consultations are contained in section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, and section 151 of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002.

14. GAINING ACCESS

Tenants and leaseholders are required, under the terms of their respective agreements, to allow Norwich City Council staff and its contractor's access to their home to inspect, repair or do other work, which is required to their property or to adjoining properties. In extreme cases legal means may be used such as a warrant or injunction in order to gain access. The cost of this action may be passed on to the tenant or leaseholder.

Where there is an extreme emergency and the tenant, leaseholder or a member of the household cannot be contacted, Norwich City Council retains the right to force entry as set out under the terms of tenancy and lease agreements.

In order to support access for repairs, tenants are responsible for cleaning surfaces, moving furniture and lifting carpets (or laminated flooring) to allow repairs to be carried out. Where this is not done and staff or contractors have to lift carpets or move furniture, Norwich City Council is not responsible for any damages to these items.

15. DECANTING CUSTOMERS

Decanting is the process of providing alternative accommodation for a tenant or leaseholder so that repair or refurbishment of their home can take place.

Because of the costs involved and the disruption to the customer, decanting is only used as a last resort, where the nature of the work means the health and safety of the customer could be at significant risk if they do not leave their home when works are taking place.

Decanting is usually a planned process but there may be some occasions where decants cannot be planned for, such as where the tenant or leaseholder cannot remain in their home because the property has become uninhabitable through fire or flood. Norwich City Council recognises that moving people from their home can be a stressful experience. Where a decant is required, Norwich City Council will follow its decant policy and procedure to ensure disruption is minimised and extra help and support is provided to the resident where required.

16. PRE INSPECTIONS

Pre-inspection visits will only be carried out where the following may apply:

- the customer is unable to fully explain the problem
- the responsibility for the repair may lie with the customer
- surveying schedules/specifications etc. are required prior to works being ordered
- an investigation is needed to identify the underlying cause of the problem
- a previous repair or repairs has not solved the problem
- works to a block/communal area where leaseholders may be charged

Where necessary an appointment with a surveyor will be arranged through the property services team when the repair is initially requested.

17. POST INSPECTION OF REPAIRS

Norwich City Council has a duty to ensure its resources are used appropriately and that repairs are carried out to a satisfactory standard using the specified standard of materials. A post inspection is a quality control check which is carried out on a percentage (usually in the order of 5-10%) of all repairs carried out.

18. CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

Refer to housing compensation policy

19. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

The performance management framework enables Norwich City Council to ensure that the service is being delivered effectively and to respond to those areas where performance needs to be improved. The information is shared with staff to ensure that everyone is focussed on delivering the best service to customers.

Monitoring information is made available to the following:

- involved tenants and leaseholders
- customer representatives at tenant focus groups
- members and councillors
- all tenants on an annual basis as part of the annual reporting arrangements
- staff through regular performance updates
- all regulatory bodies as and when required

20. HOW TO COMPLIMENT, COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

Norwich City Council is committed to ensuring that all services are tailored to meet the needs of everyone, taking into account of age, gender, ethnicity, lifestyle or disability. All complaints are taken seriously and will be recorded and investigated according to our corporate procedure.

Further information on compliments, comments and complaints procedures can be found using the details below.

Norwich City Council
Tel: 0344 980 3333
Website: www.norwich.gov.uk
Email: Listening@norwich.gov.uk

Norwich City Council is continually looking to improve the services it offers its customers and as such actively encourages comments on the service provided.

21. DATA PROTECTION

At all times officers will adhere to all Data Protection policies and procedures.

22. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality: everyone has a fair chance to achieve the same or similar outcomes.

Diversity: celebrating the fact that our differences make us who we are.

As an organisation, we have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and strive towards a cohesive society. Norwich City Council is committed to equality of opportunity and celebrates the diversity of all its residents, visitors and employees.

This policy supports the council's equality strategy. Officers will at all times comply with the council's equality policy.

23. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Random checks will be carried out by a senior officer within property services to make sure that:

- this policy has been followed
- the council is meeting agreed service standards

Review of this policy will make sure that this policy:

- is in accordance with current legislation
- supports and compliments all other current council strategies and policies

24. REVIEW

The business improvement team leader will be responsible for making sure that this policy is reviewed.

This policy will be reviewed annually and an equality impact assessment and privacy impact assessment (if needed) carried out after each review unless there are any legislative changes requiring an earlier review.

Reviews will be conducted with the involvement of relevant staff, our tenants and residents, stakeholders and partners.

Equality impact assessment

**NORWICH**
City Council

Name of head of service or executive head authorising:	Chris Rayner
Role:	Head of property services (NPS Norwich)
Lead review manager name:	Rachael Warnes
Role:	Business improvement team leader
Date:	19/06/2013

1. Title of proposed policy, function or project:

Responsive maintenance policy

2. What are the aims and objectives?

The policy is in place to provide guidance, and a framework that will help long-term sick and disabled tenants remain in their homes for longer, and carry out essential daily activities or, if this is not possible or practical, to assist them in finding suitable alternative accommodation. This will ensure that:

- Financial resources are spent where they would make the most difference to the quality of life for a resident
- There are fair and equitable means of distributing limited resources
- The council and its residents obtain value for money from all adaptations i.e. that adaptations remain in place and in use for their entire projected life cycle and where possible are not removed where future tenants do have a need for them
- Any adaptations provided are adequate for the resident now and in the foreseeable future

3. Who are the key stakeholders?

- Tenants living in Norwich City Council properties who have applied for an adaptation to their property to meet a disability need
- Public and voluntary organisations including support agencies, voluntary groups and registered social landlords
- Relevant Norwich City Council officers

4. What evidence has been used for this assessment?

- Consultation
- Focus group

- Customer satisfaction data (from the disabled adaptations contract KPI's)
- Customer satisfaction data (taken from STAR survey results)

5. Have any concerns been raised about the proposed policy?
(Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

5a. What have people from these equalities groups told you about their concerns?

N/A

6. Do different groups have different needs in relation to this policy?
(Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age		✓	
Disability	✓		
Gender		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

6a. Please explain what the potential outcomes are for these equalities groups:

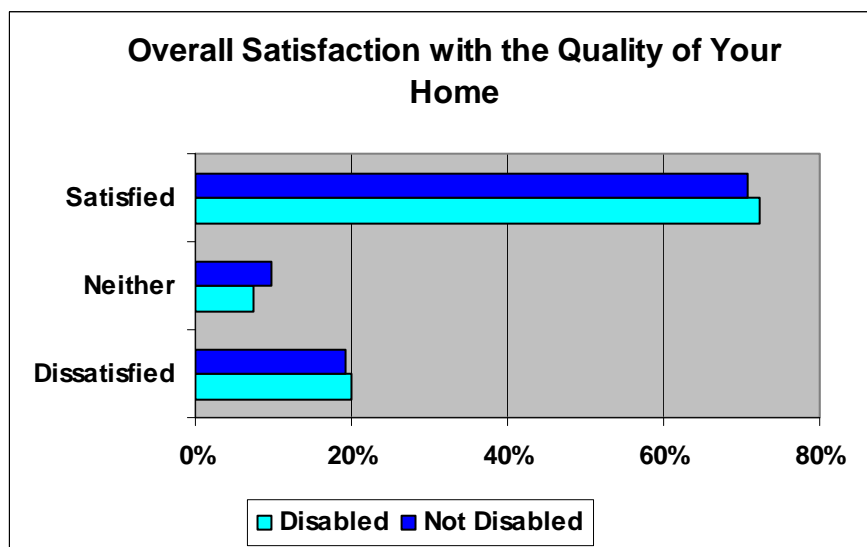
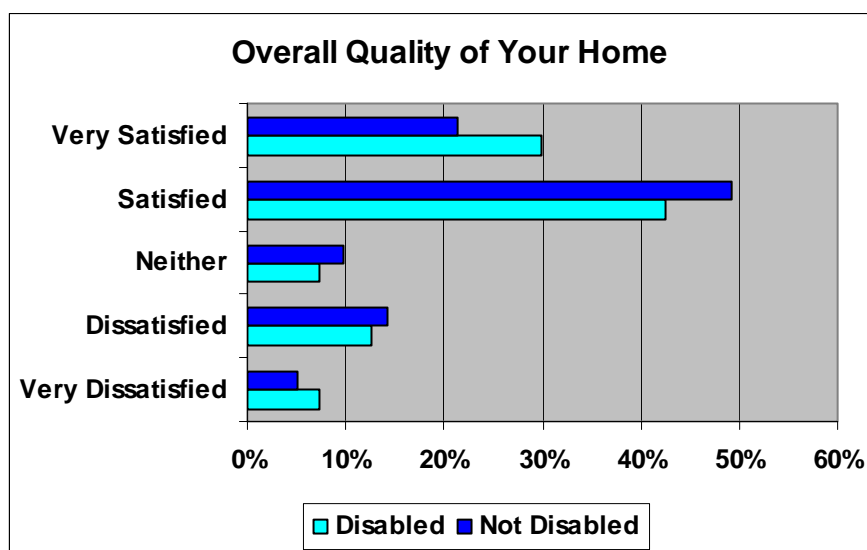
The disabled adaptations policy is there to provide a framework and guidance that allows us to:

- Carry out reasonable and appropriate adaptations to our assets to meet the resident's disability need
- Match tenants with specific needs to alternative properties (where appropriate) to make better use of the housing stock
- Work with our tenants, officers, the county council, caring agencies and contractors to ensure there is minimum disruption for tenants, and time spent carrying out adaptations to occupied properties
- Cross work with all housing departments to implement more efficient and cost effective processes and procedures
- Standardize the adaptations and alterations processes throughout the authority.

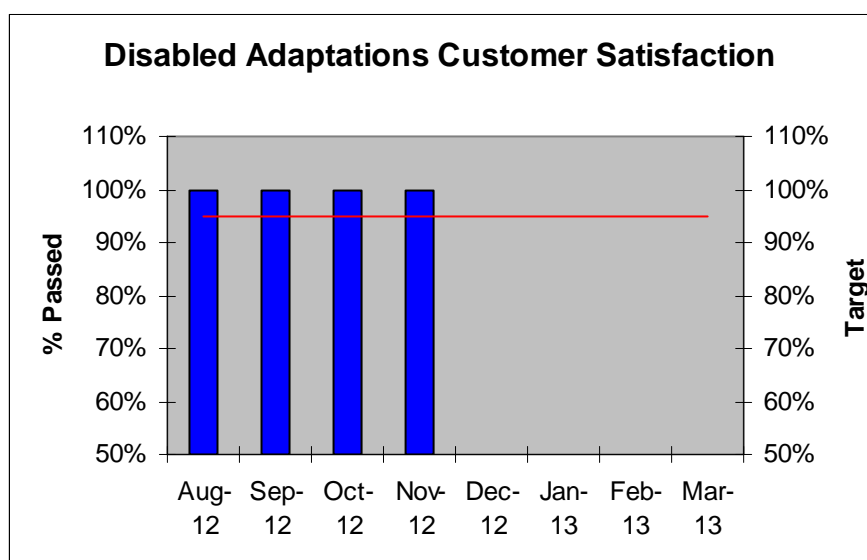
- Help shape the service ensuring our procedures are in line with best practice and current legislation
- Make use of temporary or portable equipment to ensure minimum disruption and reduce void times

All of the resident's accessing the service will have a disability need, and that need will have been assessed first by Norfolk County Council, and meet the criteria for assessment/referral for work. As such, the only group that has a need in relation to this policy is the disability group, and the outcome for that group as a result of any action taken under the framework of the policy would be a positive one in the majority of cases.

The recent STAR survey shows that disabled residents are more likely to be satisfied with the overall quality of their home. The results of this survey are shown below.



In addition, disabled resident's who have accessed the service and benefitted from a resulting adaptation to their home are extremely satisfied with the service they have received, as can be seen in the customer satisfaction results shown below, taken from the customer satisfaction forms returned to us by residents upon completion of the work.



A focus group was held in December 2012 with a number of disabled residents invited to participate. These residents were a mix of those who had recently benefitted from adaptations to their properties, and those who have a registered disability but may not have accessed the service, or not accessed it recently.

The policy and the service were well received, and there was no negative criticism from the group as a whole. Constructive criticism was that our neighbourhood housing officers need to be made more aware of how residents access the service initially (via Norfolk County Council), and that an accompanying leaflet be made available to all residents that can be included in the future with the tenant's handbook.

7. Is there a chance to: a. promote equality of opportunity and b. promote good relations in the community? (Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age	✓		
Disability	✓		
Gender		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

7a. Please explain whether the potential is for a positive or neutral outcome:

The council carries out disabled adaptations for tenants housed in Norwich City Council owned stock. In the majority of cases, tenant's access the service initially through Norfolk County Council's adult and children's social services teams, or through their phone assessment team operated by their subsidiary company, Norfolk Care Connect. The method of external assessment by qualified occupational therapists ensures that there is consistency, fairness and transparency in each referral.

Since October 2011 Norwich City Council has employed its own occupational therapist on a secondment basis from Norfolk County Council, in order to ensure that once received, the referrals are dealt with promptly, and to audit the referrals, checking for accuracy and that the works requested are reasonable, appropriate and practicable to meet the need of the tenants.

In addition, for minor adaptation requests tenants can access the service directly; minor aids and adaptations such as lever taps, adjustments to electrical sockets, and small handrails can be ordered directly through Norwich City Council's property services team without the need for a referral from Norfolk County Council.

The service provides a high level of customer service and satisfaction, and following each assessment works are tailored to the tenant's specific needs and we can provide assistance and advice throughout the process as required. This support is available in person or over the telephone through our property services team, our occupational therapist, and through our contractor who has a dedicated resident liaison officer for disabled adaptations.

The service regularly involves its internal and external stakeholders, partners and support agencies, who provide invaluable feedback. Since 2010, Norwich City Council has used this feedback to improve the service overall, and our disabled tenants who require adaptations benefit from this ongoing process of improvements; at present there is no waiting list* for disabled adaptations to be carried out, regardless of the priority need.

**From point of referral being received by Norwich City Council from Norfolk County Council, or direct from the customer.*

8. Is there evidence to suggest that the policy may have a disproportionate adverse impact on an equalities group? (Copy and paste this symbol ✓ to tick the relevant fields below)

	Yes	No	Not known
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Religion or belief			✓
Sexual orientation			✓

8a. Please explain what this potential impact is and how you intend to mitigate

against it in a proportionate and relevant way:

N/A

9. Please outline key recommendations and actions committed to in the future:

10. On the basis of this assessment, should this policy go on to the further impact assessment stage?

Yes No ✓

11b. Please explain:

N/A

Please note that the further impact assessment is only necessary if a potentially disproportionate negative impact has been identified.

POLICY	PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE POLICY	
DATE ISSUED: July 2013	REVIEW DATE:	July 2016
ISSUED BY: NPS Norwich Property Services Team		
<p>PURPOSE OF POLICY</p> <p>This policy covers planned and cyclical maintenance, as opposed to day-to-day or responsive maintenance which is covered by our responsive maintenance policy.</p> <p>Planned maintenance is defined as being the planned replacement of major components, for example windows, kitchens, bathrooms and heating systems within our existing properties.</p> <p>Cyclical maintenance is defined as being works which are included in a planned servicing of properties and their associated elements. A cyclical maintenance programme deals with the gradual deterioration of building components and finishes; the process is largely predictable and is therefore capable of being the subject of forward planning. It includes such items as gutter cleaning, paintwork and electrical checks. Cyclical maintenance is essentially preventative or protective.</p> <p>Cyclical or service maintenance works are repeated at regular intervals. Some servicing works are required to be undertaken by legislation e.g. gas servicing. These works are governed by strict rules.</p> <p>Two critical aspects of the service are value for money and customer focus. As such, this policy is intended to help ensure that available resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible in maintaining homes to the highest possible standard, and that our customer's needs are central to the delivery of the service. It will also assist in ensuring that the delivery of our planned and cyclical maintenance service continues to improve by providing a basis for consistent decision making and resource allocation.</p> <p>This policy supports the overarching Asset Management Strategy.</p>		
<p>AUTHORISATION</p> <p>It is anticipated that this policy will be approved by Cabinet in July 2013. It delegates the authority to assess individual cases to NPS Norwich, and where appropriate, and reasonable to do so, agree exceptions to the policy.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and the authority to agree revisions will be delegated to the deputy chief executive (operations).</p>		
<p>RELEVANT LEGISLATION INFORMING THIS POLICY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11) 2. The Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 (Section 20) 		

3. The Defective Premises Act 1972
4. The Environmental Protection Act 1990
5. Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
6. The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994

CONTRIBUTES TO CORPRATE PRIORITIES

The policy helps to meet the corporate priorities 'to make Norwich a city with decent housing for all' and 'to provide value for money services'.

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2. The extent of the service
3. Limitations to the service
4. Procurement
5. Methodology – planned maintenance
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8. Decanting customers
9. Performance monitoring and management
10. How to compliment, comment or complain
11. Data protection
12. Equality and diversity
13. Quality assurance
14. Review

1. INTRODUCTION

Norwich City Council aims to deliver an efficient and high quality planned and cyclical maintenance service to all its residents. A key objective of the policy is to ensure that the service is delivering best value. It is imperative, therefore, that appropriate performance targets and budgets are established to ensure that the service delivery is meeting customers' aspirations as well as achieving value for money.

The overall aim of the planned and cyclical maintenance policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective management of the council's housing stock.

The specific objectives of the policy are:

- to provide a fair, efficient, and cost effective planned and cyclical maintenance service which is clearly understood by all stakeholders including staff, customers, contractors and elected representatives
- to promote understanding of all stakeholders responsibilities in relation to planned and cyclical maintenance
- to achieve high standards of customer care
- to achieve continuous improvement in all the services we deliver and to achieve

and maintain high standards of business efficiency and effectiveness

- to manage performance within the planned and cyclical maintenance service and seek continuous improvement
- to provide a service which reflects the commitment to equality for all tenants and which takes into account the particular needs of vulnerable groups

The principles behind the policy are:

- that tenants and stakeholders are involved in, and consulted on the development of the service and its operational procedures
- that through supervision, monitoring, and feedback from the tenants (compliments and complaints) the service is continually improved
- that communication with tenants is available in a range of formats, is clear, appropriate and easily understood
- that the planned and cyclical maintenance programmes are supported by appropriate training for staff
- that tenants and leaseholders also play their part in ensuring they give access to staff and contractors to ensure planned and cyclical works can be undertaken, carry out any repairs and decorations which they are responsible for, and report any repairs to Norwich City Council promptly when they are identified

2. THE EXTENT OF THE SERVICE

A key purpose of the planned and cyclical maintenance policy is to set out those works that are provided by Norwich City Council as part of the planned and cyclical maintenance service. Both the council and its tenants (or leaseholders) have responsibilities for maintenance of the housing stock. The obligations of all concerned are set out in the tenancy agreement (or, for leaseholders, the lease agreement). The council also provides supplementary guidance and explanation in handbooks etc.

3. LIMITATIONS TO THE SERVICE

There are a number of circumstances under which planned maintenance may not be carried out in accordance with a programme of work. These circumstances may include:

- where the tenant has a Right to Buy application being processed
- where there is a history of abuse, threats or violence toward Norwich City Council staff or its contractors

4. PROCUREMENT

Planned and cyclical maintenance services will be procured in accordance with the council's financial regulations and (where possible) in accordance with modern procurement practices. Contractors will be selected according to their ability, capacity to undertake the works, financial viability, insurance cover and previous experience and success in this area. The council will have regard to a potential contractor's policies and practice in respect of equal opportunities, safeguarding, health and safety and data protection. The council has adopted the principles set out in the Egan Report and will

seek to procure work on a partnering basis where appropriate.

5. METHODOLOGY - PLANNED MAINTENANCE

Programmes of work

Programmes of work are assembled from information contained in the council's asset database and from information provided from responsive repairs surveys and historical repairs and maintenance data. Data is continually updated from information obtained during the on-going stock condition assessment which combined with life cycle information, is used to inform future programmes.

During the pre budget period each year the annual programme for the coming year will be produced based on computer projections, which will be closely linked to set targets. Draft programmes and spend profiles are produced in accordance with the relevant contract/framework agreement. Once programmes are finalised residents will be informed and consulted.

Norwich City Council uses the following information to deliver their planned maintenance service:

- stock condition inspections of every property every 5 years
- retention of asset information relating to each property for the following:
 1. condition of the property's elements
 2. expected component lives
 3. asbestos register
 4. Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
 5. Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- 30 year profiles of component replacement to ensure that the properties meet the required standards of Norwich City Council
- resource planning to ensure the works meet budget and project management availability
- annual improvement works contracts to be derived from the council's' asset information
- project management of works to ensure excellent customer satisfaction

Priorities for improvement will consider the following:

- impact to the resident
- current condition against standards required
- long term impact of not servicing the property/equipment
- budgeting constraints
- impact to other maintenance work streams

Once a draft programme has been assembled tenants and leaseholders are invited to scrutinise the programme and approve via a focus group style approach.

Asset surveys

Asset surveys (stock condition surveys) are carried out using handheld computers and bespoke survey software which interfaces with the database. The survey information is then uploaded into the asset database from which various investment scenarios are modelled to ensure the most efficient and economical programmes are produced.

Under the output model contract contractors carry out surveys to confirm the computer projections or defer proposed works. Detailed design and specifications are then produced and the projects delivered.

Work included in programmes is to be prioritised to meet the actual budget available on the basis that work included will ensure properties remain wind and weather proof, structurally sound and safe in use, are completed first. Other works can then be included in the programme as budgets allow.

Checks are to be carried out to confirm if properties have been identified for disposal or redevelopment, in which case minimal or no work is to be carried out.

6. METHODOLOGY - CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

The cyclical maintenance programme is assembled from information contained in the council's asset database and from historical maintenance data. It also takes into account and reflects any changed in legislation. Data is continually updated from information obtained during the year which combined with life cycle information, is used to inform future programmes.

Each year the cyclical maintenance programme is reviewed to help ensure that the work schedules include all appropriate elements and have the correct maintenance frequency. A typical cyclical maintenance programme will include:

Work description	Cycle Frequency
External redecoration	5 years
Internal decoration of common areas	5 years
Gas appliance servicing	Annual
Lift servicing	Monthly
Fire detection equipment servicing	6 months
Other mechanical plant	Annual
Electrical installations (domestic)	10 years (or at change of occupancy)
Electrical installations (non-domestic)	5 years (or at change of occupancy)
Electrical fitting (PAT test)	Annual
Water testing (legionella)	Monthly

Tenants and leaseholders are consulted on cyclical programmes although in many cases the work is of a statutory nature and therefore there is no option as to whether the work can be carried out or not. In all cases the proposed approach and programme are scrutinised and approved by tenants and leaseholders as for planned maintenance.

Appliance gas servicing

Whilst undertaking all cyclical maintenance regimes is important, there are special circumstances relevant to gas appliance servicing. The current Health and Safety

legislation controlling this activity (The Gas Appliance (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998) imposes special responsibilities on landlords and occupiers with the specific aim of ensuring that gas appliances are checked for safety every twelve 12 months.

Norwich City Council is committed to ensuring that each gas appliance (including pipework) that is supplied by Norwich City Council for use is serviced annually. However, gaining 100% access to all properties is a significant challenge, especially in the relatively small, but often persistent, number of cases where tenants either fail to understand the risks and responsibilities involved or, for unknown reasons, continue to deny access.

To overcome this, Norwich City Council follows clear and documented procedures for notifying tenants of the need to gain access, including follow-up letters and an explanation of the proposed action.

For further information please refer to the Gas Servicing No Access policy.

7. GAINING ACCESS

Tenants and leaseholders are required, under the terms of their respective agreements, to allow Norwich City Council staff and its contractor's access to their home to inspect, repair or do other work, which is required to their property or to adjoining properties. In extreme cases legal means may be used such as a warrant or injunction in order to gain access. The cost of this action may be passed on to the tenant or leaseholder.

Where there is an extreme emergency or a health and safety issue and the tenant, leaseholder or a member of the household cannot be contacted, Norwich City Council retains the right to force entry as set out under the terms of tenancy and lease agreements.

Certain cyclical maintenance programmes have specific procedures regarding gaining access in order for the landlord to maintain their legal responsibility. Further information can be found in the Gas Servicing No Access policy.

In order to support access for planned and cyclical maintenance, tenants are responsible for cleaning surfaces, moving furniture and lifting carpets (or laminated flooring) to allow work to be carried out. Where this is not done and staff or contractors have to lift carpets or move furniture, Norwich City Council is not responsible for any damages to these items.

8. DECANTING TENANTS

Decanting is the process of providing alternative (temporary or permanent) accommodation for a tenant or leaseholder so that repair or refurbishment of their home can take place.

Because of the costs involved and the disruption to the customer, decanting is only used as a last resort, where the nature of the work means the health and safety of the customer could be at significant risk if they do not leave their home when works are taking place.

Decanting is usually a planned process but there may be some occasions where decants cannot be planned for, such as where the tenant or leaseholder cannot remain in their home because the property has become uninhabitable through fire or flood. Norwich City Council recognises that moving people from their home can be a stressful experience. Where a decant is required, Norwich City Council will follow its decant policy and procedure to ensure disruption is minimised and extra help and support is provided to the resident where required.

9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

The performance management framework enables Norwich City Council to ensure that the service is being delivered effectively and to respond to those areas where performance needs to be improved. The information is shared with staff to ensure that everyone is focussed on delivering the best service to customers.

Monitoring information is made available to the following:

- involved tenants and leaseholders
- customer representatives at tenant focus groups
- members and councillors
- all tenants on an annual basis as part of the annual reporting arrangements
- staff through regular performance updates
- all regulatory bodies as and when required

10. HOW TO COMPLIMENT, COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

Norwich City Council is committed to ensuring that all services are tailored to meet the needs of everyone, taking into account of age, gender, ethnicity, lifestyle or disability. All complaints are taken seriously and will be recorded and investigated according to our corporate procedure.

Further information on compliments, comments and complaints procedures can be found using the details below.

Norwich City Council
Tel: 0344 980 3333
Website: www.norwich.gov.uk
Email: Listening@norwich.gov.uk

Norwich City Council is continually looking to improve the services it offers its customers and as such actively encourages comments on the service provided.

11. DATA PROTECTION

At all times officers will adhere to all Data Protection policies and procedures.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality: everyone has a fair chance to achieve the same or similar outcomes.

Diversity: celebrating the fact that our differences make us who we are.

As an organisation, we have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and strive towards a cohesive society. Norwich City Council is committed to equality of opportunity and celebrates the diversity of all its residents, visitors and employees.

This policy supports the council's equality strategy. Officers will at all times comply with the council's equality policy.

13. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Random checks will be carried out by a senior officer within property services to make sure that:

- this policy has been followed
- the council is meeting agreed service standards

Review of this policy will make sure that this policy:

- is in accordance with current legislation
- supports and compliments all other current council strategies and policies

14. REVIEW

The business improvement team leader will be responsible for making sure that this policy is reviewed.

This policy will be reviewed annually and an equality impact assessment and privacy impact assessment (if needed) carried out after each review unless there are any legislative changes requiring an earlier review.

Reviews will be conducted with the involvement of relevant staff, our tenants and residents, stakeholders and partners.

PROCEDURE		Out of hours emergency callouts (housing repairs) and forced entry to properties	
DATE ISSUED: July 2013		REVIEW DATE: July 2016	
ISSUED BY:		NPS Norwich Property Services Team	
PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE To provide guidance for council officers and contractors when dealing with emergency and out of hours repairs and maintenance call-outs and where it may be necessary, due to an emergency situation, to force entry into a council owned property or leasehold dwelling where it has not been possible to contact the tenant, leaseholder or resident. The principles of the guidance for forced entry are also applicable for forced entry situations during daytime call-outs. This procedure supports the responsive maintenance policy, planned and cyclical maintenance policy, and the overarching Asset Management Strategy.			
CONTRIBUTES TO CORPRATE PRIORITIES The procedure helps to meet the corporate priorities ‘to make Norwich a city with decent housing for all’.			

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Gas leaks 3. Reporting emergencies 4. Out of hours (NCAS) diagnosis and procedure 5. How quickly will we do a repair 6. Logging the repair 7. Charging for the call 8. Forced entry to empty properties (tenanted or leasehold) 17:00-08:00 9. Multi-contractor call-outs 10. Forced entry to empty properties (tenanted or leasehold) 08:00-17:00 11. Data protection 12. Equality and diversity 13. Quality assurance 14. Review
1. INTRODUCTION
<p>Norwich City Council is committed to ensuring the housing it provides is clean, safe, comfortable and properly maintained. Apart from any initial response that may be required for flood, fire or explosion, the main purpose of the emergency / out of hours repairs service for the housing service is to make safe any serious fault that is likely to</p>

cause death or injury to occupants or the public, which is a serious danger to health, or likely to cause extensive damage to property and/or extreme discomfort to the resident.

Examples of emergencies are:

- gas leaks
- collapsing or collapsed floor or ceiling
- collapsing masonry or brickwork
- live wiring in an accessible place
- effluent overflowing internally from a blocked/broken toilet or soil pipe
- making safe any fault to burst pipes and tanks (not weeping)
- making property secure after forced entry
- forced entry because tenant is locked out and vulnerable
- initial response to storm damaged/severe roof leaks
- no heating and hot water (dependent on time of day/year and vulnerability of resident)

This is by no means an exhaustive list and the Norwich City Council officer taking the initial emergency / out of hours call will determine the urgency of reported emergencies.

2. GAS LEAKS

Gas leaks should be reported to National Grid by tenants and leaseholder's in the first instance. If the resident thinks they can smell gas and calls NCC / NCAS they should be advised of the following steps:

- put out any cigarettes or naked flames
- check that they have not left a gas tap or cooker on
- turn off the gas supply if possible/able at the meter
- open doors and windows to let gas out (if this can be done safely)
- do not use electrical switches, doorbells or a naked flame
- do not use a phone in the property – it can cause sparks
- ring National Grid emergency telephone number 0800 111999 (the NCAS operator to do this if they are the first point of contact)

3. REPORTING EMERGENCIES

Daytime hours – 08:00 to 17:00

Residents are advised to call 0344 980 3333. Between 08:00 and 17:00 their call will be handled by a customer contact advisor and the appropriate emergency responsive repair order will be raised and pass to the relevant contractor.

Between 08:00 and 17:00 in the case of emergency gas / heating repairs the call will transfer to the Gasway call centre, who deals with these calls directly.

Out of hours – 17:00 to 08:00

Residents are advised to call 0344 980 3333 between 17:00 and 08:00. Their call is then directed to the out of hours team (NCAS).

4. OUT OF HOURS (NCAS) DIAGNOSIS AND PROCEDURE

The NCAS call centre operatives will respond to the call. Once the repair has been diagnosed, and established as an emergency, the NCAS officer will log the repair with the appropriate contractor's out of hours operative.

The NCAS operative should log the repair with the appropriate operative but in some circumstances it may be necessary to contact the appropriate contractor's out of hour's supervisor, and/or the Norwich City Council officer on call.

The NCAS operative is responsible for advising the contractor of any warning or information flags present against the property such as "two to attend".

On call supervisor (contractor)

It may be necessary for the NCAS operative to call the contractors out of hour's supervisor in the following situations:

- total loss of water, power or heating to a block
- suspected structural damage
- flag to property (for e.g. 2 to attend, potentially violent/abusive etc.)
- fire
- flood
- gas leak
- empty dwelling – if an emergency situation is reported and access needs to be gained under section 11.4 of the tenancy agreement, the contractor's operative must be accompanied by the contractors on call supervisor (see section for forced entry)

This is by no means an exhaustive list and the NCAS operative will assess if it is necessary to contact the supervisor on call.

On call property services officer (NPS Norwich)

It may be necessary for the NCAS operative to call the council's out of hour's property services officer in the following situations:

- fire
- flood
- suspected structural damage
- total loss of water or power to a block
- domestic violence
- at the request of the contractors on call supervisor – in certain circumstances the contractor's supervisor may feel that the advice, guidance or presence of a council officer is appropriate. All requests for council officer attendance will be made through NCAS, with the reasons for request fully stated
- to resolve a tenant dispute with NCAS
- welfare report/check
- notification of a forced entry by the contractor

This is by no means an exhaustive list and the NCAS operative will assess if it is necessary to contact the Norwich City Council officer on call..

5. HOW QUICKLY WILL WE DO A REPAIR

Out of hours emergencies should be attended to and made safe within two hours (depending on the emergency), and completed within 24 hours. If the operative needs to return to complete the job fully they must pre-arrange this with the occupant.

6. LOGGING THE REPAIR

The NCAS operative will ensure that details of the call are logged, and that the out of hours paperwork is fully completed and sent to the agreed email addresses for the contractor, and the NCC council's customer contact team, in order that the repair may be logged onto Academy as a confirmation order the following working day.

If further works are required following the make-safe/emergency call out, then the follow up repair should be requested using the appropriate report back form, and sent by the contractor to the property services email address:

NPSGeneralEnquiries@NPS.co.uk

7. CHARGING FOR THE CALL

If the repairs are necessary because of the tenant's actions or neglect, they may be charged for the out of hours visit. Blocked waste pipes, no power due to a faulty appliance (that is owned by the tenant), water leaks due to overflowing baths or washbasins/sinks, lost keys/lock outs are all examples of out of hours calls where the tenant may be charged.

The NCAS operative should advise the tenant of the potential charge prior to sending out an out of hours operative. The council may not be able to charge for tenant misuse or neglect if the tenant has not been advised of the charge.

8. FORCED ENTRY TO EMPTY PROPERTIES (TENANTED OR LEASEHOLD)

17:00-08:00

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to gain entry to a property in an emergency situation, where the tenant or leaseholder can not be contacted.

Section 11.4 of the tenancy agreement and section 4.9 of the leasehold agreement covers these situations:

11.4 We, or our contractors, may enter your home by any means necessary, including a forced entry if either:

- *it is an emergency*
- *we have been unable to make contact with you despite all reasonable efforts (including where we know of them, contact through your next of kin and any social*

or other support worker), and have reason to believe either that you are not in occupation of your home or that your well-being is at risk

4.9 The lessee covenants with the council:

To permit the council or the council's housing manager or such other officer of the council as shall be appropriate agents workmen and others with or without tools and equipment at all reasonable times after previous written notice has been given (except in case of emergency) to enter into and upon the Property or any part or parts thereof for the purposes of carrying out all works which the Council may be liable or require to do or upon the Property or the Building or to or upon any adjoining or neighbouring premises the Council making good all damage occasioned thereby.

A forced entry may be required in the following circumstances:

- flood/burst pipes/leaks
- fire
- carbon monoxide alarm
- smoke alarm
- gas leak
- welfare check
- unsafe electrics
- to allow access for the police, fire service, or social services

This is not an exhaustive list and the NCAS and property services operatives will assess if it is appropriate to force entry to a property.

Where NCAS are made aware of a situation that may require a forced entry they should contact the on call property services officer in the first instance. The property services officer will advise the NCAS operative if a forced entry is required and appropriate under the tenancy/leasehold agreement. They will also advise if the presence of the on call property services officer is required at that point.

If forced entry to a leasehold property is required, it is likely to be appropriate for a council officer to be present with the contractor at the point of forced entry.

The NCAS operative will ensure that every effort has been made to contact the tenant, leaseholder or any other approved contact on file prior to the forced entry. Final authority for the forced entry is with the on call property services officer.

Once NCAS have received authority for the forced entry they should contact the contractors on call supervisor. The on call supervisor will arrange to attend with the appropriate contractors operative(s).

The on call supervisor must ensure that the contractor's operatives are not alone in an empty dwelling at any time.

The appropriate notice of forced entry should be left in a visible and accessible place within the property by the on call supervisor prior to leaving the dwelling.

Should it be necessary to change the lock to the property following forced entry the on

call supervisor will ensure that the appropriate notification/notice is taped to the door when leaving the property, which advises the tenant of the process for key collection.

It is the responsibility of the contractor and their on call supervisors to ensure that they carry the relevant council approved notices with them in case of a forced entry situation.

Should the on call supervisor deem it necessary at any point to contact the on call council officer for advice, guidance or support, they will contact NCAS directly.

The on call supervisor will ensure that the details of the forced entry are reported back to NCAS immediately following the forced entry, with full details of what action has been taken, including if any locks were changed.

Any new keys should be immediately delivered by the contractor to the NCAS offices.

The on call supervisor will fully document the forced entry using the property services reportback form. This form should be sent by the contractor to the housing property services email the following working day.

NCAS will notify the appropriate NHO Housing officer where locks have been changed and new keys delivered to the NCAS offices. The NHO Housing officer is responsible for these keys, and will ensure collection from the NCAS offices if appropriate or required and will instruct NCAS accordingly if keys may be destroyed.

9. MULTI-CONTRACTOR CALL-OUTS

In some circumstances it may be necessary for more than one contractor to attend a property for e.g. a gas or heating emergency where it may be necessary for a carpenter to attend to allow the gas/heating contractor entry.

The NCAS operative will be responsible for liaising with all appropriate contractors to ensure the right attendance at the right time dependent on the circumstance. If the NCAS operative requires further guidance they will seek this from the on call council officer.

It is the responsibility of the NCAS operative to advise all contractors of any warning or information flags such as 2 to attend.

In multi-contractor call-outs it is the responsibility of all contractors attending site to ensure the safety of their operatives on site at all times.

If one contractor leaves site upon completion of their part of the call out, the responsibility will remain with the contractor left on site to ensure that the conditions of any flag(s) are adhered to.

10. FORCED ENTRY TO EMPTY PROPERTIES (TENANTED OR LEASEHOLD) 08:00-17:00

The principles / guidelines of forced entries out of hours as set out in section 7 above still apply. However, if a forced entry within these hours is required, the contractor should

report the situation to the NPS Norwich property services team in the first instance.

Where property services are made aware of a situation that may require a forced entry they should contact the patch housing officer or duty housing officer. The property services officer will advise the contractor if a forced entry is required and appropriate under the tenancy/leasehold agreement. They will also advise if the presence of the housing officer or an additional council officer is required at that point.

If forced entry to a leasehold property is required it is likely to be appropriate for a council officer to be present with the contractor at the point of forced entry.

The property services officer / housing officer will ensure that every effort has been made to contact the tenant, leaseholder or any other approved contact on file prior to the forced entry. Final authority for the forced entry is with the property services team.

Once the contractor(s) have received authority for the forced entry they should contact the relevant supervisor. The contractor(s) supervisor will need to attend with their operative(s) unless a council officer is attending, as set out in section 7 above.

During daytime hours, any queries from the contractor in relation to the forced entry should be directed to the property services team.

The contractor will ensure that the details of the forced entry are reported back to the property services team immediately following the forced entry, with full details of what action has been taken, including if any locks were changed.

Any new keys should be immediately delivered by the contractor to the NCAS offices.

The contractor supervisor will fully document the forced entry using the property services reportback form. This form should be sent by the contractor to the NPS Norwich property services email the following working day.

Property services will notify the appropriate housing officer where locks have been changed and new keys delivered to the NCAS offices. The housing officer is responsible for these keys, and will ensure collection from the NCAS offices if appropriate or required and will instruct NCAS accordingly if keys may be destroyed.

11. DATA PROTECTION

At all times officers will adhere to all Data Protection policies and procedures.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality: everyone has a fair chance to achieve the same or similar outcomes.

Diversity: celebrating the fact that our differences make us who we are.

As an organisation, we have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and strive towards a cohesive society. Norwich City Council is committed to equality of opportunity and celebrates the diversity of all its residents, visitors and employees.

This policy supports the council's equality strategy. Officers will at all times comply with the council's equality policy.

13. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Random checks will be carried out by a senior officer within property services to make sure that:

- this procedure has been followed
- the council is meeting agreed service standards

Review of this procedure will make sure that this procedure:

- is in accordance with current legislation
- supports and compliments all other current council strategies and policies

14. REVIEW

The business improvement team leader will be responsible for making sure that this procedure is reviewed.

This procedure will be reviewed in accordance with the policies it supports.