

Dolphin Square Charitable Foundation & Dolphin Living Limited

Repairs and Maintenance Standards

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1. Introduction

Dolphin Living recognises that meeting the residents' expectations of a high standard of service delivery is essential. Repair and maintenance service standards provide the structure and approach for how services should be delivered. We are committed to providing residents with an excellent maintenance service delivered through our property management services; this being outsourced to Touchstone Corporate Property Services ("Touchstone").

These repairs and maintenance standards provide the guidelines that Touchstone will work to, and be measured against, when completing all repair and maintenance services for our residents.

Our commitment to our residents:

- Provide an efficient repairs and maintenance service for all types of repairs.
- Provide a fair and equal service to all residents.
- Offer the reporting of repairs through several different options including digital, telephone and in writing.
- Provide properties that are safe and secure, warm, and dry.

2. Service Standards

A high standard of service delivery is expected by both Dolphin Living and the residents. The standards that are expected to be completed by Touchstone include:

- Provide a 24hr, 7 day a week service to report repairs.
- To attend and complete repairs to repair classification timescales (see Table 1 below in section 4.1)
- Offer a choice of appointment times for non-emergency repairs.
- Carry out standard health and safety and compliance checks, taking appropriate and timely remedial action when necessary.
- Inspect all repairs that have arisen from a complaint as well as at least 10% of all other repairs.

3. Homes Standard

3.1 Residents handbook

All incoming residents receive a Welcome Pack which consists of a Resident's Handbook / Home User Guide, gas certificate (where applicable), signposting of contents insurance information and advice (My Home Contents Insurance www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/)

When residents move into their new home, they will meet their inventory clerk and will be shown the location of water, gas (where applicable) and electric meters, along with the location of the stopcock.

3.2 Property standards

All properties will have standard health and safety and compliance checks (included in Appendix 1). Where we have full repair and maintenance responsibilities within the home, they will be maintained, at a minimum, in line with the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 which includes the Housing Health and Safety Regulations 2005 and the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 (Awaab's Law). At properties with 3rd party managing agents, Touchstone liaises with the agent to ensure communal and external areas are maintained.

Under these Acts, the matters that are considered are set out in section 10 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and are used to determine whether a house (or dwelling) is unfit for human habitation. Regard is given to the condition of the following matters: whether:

- repair,
- stability,
- freedom from damp,
- internal arrangement,
- natural lighting,
- ventilation,
- water supply,
- drainage and sanitary conveniences,
- facilities for preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water;

The house (dwelling] shall be regarded as unfit for human habitation if, and only if, it is so far defective in one or more of those matters that it is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition.

3.3 Property surveys

Every year, Touchstone carry out an internal home inspection to 100% of homes along with quarterly estate inspections. This is to assess the condition of the home and to carry out standard health and safety and compliance checks. These surveys assist Dolphin Living in understanding the condition of the homes and buildings for any future works that they may require and to identify any unreported repair issues.

If damp and mould is identified within a property, the damp and mould policy will be applied.

4. Repairs Standard

4.1 Repair classification and response times

Resident reported repairs (or responsive repairs) are classified by the Property Manager into four categories: emergency; urgent; routine; and major. This guidance has been adapted from the NIHE Response Maintenance Manual (see Appendix 2 for example repairs that fall within each category).

The response times and targets set by us for the various classifications of repairs are as follows:

Classification	Category	Response times	Completion times	Percentage of repairs to be completed within target	
				Base	Stretch
Emergency	1	Within 4 hours (make safe)	2 working days	85%	100%
Urgent	2	Within 24 hours. If not fixed within period to provide alternative solution within 48 hours. Compensation may be available after 48 hours depending on issue.	5 working days	85%	100%
Routine – controllable*	3	5 working days of receipt of instruction	12 working days	80%	85%
Major* †	4	10 working days of receipt of instruction	30 working days	80%	88%

*These classifications include general maintenance requests as well. An example of repair that is not controllable is where spare parts are not available within 10 days and an example of this is a lift repair that requires additional parts. A controllable repair is one such as a faulty toilet where parts are readily available.

† If the works required are over £10,000, this is classed as a specialist project or refurbishment. Works are to be carried out by Dolphin Living.

The purpose of classifying repairs is to:

- ensure Dolphin homes remain safe and habitable;
- provide a uniform method of prioritisation of repairs;
- provide a resident with a timescale within which work is scheduled for completion; and
- provide the contractor with a scheduled completion time.

While the classifications above provide a target timescale for completion of the work, the definitive date for completion will be specified on the works order.

An acknowledgement of the reported repair such as text, email, letter, or message via SalesForce, or other methods, must be sent to residents for all repairs.

4.2 Responsive day to day repairs

Residents are asked to notify us as soon as reasonably practicable of any repair issue within their home. Our aim is to arrange an appointment during first contact with the resident (except for specialist work that will require contact with a third party) via SalesForce and

complete the repair in no more than two visits. in one visit. Touchstone's property management team oversee and manage all repair requests made to them (see Touchstone's procedure manual for maintenance instructions at Appendix 3 for the procedure for logging a call).

4.2.1 Reporting repairs

Residents may report repairs by any of the following means:

- **By telephone** (during normal working hours)
01225 838 544
- **By telephone** (emergency out of hours)
01772 667 182
- **By email**
info@touchstonecps.com / lt@touchstoneresi.co.uk or to contact the designated Customer services advisor or maintenance controller for the building.
- **Online** (SalesForce - the on-line, self-service customer repair portal – accessed via ResidentLy app)
Salesforce is a self-service repairs portal that residents can access at any time for all their repair concerns. It is user friendly and available in over 40 different languages.

The SalesForce portal provides advice on how to resolve your repair issue where appropriate. It will use the information that you have provided to give you up front advice on how to solve the repair issue yourself as you may be able to do something that will get the repair sorted sooner.

SalesForce allows you to speak directly with the contractor and will provide you updates on your internal repair issue from confirmation that it has been logged when it has been passed to a Contractor (and who that Contractor is) and when it is completed. Larger block repairs will be managed directly by Touchstone's maintenance controllers.

- **In writing at**
Touchstone Property Management
2 Crescent Office Park
Clarks Way
Bath BA2 2AF

4.2.2 Appointment Times

Appointments for non- emergency repairs can be made during normal working hours: 9am to 5:30pm Monday - Thursday and 9am to 5:00pm Fridays. Touchstone provide an out of hours service for any emergency repairs. Non-emergency repairs can be carried out outside of normal working hours if the cost remains the same, if requested by residents.

4.2.3 Repair handling and approval

Touchstone will work with residents to identify the repair required and appoint the relevant contractor to fix the issue. Where a repair cost is over £1,000 Touchstone will send the quote to a Dolphin manager or director for approval. Where a repair is over £5,000, three quotes will be required before works can be approved by Dolphin Living and then commence. This will mean up to three different contractors will require entry to a home to assess the repair and provide a quote for works. Touchstone will work with the resident to reduce disruption to their home. If the contractors identify multiple issues, our preference is that these are addressed under one repair ticket to reduce contractor visits.

4.2.4 Preferred contractor list

Touchstone work with a preferred contractor list across all Dolphin Living homes. Touchstone will endeavour appoint one contractor per property (estate) to carry out similar works. For example, all damp and mould works at a property are carried out by one contractor to ensure reduced repair times and consistency of quality and standard of repair.

4.2.5 Resident communication

Touchstone are responsible for communicating with residents from reporting to completion of a repair. The maintenance controller for the property will ensure a resident receives timely updates on the repair. Where possible visits will be restricted and one contractor appointed to carry out all the works. A repair is only recognised as complete when the resident has confirmed that it is complete.

4.2.6 Post-inspection Repairs

Touchstone will inspect all repairs that arise out of a complaint and 10% of other repairs. This is to ensure that the repairs carried out are completed as instructed and meet an acceptable quality and standard.

Touchstone will carry out these inspections at a date and time agreed in advance with the resident. All residents must provide access on the agreed appointment date and time.

4.3 Rechargeable repairs

Dolphin Living will bear the cost of all repairs and maintenance to the home that have occurred through fair wear and tear. Fair wear and tear is defined as “damage that occurs during normal use or something that happens due to age”. It is expected that all residents use their home in a ‘resident-like manner’ and carry out some maintenance responsibilities, i.e., bleed radiators, clean windows internally, change light bulbs, etc.

Where the damage is found to not be due to fair wear and tear, the resident will be recharged for the works that are required to be undertaken to achieve the appropriate repair

standard for that home. At the end of a tenancy, any outstanding damage costs may be deducted from a resident's security deposit.

The inventory clerk's check-in report and annual property inspection reports will be used as evidence when inspections are carried out which identify a repair that will be recharged to a resident. Rechargeable repairs include but are not limited to:

- Any act of damage / vandalism, unless a crime number has been obtained and can be supplied to Touchstone;
- Any act of negligence by the resident by not reporting a repair;
- Any damage to the home that is beyond normal wear and tear (as per the definition provided above);
- a resident has moved out of a property and Dolphin Living must clear their belongings or carry out repair works that are the resident's responsibility, such as making good to redecoration; and
- there is tampering or interfering with meters or similar equipment.

Dolphin Living will pursue payment including making deductions from a deposit; recovery in cases above the deposit will involve legal action.

4.4 Compensation Policy

We recognise that occasionally errors and service failures may occur, and it may sometimes be appropriate for Dolphin Living to offer compensation. Please refer to Dolphin Living's Compensation Policy for details.

4.5 Three repairs standards

Dolphin Living have adopted a multi-faceted repair standard approach for the portfolio. This approach was determined to reflect the diverse range of home types and long-term strategies that Dolphin Living have for them. An overview of the three repairs standards (see Appendix 4 for more detail):

- **R1 – Vacant property standard**
This standard is for security and / or health and safety work to be carried out to the property to ensure that it can be sold and to include any works to combat damp & moulds have been carried out. To be applied to properties that are identified for disposal.
- **R2 – Minimum standard**
This standard is to ensure that the properties are in good condition, meeting all health and safety and compliance requirements including Decent Homes standard, while carrying out only essential repairs given the short timescales before disposal / demolition and to include any works required to combat damp & mould. This will be applied to occupied homes identified for disposal / redevelopment.

When identifying properties to be brought up to this standard, the following property characteristics may be identified:

- upgrading to R4 standard is not viable in terms of payback on investment within 10 years;
- the property sits alongside other properties identified for this standard within the long term strategy for the portfolio;
- high rates of resident turnover will continue to result in extensive need for refurbishment at frequent intervals; or,
- there is demand for lower cost, lower specification properties at this location.

The standard allows for kitchen and bathroom replacement and further works to bring the condition to above a decent homes standard and ensuring any works to combat damp & mould works have been carried out. This will be applied to the 'older' homes within the portfolio that are being retained and are not identified for refurbishment or redevelopment within the next 5 years.

- **R4 – High standard**

Referred to as the 'Dolphin Living' standard. All new build developments are built and maintained to this standard. Some 'older' stock properties may be brought up to this standard, taking the following into consideration:

- long term financial return;
- rent not increasing beyond affordable levels for the location;
- the properties do not have a high turnover of residents;
- there is no extensive need for refurbishment at each handover; and,
- the limitations to the external fabric allow the home to be brought up to this standard.

5. Related Policies

- Compensation policy – published on the Customer Portal (ResidentLY).
- Complaints policy
- Procurement policy
- Adult safeguarding and vulnerable policy
- Data protection policy
- Diversity and inclusion policy
- Damp and Mould policy

6. Monitoring

Dolphin Living will formally review this policy annually.

APPENDIX 1 – PROPERTY STANDARD CHECKS AND FREQUENCIES

Full electrical safety test	Carried out every 5 years. All necessary remedial works undertaken following test.
Gas Safety Check (where applicable)	Carried out annually. Resident to receive a copy of the certification as part of the welcome pack.
Energy Performance Certificate	Valid for 10 years. Resident to receive a copy of the certification as part of the welcome pack.
RD-SAP (EPC) Energy Rating	Property overall RD-SAP rating to exceed 69 (band C and above).
Smoke detector \ CO² detector	Visually checked during annual inspections or gas safety checks. Resident to test (by pushing the button) annually. Detector to be serviced and left in good working order. Hard Wired Smoke detector to be installed with removable battery type. Hard Wired CO ² detector to be installed when gas is in the property.
Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	No category 1 hazards, as derived from the stock condition survey or short form assessment. Property will be free from damp and will be weather tight. Hot water and heating available. Gas and electric meter to be in working order.
Annual property survey	Survey to 10% of properties within each block. To assess the condition of the property and to carry out standard health and safety and compliance checks.
Estate surveys	Survey of all blocks on a quarterly basis. To assess the condition of the block and communal and estate areas. To also carry out standard health and safety checks.
Portable Appliance Test (PAT)	All appliances (where applicable) will be PAT tested at check in of new residents in a property.
Fire Risk Assessments (FRA)	FRA's carried out annually on all communal areas to ensure health and safety compliance concerns are dealt with.
General Risk Assessments (GRA)	GRA's carried out every 2 years.
Flat fire front door	Doors and seals to be checked on an annual basis to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain compliant.

Communal cross-corridor fire doors	Doors and seals are to be checked on a quarterly basis to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain compliant.
Fire-fighting lifts	Fire-fighting lifts are to be checked on a quarterly basis to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain compliant.
Major Works	We aim to maintain decency and optimum serviceable life from our assets. Lifecycle replacement is dependent on the component with internal communal decorations being carried out on a 7-year cycle. If required, internal stock condition surveys will be carried out on void properties to update our asset information for future planned works.
Damp & Mould Works	Visually check property during annual inspections and when property is void. Refer to Damp & Mould policy for process on response and follow up actions. Damp & Mould tracker to be updated and monitored.

APPENDIX 2 – EXAMPLE DEFINITION OF REPAIRS FOR REPAIR CLASSIFICATIONS IN TABLE 1

Classification	Type of repair
Emergency	<p>Any repair that could cause serious injury or is a major health hazard to the resident or another person, could cause extensive property damage or is a major inconvenience to the resident. This may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas leaks. • Total failure of lighting. • Blockages to WCs causing sewage to back up and enter dwelling. • Failure of heating system where no back up is available. • Property security, i.e., door entry system not working, main entrance door not closing. • Water penetration from another property or the roof; or • A fire risk.
Urgent	<p>Repairs which result in the loss of a basic facility or where further damage will occur if the problem is not dealt with.</p> <p>Examples of urgent repairs include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the house) • Blocked sink, bath, or basin (only if the resident is unable to clear this themselves) • Taps which cannot be turned on. • Running overflows • Stopcock problems • Door entry phone not working • Damp and Mould detection
Routine	<p>Repairs that can wait without causing major inconvenience to the resident. This may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor leaks (which can be contained); • Repairs to windows and doors (including cupboard doors) which do not close properly but are not a security risk. • Dripping taps • Repairs to kitchen units, worktops, and drawers. • Defective guttering • External repairs to fencing, gates, paths, manhole covers brickwork or roofing (where there are no structural or health and safety issues) • Non-urgent electrical work (loss of a single light or socket) • Electrical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working • Damp and Mould detection
Major	<p>Reactive repairs of high quantity or over the value of £10,000.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is a lot of work but value is under £10,000, this is classed as a refresh. Works are to be carried out and managed by Touchstone. • If the works required are over £10,000, this is classed as a special project or refurbishment. Works are to be carried out by Dolphin Living with the support of Touchstone is contractor sourcing and resident engagement.

APPENDIX 3 – TOUCHSTONE’S PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

This document takes you through the responsibilities of the resident and landlord; and how repair and maintenance calls taken by Touchstone are managed.

This document can be found in the policies folder within the Corporate Services documents alongside this standard. This document was reviewed and updated in May 2021.

APPENDIX 4 – THREE REPAIRS STANDARDS

R1 – Vacant property standard

- Certified gas and electricity supplies and valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in place
- Free from external defects such as loose or defective masonry, roof tiles, rainwater goods and the like which might injure adjacent residents or third parties.
- Free from blocked gutters and downpipes which might cause flooding and internal damage to the property and / or neighbouring properties.
- Free from leaking roof membranes using short term repairs as required.
- Free from Damp and Mould within the property.
- Secure from a perspective of avoiding unauthorised access and / or squatting (for R1 standard only)
- Internal power, water, and electrical supplies isolated at source
- Free from major internal hazards such as unsupported structural defects, missing floorboards.
- Free from infestation of pests such as vermin and insects
- Where any hazards are so significant as to be impossible to mitigate without minor repairs a strict access control policy to be implemented with suitable prominent warnings posted at the point of entry (for R1 standard only)

R2 – Minimum standard

Attention to all matters contained under repair standard R1 as set out above, plus:

- Complete short to medium term repairs where required.
- Certified and functioning water, gas, electrics, heating and plumbing free from leaks.
- Secure external envelope to a standard proportionate with the age, nature and location of the property, e.g., free from any major weaknesses to security caused by decay to windows and doors or corrosion to locks and other security critical ironmongery.
- Functioning kitchen and bathroom facilities in a state of repair capable of providing clean and sanitary conditions for residents in day-to-day use.
- PAT testing of electrical appliances (if applicable)
- External shrubs and trees cut back to a manageable state.
- All urgent health and safety / fire safety matters attended to or evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

R4 – High standard (Corporate standard – full refurbishment)

New build schemes are maintained, repaired, and refurbished on a like for like basis.

Older stock is upgraded and refurbished observing the following aspects wherever practically achievable:

- Full rewire to current standards.
- Complete replumb from incoming cold mains supply throughout including new Worcester Bosch or Vaillant condensing boilers.
- Consideration given to using overlay systems for hot water fed underfloor heating systems.
- Complete renewal of all kitchen facilities. Consider any layout changes to create open plan kitchen / living spaces where works would not be prohibitively costly or disruptive.
- Adopt specification of units, appliances, and finishes, etc. as specified in new build properties elsewhere in the portfolio.
- Complete redesign of bathroom / WC facilities. Where currently separate rooms consider amalgamating in line with contemporary design standards
- Adopt specification of fixtures, fittings and finishes for bathrooms as specified in new build properties.

- Utilise wood effect flooring throughout hallways and habitable rooms; bathrooms and kitchens to be fitted with waterproof tiling or high specification sheet vinyl systems.
- Where properties are split level consideration should be given to the potential for installing WC facilities on the floor which does not contain the main bathroom of the property
- Lighting should be contemporary LED fittings.
- Attention to fire stopping and sound proofing between dwelling to dwelling as well as between dwellings and the common parts should be given priority within the design.
- Where practical, improvements in thermal insulation should be sought. This could include items such as internal wall insulation to the faces of external walls (i.e., Matilda's Blanket), retro-fitted External Wall Insulation (EWI) or replacement windows.
- Free from Damp and Mould within the property.
- Opportunities for use of flat roof spaces to accommodate sustainability initiatives such as Photo-Voltaic panels or similar should be considered.
- Roof systems when renewed should incorporate increased insulation wherever practical to comply with contemporary standards; green roof solutions should also be considered. As a minimum, all roof membranes should be to a high specification and of a system which provides a minimum 25-year insurance backed warranty for materials and workmanship.
- Exteriors of buildings should be cleaned where excessively soiled and all loose or defective pointing replaced, brickwork repaired, and concrete fully tested and renovated with a finish of fairing coats before final decorations.
- Internal common parts should be assessed from a perspective of achieving any improvements to satisfy Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements wherever possible. It should be noted that due to the original design of many properties there will be inherent constraints in fully meeting DDA criteria but in most cases some improvement can be achieved regardless.
- Consideration should be given to improved security and door access control systems utilising specifications for new build properties.
- Communal area finishes, lighting and flooring should be improved, wherever possible, using specifications for new build properties
- Opportunities for new, secure bicycle storage facilities should be explored where Dolphin Living have ownership of the surrounding area.
- External landscaping should be reviewed, and any defective roadways and paths brought up to a good standard of repair. Where car parking is present, bays should be formally marked out and numbered where appropriate. Consideration should be taken into providing additional spaces where we have ownership of the surrounding area as well as the viability of a parking permit scheme.
- External security should be given priority including the provision of CCTV systems and adequate external lighting.
- Areas of security weaknesses such as blind alleyways or concealed entrances to rear exists or basement areas, etc. should be upgraded with robust anti-intruder measures and, where applicable, installing external gates or fencing.
- External fences, boundary walls and gates, etc. should be in good repair or renewed in a style sympathetic to its surroundings. Regard to be had to the potential for these to be owned by neighbouring properties or be under a shared ownership where Party Wall procedures would apply.
- Wherever possible and reasonably practical the removal of ACM from individual dwellings and communal areas.