

MAINTENANCE POLICY

Introduction

Midsummer recognises that the standard of maintenance service received by residents has a significant impact on levels of customer satisfaction. For this reason Midsummer will seek to deliver a service that meets or exceeds the expectations of its residents.

The maintenance service is also a key element of the Association's strategy to safeguard its assets and represents a significant element of Midsummer's annual budgetary provision. In order to achieve value for money, there needs to be a balance in investment between responsive and planned maintenance and adequate financial provision made to meet future repairing obligations. This can only be achieved through a structured approach, based on up-to-date, comprehensive and reliable stock condition data, supported by whole life-cycle costing, to estimate and plan for the costs of maintaining the stock over its life.

Policy Statement

Midsummer seeks to ensure that its maintenance service:

- Complies with the legal duties associated with property ownership and management
- Maximises the life of the stock to preserve its asset value
- Achieves high levels of customer care and satisfaction whilst achieving value for money
- Provides an accessible, efficient and responsive service to residents, reflecting their varying needs
- Maintains the Association's rental and, where appropriate, leasehold properties to a high standard, ensuring that no rental homes fall below the Decent Homes Standard
- Delivers an appropriate balance between expenditure on responsive repairs and planned maintenance, in line with the Audit Commission's recommendations
- Is supported by an effective procurement strategy, promoting the 'Egan' principles of sustainability, supply chain management, customer satisfaction, integrated information technology and the respect for people agenda
- Sets clear and challenging performance targets that are regularly monitored to encourage continuous improvement
- Involves residents in decision making about the service, including setting service standards and reviewing performance

- Adheres to the principles of the Right to Repair and offers compensation for service failure, where appropriate

Customer Care

Midsummer is committed to providing a high quality maintenance service to its residents. To meet this objective we will:

Response Repairs

- Agree service standards and response times with residents
- Offer an appointment service
- Provide written confirmation of the ordered repair and appointment details for urgent and non-urgent repairs
- Provide an out-of-hours emergency service
- Publish a Repairs Charter that sets out the standard of service to be delivered by the contractor and their operatives
- Carry out post inspections to monitor the standard of workmanship
- Provide residents with a range of opportunities to feedback their views on the service including satisfaction questionnaires, telephone surveys and an annual Repairs Forum

Planned and cyclical repairs

- Agree service standards with residents
- Undertake internal and external decoration work at least every five-years
- Have an agreed procedure for resident consultation that sets out how and when we will consult
- Offer at least three choices of products and/or colours to residents when undertaking planned and cyclical maintenance work, such as replacement kitchens, bathrooms, flooring or redecoration of external/internal areas
- Provide written confirmation of the work to be undertaken and timescales
- Publish a Repairs Charter that sets out the standard of service to be delivered by the contractor and their operatives
- Carry out post inspections to monitor the standard of workmanship
- Provide residents with a range of opportunities to feedback their views on the service including satisfaction questionnaires, telephone surveys and an annual Repairs Forum

Stock Condition

Midsummer will seek to ensure that the housing for which it has a repairing obligation is kept in a good and lettable condition (as specified in the separate Lettable Standards Policy), meets or exceeds the Decent Homes Standard and is assessed against the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, implemented on 1 April 2006.

Midsummer will undertake a stock condition survey on 20% of its stock each year, in order to identify, record and analyse the physical condition and energy efficiency of its properties. This information will be added to other secondary data, for example response repair information, and will be used to plan a detailed five-year rolling planned and cyclical maintenance programme and to inform the 30 year Business Plan.

Gas Appliance Servicing

In accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, Midsummer will undertake a gas appliance check including any flue the appliance is connected to, at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

All rental tenants will be required to provide access for the safety checks to be carried out. Midsummer has a right to enter a tenant's home, both to inspect for repairs and to carry out necessary work, under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement and Section 11(6) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1988. Midsummer will, where all other means have failed, apply to the county court to enforce this power of entry.

Leaseholder Repairs

All shared owners/lessees are responsible for repairs to the inside of their homes. Shared owners in houses are also responsible for all external repairs.

Midsummer may be responsible for the maintenance of the structure and exterior of the building and any common areas as determined by the particular lease agreement, however, leaseholders are required to contribute to the cost of such work. Midsummer will comply with relevant legislation when consulting with leaseholders on work to communal areas.

Resident Involvement

An important input into the strategic direction for housing maintenance must come from residents, to ensure that priorities reflect their needs and aspirations as far as possible.

Residents will be encouraged to be involved in selecting our maintenance partners, setting service standards, receiving and commenting on performance information and the five-year planned maintenance programmes, contributing to performance monitoring, selecting the options available for replacement kitchens, doors and colours for planned maintenance works. This will be achieved through the Tenants Panel, Leaseholder Virtual Panel and an annual Repairs Forum.

Equality Audit

Midsummer is committed to ensuring its maintenance service is fully accessible to all residents. To ensure this is the case, we will undertake an equality audit every three years. The audit will allow us to identify groups of residents, who may find it difficult to

access our repairs service, for example due to language barriers or disability. By identifying these groups we will be able to consult with them, to ensure that their needs are taken into account when providing the service.

Procurement

In response to the efficiency agenda, Midsummer will challenge traditional procurement methods and seek alternative options, where appropriate. To meet this objective we will:

- Form strategic partnerships which deliver value for money and improve performance
- Join procurement clubs and/or joint procurement initiatives within the Guinness Group to improve our purchasing power
- Involve our customers in product and service development as well as the ongoing review and monitoring of quality standards
- Benchmark our costs and performance against other housing service providers
- Introduce standardisation, both in terms of internal unit layouts and of components used in development and maintenance processes

Performance Review

Key Performance Indicators, including customer satisfaction, will be agreed for the maintenance service and wherever practicable, contractor's payments will be linked to performance against these agreed targets.

Midsummer's Senior Management Team and Board of Management will regularly review the Key Performance Targets and monitor performance on a quarterly basis.

Performance results for the maintenance service will be published in Midsummer's annual report to residents.

Midsummer will benchmark its performance against others and share good practice wherever possible.

Legislation

In fulfilling its obligations under this Policy the Association will have regard to a range of legislation including:

- The Housing Acts 1985 and 1996
- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (s11)
- The Leasehold Reform Act 1993 (s121 and 146)
- Gas Installation & Use Regulations 1998

- Environmental Protection Act 1990 (s79-82)
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957
- Defective Premises Act 1972

Linked Policies

- Aids and Adaptations
- Asset Management
- Design & Technical Brief
- Development Strategy
- Sustainable Living
- Customer Service Charter
- Resident Involvement
- Compensation
- Service Charges – Rental Tenants
- Service Charges – Leaseholders
- Equality and Diversity
- Lettable Standard
- Recharges