

Recharge policy statement

Updated February 2019

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of the Recharge policy statement is to ensure that costs that arise from Golden Lane Housing (GLH) carrying out repairs which are normally the responsibility of the tenant are recovered through a recharge and that tenants are made aware of this.
- 1.2 GLH aims to ensure that as far as is possible all monies due in respect of any work or repairs deemed as rechargeable and payable by the tenant are collected within agreed timescales and tenants are offered an appropriate method of paying the charges due.
- 1.3 GLH will adopt a caring but firm approach in recovering the amount owed; the tenants will be told of their obligations to pay these recharges and will be kept informed on a regular basis about the amount they are required to pay.

2 Definition of a recharge

- 2.1 Rechargeable works are those works arising from damage, neglect, abuse or misuse of landlord's property, fixtures and fittings by a tenant, member of the tenant's household, support staff or visitors to the tenant's property. They do not include repairs that arise as a result of normal wear and tear through the duration of a tenancy.

- 2.2 From time to time tenants may ask GLH to undertake work which is their responsibility. In these circumstances the tenant will be informed that the work will be rechargeable and that GLH will require payment in advance (or agreement to a schedule of repayment) before undertaking the work. In emergencies, (eg gaining entry when the tenant has lost their keys), the requirement for payment in advance may be waived provided that the tenant agrees that they will meet the cost of the work.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The aims of the policy are to:
 - a put clear guidance in place to support GLH with the recharge costs for which tenants are responsible
 - b link with other strategic documentation and policies such as the maintenance policy and value for money agenda. In order to operate as an effective organisation and ensure value for money, GLH needs to ensure that all aspects of the tenancy agreement are enforced by ensuring income from rechargeable works and minimising expenditure in managing and maintaining its properties
 - c provide a framework in which a consistent approach is undertaken to the recharge of services, where there have been deliberate actions by the tenant resulting in damage to property or other assets owned by GLH.

4 Equality and diversity

- 4.1 The policy will be underpinned by the following principles:
- GLH's commitment to delivering a service which is fair, equitable and transparent
 - supported by detailed procedures and agreed practices, which will be consistently applied across the organisation
 - tenants will be made aware of circumstances in which charges may apply.

5 Scope

- 5.1 All recharges for any work and repairs undertaken at a tenants property which is outside of any GLH contractual obligations.

6 Policy

- 6.1 To recharge tenants for work carried out that is not GLH's responsibility, and as far as is reasonable practicable recover the costs.
- 6.2 If GLH agrees to carry out work that is beyond the requirements of the Tenancy Agreement or current policy a recharge will usually only be made if the tenant has agreed to the recharge.
- 6.3 No recharge will be made to the incoming tenant for works as a result of preparing a property for re-letting or sale, except for exceptional works requested by an incoming tenant beyond the GLH standard.
- 6.4 A tenant may be recharged for any of the following work for which GLH is not responsible, including but not limited to:
- replacement and fitting of light bulbs
 - supply and replacement of household dustbins including wheelie bins
 - replacement plugs and chains on sinks, baths and basins
 - replacement of toilet seats, pulls and chains
 - fitting of blinds, curtain tracks, coat rails and shelving
 - installation of extra security locks
 - replacement of lost keys

- changing locks and repairing associated damage after a person has locked themselves out
- adjusting internal doors so they open and close over fitted carpets
- lifting and relaying of wooden or laminate floors or carpets in order to carry out repairs
- unblocking sinks, basins and baths
- repair of damage caused by a tenant, family member or guest.

Circumstances in which works give rise to a recharge also include:

- where the health and safety of tenants or others is at risk
 - a property has been vacated and left in poor condition
 - the Landlord's fixtures and fittings in a property have been changed or modified by the tenant and costs are incurred to remove and restore the original fitting
 - situations where the repair is necessary to avoid further damage to the property or other properties.
- 6.5 Where damage is caused by persons other than the tenant, and the name and address of the perpetrator who has undertaken the willful damage is known, then a criminal damages claim may be pursued. In this instance, a crime reference number will be required prior to raising the request for a recharge.
- 6.6 Deceased tenants – where a rechargeable repair has been identified from a deceased tenant the case will be referred to the head of operations for the consideration of writing off this debt against the account.
- 6.7 Discretionary circumstance – there may be times that the tenant will not be recharged as a result of their actions. This may relate to domestic violence, or vulnerabilities including mental health issues. These cases will be raised with the Line Manager for each area and costs waived under specialist circumstances. If a decision can't be decided upon at this level then the case will be referred to the head of operations.

7 Appeals

7.1 Any tenant wishing to appeal about any aspect of the recharge process can lodge a formal complaint in accordance with GLH's Complaints policy.

8 Responsibility

8.1 The head of operations is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 GLH will monitor the volume, frequency and nature of tenant recharges and report regularly to the leadership team. The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner subject to changes in legislation or regulation.

Signature



Melissa O'Donnell
Head of operations

This policy was issued in February 2019.
This policy will next be reviewed in February 2020.

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