

Golden Lane Housing



Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Date: February 2023

CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**
- 3. POLICY STATEMENT**
- 4. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATION**
- 5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**
- 6. DEFINITIONS & GENERAL PRINCIPLES**
- 7. ADAPTATIONS**
- 8. REGULATORY STANDARDS**
- 9. EQUALITY IMPACT**
- 10. PERFORMANCE & MONITORING**
- 11. RELEVANT DOCUMENTS LINKED TO THE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY**
- 12. RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 13. POLICY REVIEW PROCESS**
- 14. TRANSLATION REQUIREMENTS**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As a specialist housing provider for people with learning disabilities Golden Lane Housing recognises that meeting tenant`s expectations of a high standard of service delivery is essential. GLH acknowledges that the provision of a value for money repairs service is one of its core priorities. This policy should be considered in conjunction with the corresponding procedures and other policies as referred to within this document.
- 1.2 The delivery strategy of GLH is to use our in house works team (Resolve Solutions) on general day to day repairs but employ specialist contractors for delivery of more specialist repairs and compliance.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Aims

- On behalf of our tenants, to effectively manage our repairs obligations.
- To comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- To ensure that all tenants always live in a safe and habitable environment.
- To ensure our repairs are completed in “one visit” where possible. We do this by accurate diagnosis through our Property Services Centre at the point of reporting the repair and by sending the most appropriate operative with the correct materials.

2.2 Objectives

- To run an effective and reliable repairs service.
- To continuously seek to improve performance.
- To afford tenants the highest levels of satisfaction.
- To provide services that gives value for money.
- To engage openly with tenants about repairs to their home.
- To maintain relevant information about the Association’s properties both owned and leased
- Support the Asset Management Strategy

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Golden Lane Housing is committed to the provision of high-quality homes where our tenants can live as independently as possible, flourish and be safe. The aim of this policy is for Golden Lane Housing to set out its commitment to fulfilling its statutory repair obligations and contribute to the efficient and effective maintenance of the Association’s housing stock and to ensure that expenditure is managed effectively and therefore delivering Value for Money.
- 3.2 It is essential that tenants and their support teams report any repairs issues through to us as soon as possible. It is both the landlord and tenants’ responsibility to ensure these repairs are reported & dealt with by either making them safe or completing the repair within the agreed timescales. Golden Lane Housing values and respects all its customers. In return, we encourage our tenants to respect and value their homes.
- 3.3 Golden Lane Housing endeavours to work always with its customers, and we have staff available 24 hours a day 365 days a year to deal with any emergencies that may occur through our Property Services Centre contact number 0300 003 7007.
- 3.4 **Summary of Responsive Repairs Service Standards**
 - To provide a 24 hour, 7 days a week service to report responsive repairs.
 - To attend and complete responsive repair works to published timescales.
 - To offer appointment choices.

4 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

4.1 The Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 places obligations upon GLH for the properties we own and manage to:

- Keep in good repair the structure and exterior of all properties
- Keep in good repair and proper working order installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity, for sanitation and for space and water heating
- Keep communal areas in reasonable repair.

4.2 Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, we must as part of our legal obligations ensure that gas appliances, fittings and flues are tested at least once every 12 months as outlined in the Compliance Strategy Policy.

4.3 Summary of legislation relating to repairs and maintenance

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Sections 2, 3 and 4
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Control of Asbestos regulations 2012
- The Social Housing Regulation Bill 2022-23

5 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

5.1 The policy covers the properties owned and / or managed by the Association with regards to all repairs obligations. The intention of this policy is to clearly demonstrate information and issues around obligations of the GLH and that of our tenants.

6 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

6.1 Golden Lane Housing provides a 24/7 national repairs service to its customers. During office hours, customers can report repairs to the Property Services Centre via telephone (0300 003 7007 option 2), email (propertyservices@glh.org.uk) or via our website (www.glh.org.uk). Outside of office hours, repairs must be reported via telephone. The same telephone number is used and this is diverted to our out of hours provider.

6.2 The priority is determined by the severity of the work required or driven by the impact on the customer. The Property Services Centre Advisor assigns the priority based on their diagnosis at the first point of call. We have three priorities for attendance to repairs:

- **Emergency Repairs** – These include repairs affecting the safety or basic security of the property or potentially affecting the health of the household or visitors (e.g. Gas leaks, uncontrollable water leaks and serious electrical faults. We intend to visit within 24 hours to make safe.
- **Out of Hours Repairs** - If an emergency repair is reported out of hours, Golden Lane Housing's standard response time is to attend within 24 hours, however we will endeavour to

reduce this attendance time to within 4 hours. In addition, GLH ensures that there is always an On Call Manager available out of hours should escalation or advice be required.

- **Appointable Repairs-** These are repairs that can wait without causing major inconvenience to the tenant (e.g. a leaking gutter). These works can be carried out at a scheduled appointment to suit the tenants availability. We will aim to complete all appointable repairs within 20 working days.

6.3 Appointments for repairs - Where an appointable repairs order has been issued, we look to provide an appointment to the tenant at the first point of call. Where this is not possible due to Golden Lane Housing not having visibility of the contractor's diary; this will be explained during the call and our Property Services Centre will request the tenant's access preferences. These will be shared with the contractor on the work order issued.

Appointable Repair Times - We have introduced an appointment scheme for most non-urgent repairs inside the home. Where appointments are provided, these are on an AM/PM basis. These slots are defined as:

- **AM** – Between 8am and 1pm
- **PM** – Between 1pm and 5pm

Flexible Appointments - Flexible appointments will be made available to meet tenants individual circumstances and specific needs.

- Later appointments to allow for personal care
- Agreements with Support Team to allow customers to be supported during appointments

6.4 Missed appointments –We will always try to work with our customers and contractors to facilitate the appointment process by requesting access preferences when the repair is reported and including this detail on the work order request which is issued to the contractor. We request that contractors call on-route to a job to confirm it is still convenient for them to attend as we appreciate that circumstances with our tenants can change on a daily basis. However, we understand that agreed appointments may not go ahead on some occasions and this failure can be due to a variety of reasons:

- **Contractor asked to leave site** – Our contractors may be asked to leave the property before a repair can be fully completed. If the repair or presence of the operative is causing the tenant distress (i.e noise) or is affecting the customer's behaviour, the Support Team reserve the right to ask the contractor to down tools and return at another time. The contractor will communicate this to Golden Lane Housing and a follow-up appointment will be arranged.
- **Contractor failure to attend** - Where appointments are missed by the contractor, Golden Lane Housing will investigate this with the contractor to understand why the appointment has been missed and facilitate the rebooking. This is monitored during performance reviews with the contractor and flagged if it becomes a recurring issue.
- **No Access:** Where no access is due to the tenant or Support Team not being present at the property at the agreed appointment time, where possible, we would ask that the operative make contact with our Property Services Centre before leaving the property. Our team will endeavour to contact the tenant or Support Team to remind them of the appointment.

Where contact cannot be made, we will ask the contractor to evidence the no access by way of calling card, time-stamped photograph etc. Golden Lane Housing will then contact the tenant or Support Worker to book in another appointment.

After a second missed appointment a plain English letter will be sent to the property to advise that we are trying to gain access for a repair and requesting that they contact us

within the next 10 days to rebook. If we don't hear anything, we will then close down the repair and mark it as no longer required. If the tenant contacts us again in the future, we will raise a new repair.

6.5 Communication during the repairs process

- **Emergency repairs/Out of Hours Emergency repairs** – Where an emergency repair has been reported to Golden Lane Housing, our Property Services Centre will follow up with the customer once the 24 hour attendance period has lapsed. During the call, we will confirm if any follow up works are required and check and log the tenant's satisfaction with the service provided.
- **Appointable Repairs** - Following the initial report of the repair, this will then be confirmed in writing in the format of a plain English letter sent to the customer's address. This details the repair reported, the priority assigned, the contractor/name of operative who will be attending and the appointment assigned (if known).

6.6 Customer Satisfaction

Our tenant's views around our repairs service are really important to us. Their feedback helps us to shape our service and identify where we need to make improvements. We collect feedback from our tenants in the following ways:

- **Out of Hours Repairs** – These are followed up by telephone call from our Property Services Centre either the following morning (Monday to Thursday) or on the Monday morning (following a weekend). During the call, we will confirm if any follow up works are required and check and log the tenant's satisfaction live into our Asset database during the call.
- **Emergency Repairs** – Our Property Services Centre will follow up with the tenant once the 24 hour attendance period has lapsed. During the call, we will confirm if any follow up works are required and check and log the tenant's satisfaction with the service provided. This data is recorded live into our Asset database during the call.
- **Appointable Repairs** – All appointable repairs are confirmed in writing to the tenant's home. Accompanying this letter will also be a satisfaction survey for tenants to complete and return to Golden Lane Housing by post in the pre-paid envelope provided. The data is then inputted into our Asset database and any comments around dissatisfaction are recorded and followed up.
- **Resolve Solutions Repairs** – Where a repair is completed by Resolve Solutions, the tenant or Support Worker will be given the opportunity before the operative leaves site to log their satisfaction on the operative's PDA. This data is entered live into Golden Lane Housing's Asset database.

6.7 Enhanced service for tenants

GLH's commitment is to offer a flexible and tenant focused repairs service to its vulnerable customers. A more flexible repairs service will be offered to ensure that repair responsibilities which would normally fall to the tenant, are varied for people who are unable to carry out the repair due to the nature of their vulnerability and those who suffer from a disability which prevents them from carrying out the repairs themselves.

GLH can arrange for staff to:

- Relight pilot lights on boilers and gas fires.
- Bleed Radiators.
- Replace plugs to sinks, baths and basins.
- Reset trip switches.
- Replace toilet seats.

- Replace light bulbs in enclosed fittings.
- Replace shower heads and hoses.

GLH will ensure that the needs and wishes of our vulnerable tenants are respected and matters relating to their safety and security taken into account.

- Make appointments (either am or pm).
- Liaise with Scheme Managers or family to arrange home visits with pre- arranged appointment times where necessary. This can be requested by the tenant or a staff member.
- Carry identity badges at all times.
- Be aware that those who have mobility issues may take a little longer to come to the door. We will wait at the door for 3 minutes to allow these tenants time to answer.
- Speak loudly and clearly over the intercom or phone.
- Keep the workspace tidy and clear of obstructions.
- Keep our tenants informed of any physical or noise related disruptions to their environment whilst we are carrying out repairs.
- Ensure that a property is made secure immediately if external doors and windows have been damaged through an incident.

6.8 Damp and mould

6.8.1 GLH recognises that Damp and Mould could pose a risk to the lives and wellbeing of customers, Support Staff, colleagues, people who work on our behalf, and members of the public who live in our homes or visit our properties we own or manage. We monitor incidents of Mould and damp and report through our monthly Health & Safety KPI's. We do not accept that the presence of damp and mould is a product of lifestyle choices and actively seek to remedy through maintenance intervention.

To minimise the risks arising from Damp and Mould in our properties we have adopted the following approach:

- Suitable, timely and sufficient response to initial reports of damp or condensation.
- GLH will identify the cause of damp occurring in its property and order remedial works where required within set timescales, including advice and assistance to the Tenant where there is condensation present.
- There is increased information in an accessible format to assist tenants on causes and prevention of condensation.
- There are sufficient levels of basic damp and condensation awareness and staff competency through effective training programmes.
- There is regular monitoring and review of damp and condensation performance information within GLH Assets to identify trends and support targeted interventions such as information campaigns and technological solutions.
- Components are installed as part of the responsive repairs and maintenance service and planned investment programmes are cost effective and meet sustainability and affordability criteria.

We will ensure that we maintain comprehensive and accurate records in relation to damp and mould in our properties. This will enable us to manage our responsibilities and be able to demonstrate how we have met our legal requirements. For our more detailed approach please refer to our **Damp & Mould Management Plan**.

6.9 Disrepair

All disrepair claims are investigated by Golden Lane Housing. Where a claim of disrepair is made, Golden Lane Housing will assign an Investigating Manager and arrange for a full condition survey of the property by one of our Property Surveyors alongside a review of all repairs records to date.

Where evidence of disrepair is evident, Golden Lane Housing will work with our customers and contractors to ensure all required works are expedited quickly. Any compensation considered or due to the customers would be agreed and paid in line with the organisation's Compensation Policy.

7 ADAPTATIONS

When an application or request for adaptations is received our Property Surveyors will undertake a visit to establish the needs of the customers and agree any necessary work.

6.8 Minor Adaptations

We are committed to facilitating and supporting independent living, by carrying out minor adaptations to a customer's home. These alterations will meet the specific need of the customer and enhance their quality of life and where appropriate enable them to remain in their current home.

7.2 Major Adaptations

We ask tenants to contact an Occupational Therapist through their GP when applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) for any major adaptations needed within their home.

8 REGULATORY STANDARDS

8.1 Regulatory Standards -

The consumer standards relating to this policy are:

- **Home Standard** – quality of accommodation and repairs and maintenance
- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard** – customer service and complaints, tenant rights and involvement.

8.2 Achieving Value for Money - Operating as an efficient and effective business and demonstrating Value for Money for its customers with a high level of service are key strategic objectives for Golden Lane Housing. GLH has a range of mechanisms in place to demonstrate and improve this, including:

- Benchmarking cost and performance data such as average costs per property.
- Market testing of the service against other external housing providers.
- Procurement of repairs contracts using framework contractors.
- Undertaking reviews on processes, services and systems.
- Analysing repairs issued to determine long term remedial or planned works.
- Robust tendering process and members of procurement frameworks.
- consultation process with strategic partners.

8.3 Customer Service - We aim to achieve 100% customer satisfaction with our repairs and maintenance services. The standards we expect of our contractors are set out within our contracts. We welcome, and positively encourage, feedback from our customers. We do this through several methods including customer satisfaction surveys, complaints, comments and an annual survey.

8.4 Tenant responsibility - Tenants are responsible for those repairs around the home identified below, this is not an exhaustive list,

- Replacement Door Keys when lost/stolen
- Blocked Waste pipes
- Replacement Light Bulbs except enclosed fittings
- TV Aerials (unless communal)
- Bath, Sink Plugs & Chains
- Rehanging doors following new carpets

9 EQUALITY IMPACT

9.1 Golden Lane Housing is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all its tenants regardless of their ethnicity, disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or any other grounds set out in our Equality and Diversity Policy. Enshrined within ongoing development and continuous improvements of our services, GLH will consider the diverse needs of its customers, potential service users and will be flexible and innovative in its response to issues of diversity and all forms of learning disability.

10 PERFORMANCE & MONITORING

10.1 Quality

Golden Lane Housing monitors the quality of repairs carried out by either post inspecting a representative sample of works completed or through our tenant Satisfaction Surveys. If a customer informs us, they are not satisfied with any repairs carried out, we will arrange for one of our representatives to call the tenant and investigate the circumstances. We also quality check our planned works. Targets are reviewed on a regular monthly basis, these can be viewed in our annual report which is mailed out to all our customers each year and available through our website at www.glh.org.uk

11 RELEVANT DOCUMENTS LINKED TO THE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

- Asset Management Strategy
- Compliance Strategy
- Empty Homes Policy
- Decant policy
- Sustainability Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Recharge Policy
- Damp & Mould Management Plan.

12 RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Director of Operations. The delivery of Responsive Repairs services is delegated to the Head of Repairs and works completed by GLH's own in-house Repair Team of technicians or by 3rd party contractors who are on the GLH approved contractor list.

13 POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

13.1 This policy is formally reviewed on a biannual basis with light-touch reviews completed as and when business needs determine.

TRANSLATION REQUIREMENTS

14.1 This policy is available in easy read.

14.3 Please contact the Property Services centre if you require any of these services.

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