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**Title:** Mid Market Rent Voids, Repairs and Maintenance - Sanctuary Scotland Procedure

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**Authorised by:** Sanctuary Homes (Scotland) Limited Board  
Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association

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### **Additional guidance**

AG01 - Guidance for completing end of tenancy inventories and voids inspections

## General Information

### 1. Objectives of this procedure

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for all staff involved in the voids, repairs and maintenance service to ensure they deliver a prompt, efficient and customer focussed responsive service that reflects good value for money.
- 1.2 Sanctuary Scotland will provide service users with adequate, clear and easily understood information. In particular, this will include:
  - the repairing obligations of both parties;
  - the anticipated response times for all repairs;
  - information on performance against targets;
  - provision of comprehensive repairs information in the Mid Market Rent Tenants Handbook for all tenants; and
  - information about improvements and alterations that may be made to the property.
- 1.3 This procedure links to the [Repairs and Maintenance - Group Policy](#) and is relevant for Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association (Sanctuary Scotland) which is the 'agent' delivering mid market rent services on behalf of Sanctuary Homes (Scotland) Limited.

### 2. Legislative/Regulatory context

- [Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2015](#)
- [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#)
- [Data Protection Act 1998](#)
- [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2006 - The Repairing Standard and accessing properties](#)
- [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)
- [Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996](#)
- [Housing and Regeneration Act 2008](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation 2016](#)
- [Gas Safety \(Installation and Use\) Regulations 1998](#)
- [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 1988 - Short Assured Tenancies](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#) (and all relevant regulations)
- [Occupiers Liability Act 1957](#)
- [Permission for Improvements - Group Procedure](#)
- [Private Housing \(Tenancies\) Scotland Act 2016](#)
- [Scottish Housing Quality Standards \(SHQS\)](#).

### 3. Responsibilities for implementation

- 3.1 The Director - Sanctuary Scotland and the Head of Maintenance Operations - Scotland is responsible for ensuring adoption of, and adherence to, this procedure.

### 4. What's new - What's different?

- 4.1 February 2020 - sections 2.2-2.7 have been amended to clarify roles and responsibilities around budgets, reactive repairs, and planned/cyclical works. Additional guidance has been created, **AG01** - Guidance for completing end of tenancy inventories and voids inspections, to assist teams in assessing the condition of the property and its components at the void inspection or end of tenancy inventory.
- 4.2 August 2018 - this procedure is new. It was created to set out Sanctuary Scotland's approach for maintaining, servicing and repairing mid market rent properties in Scotland.

## Detailed Procedures

### 1. Repair categories

- 1.1 Diagnosed responsive repairs will be allocated a distinct priority category. This is to ensure that the Sanctuary Scotland's response is proportionate to the urgency of the repair and is efficient through the optimum use of resources. These categories also assist Sanctuary Scotland to monitor performance and provide information to deliver consistently high levels of performance.
- 1.2 In circumstances where a service user has deliberately or falsely reported an out-of-hour's emergency repair, Sanctuary Scotland will expect the service user to pay any costs related to the call out.
- 1.3 Emergency repairs
  - 1.3.1 These apply to any repairs necessary to remove a serious threat to the health and safety of the service user, members of their household, visitors, or the structure and fabric of their home. The response to all emergency repair requests is to attend and make safe the property within six hours of receipt of the repair request.
  - 1.3.2 At the discretion of the Director - Sanctuary Scotland or Head of Maintenance Operations - Scotland, access to the property may be needed in order to make safe a repair that poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of service users or others residing in neighbouring properties, or will cause substantial damage to the property. In such cases, staff will make every effort to contact the service user prior to entering the property.
  - 1.3.3 Examples of emergency repairs include:
    - main drainage or sewer blocked;
    - damage to any ground floor windows, making them insecure;
    - insecure external door;
    - water leak coming through the ceiling;
    - no water supply; and/or
    - heating repairs (during the winter season) where there is no other heating.
  - 1.3.4 A second appointment may be required to complete all remedial works following initial attendance.
- 1.4 Appointed repairs - urgent and routine
  - 1.4.1 These apply to all non-emergency repairs for which access to the property is required. Staff will agree an appointment with the service user during the first point of contact, wherever possible.

#### 1.4.2 Examples of appointed repairs include:

- partial loss of electrical power;
- partial loss of water supply;
- taps that cannot be turned on or off;
- leaking gutters;
- roof leaks to garages or outbuildings; and/or
- repairs to boundary walls.

1.4.3 Appointment repairs will aim to be completed repairs within 20 days and at the appointment time originally agreed with the resident. If an appointment time is changed, the service user will be contacted to agree an alternative appointment. If the resident needs to move an appointment, they will be offered a suitable alternative, provided they give at least half a day notice. If a resident requests an appointment to be booked after the 20-day timescale, because this better suits their needs, this can be agreed.

#### 1.4.4 Appointed repairs are categorised as 'urgent' or 'routine':

- Urgent repairs comprise works required to prevent further damage to the property or where required works are causing serious inconvenience, for example, partial loss of electrical power or taps that cannot be turned on or off. Urgent repairs will aim to be completed within three working days.
- Routine repairs include works that are not causing damage to the property and do not pose a threat to the health and safety of the service user however, they cannot wait to be included in the Sanctuary Group's Capital Reinvestment Programme. Routine repairs will aim to be completed within 20 working days.

#### 1.5 Flexibility for vulnerable service users

1.5.1 The repairs service will be flexible towards the needs of vulnerable service users. Vulnerable service users are defined in the Sanctuary Scotland Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

1.5.2 Where additional flexibility to repair priorities and services is required, the service users' needs will be taken into account and the severity of the situation; an appropriate action will be identified on a case by case basis.

## 2. Voids works

2.1 Mid Market Rent Properties have a unique specification which includes the provision of blinds, carpets, white goods (fridge, freezer) and in some instances a washer-dryer, where there is no external drying area. A deposit is also taken at the start of the tenancy which can be retained for covering the costs of voids works and bringing the property up to The Repairing Standard as set out in the Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act:

- the property must be wind and water tight and in all other respects reasonably fit for people to live in;

- the structure and exterior (including drains, gutters and external pipes) must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order;
  - installations for supplying water, gas and electricity and for sanitation, space heating and heating water must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order;
  - any fixtures, fittings and appliances that the landlord provides under the tenancy must be in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order;
  - any furnishings that the landlord provides under the tenancy must be capable of being used safely for the purpose for which they are designed;
  - the property must have a satisfactory way of detecting fires and for giving warning in the event of a fire or suspected fire; and
  - the property must have satisfactory provision for giving warning if carbon monoxide is present in a concentration that is hazardous to health.
- 2.2 On receiving a termination notice, the Mid Market Rent Housing Officer will arrange a visit to the property accompanied by the Maintenance Surveyor – this must take place on the day that the tenant vacates the property or as soon as possible thereafter. This will provide an opportunity to complete a final inventory check and to inspect the property’s condition. This should be done before maintenance start to complete any voids works.
- 2.3 To assist with the inspection, a separate lettings standard is available for MMR properties, which is available on [KnowledgePoint](#).
- 2.4 All information on the specification (make/models etc.) of different components is in [health and safety files in the shared drive](#). Replacing items such as carpets, white goods and kitchen appliances should come out of the devolved budget to Sanctuary Maintenance as per the standard void process. Guidance is available on in **AG01** - Guidance for completing end of tenancy inventories and voids inspections, to assist Housing and Maintenance in their assessment of when components should be repaired or replaced during the voids inspection and end of tenancy inventory.
- 2.5 Reactive or one-off repairs or replacements will be the responsibility of Sanctuary Maintenance. Any cyclical or planned replacement of components within MMR properties will be the responsibility of Assets (commercial assets team/reinvestment). Any queries relating to replacements of components (where for example you want to check when a fridge freezer is due to be replaced based on its lifecycle) should be directed to the Reinvestment Scotland mailbox [Reinvestment.Scotland@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:Reinvestment.Scotland@sanctuary-housing.co.uk).
- 2.6 If there is any work activity identified to rectify any negligence or damage, these must be detailed on the voids schedule with each item costed and the General Ledger code noted. This information is needed in order to charge the tenant for work activities and comply with the process for requesting the retention of tenancy deposits.

2.7 Voids works will also need to include an electricity inspection which will include PAT tests and testing and/or maintenance of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and alarms.

### **3. Access to properties - health and safety risks**

3.1 A property may need to be accessed in order to make safe a repair that poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of service users or others residing in neighbouring properties, or is likely to cause substantial damage to the property.

3.2 In such cases, staff must take all reasonable actions to contact the service user, and the decision to access the property must be made by a senior member of staff (Director - Sanctuary Scotland or Head of Maintenance Operations - Scotland). If the customer is not contactable after multiple attempts and forced access is considered necessary, the Mid Market Rent Housing Officer or Police must accompany the Trade Operative or Engineer when attempting to gain access. Any damage caused by entering the property must be made good and all actions taken must be clearly documented.

### **4. Unforeseen changes in service delivery**

4.1 Despite best efforts to complete all repairs on time, this is not always possible. Some repairs require specialist parts to be ordered, or for specialist contractors to be called in. If these situations occur staff must keep service users informed of the progress of their repair and provide an update when the work will be completed.

4.2 Where unforeseen events occur, repairs may need to be prioritised; appointed repairs may be rescheduled. Should this happen staff must give service users as much warning as possible.

## 5. Detailed processes

Step	Action	Timescale
<b>1. Repair requests and response times</b>	<p>If the service user telephones the Customer Service Centre (CSC) they will be offered an appointment at first contact. By all other methods (including via the website, email or in person), an appointment will be offered once the Works Order has been raised - if access to the property is required. If the system is unavailable at the time of the user telephone call, the appointment will be communicated to the user within 24 hours of contact.</p> <p>The CSC must ensure it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the tenure of the service user; and</li> <li>• check whose responsibility the repair is using the available information on OneSanctuary and <b>Appendix 1</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a> as guidance.</li> </ul>	<p>Immediately</p> <p>Within 24 hours of contact</p> <p>During call</p>
<b>1a. Identification of repair need:</b>	<p>The following must all be adhered to by CSC prior to ordering a repair/inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairs must be diagnosed as accurately as possible at the time of reporting the repair. The tenancy information must be consulted to ensure repairs are not being completed on gifted items.</li> <li>• Installations still under warranty or guarantee - OneSanctuary must be checked at the time of raising the works order to ensure this is adhered too.</li> <li>• Where there are serious or persistent repair issues, the record of 'repair history' must be consulted so as to assist with diagnosis and also to avoid wasted effort through unnecessarily repeated inspections by the Surveyor.</li> </ul> <p>The CSC must contact the relevant Surveyor to discuss any issues/concerns relating to the above.</p>	<p>All within 24 hours of telephone contact and before a works order is raised</p>
<b>2. CSC assess repair information to determine who is responsible</b>	<p><b>A)</b> The Group is responsible for all repairs that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• required due to normal wear and tear;</li> <li>• repairs to the structure and/or exterior of the premises; and</li> <li>• repairs to any installations in the property provided by the Group.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> For a more detailed list, see <b>Appendix 1</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a> - Repair responsibility table.</p>	<p>During the call or as soon as phone call has ceased</p>

Step	Action	Timescale
	<p><b>B)</b> Service users may request repairs resulting from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vandalism;</li> <li>• pests and infestation;</li> <li>• unforeseen or accidental damage (for example, storm, flood); and/or</li> <li>• accidents by a third party.</li> </ul> <p>In these circumstances, the CSC must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advise the service user that the repair requested is not the Group's responsibility and may result in a recharge; or</li> <li>• if unclear on who is responsible for the repair, arrange for the Surveyor to carry out a home visit to determine responsibility.</li> </ul> <p>If, after inspection, the repair is deemed to be the responsibility of the Group and covered by insurance, then Group Insurance must be notified by the person carrying out the inspection immediately to ensure the Group is able to refer to its insurers within the correct timeframes. For further information please visit the SOLIS Group Insurance page - <a href="#">Group Insurance SOLIS</a> page.</p> <p><b>C)</b> If the repair is considered a 'defect' (OneSanctuary will show the defect liability period) the process outlined in <b>Appendix 2</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>, Defects must be followed by the CSC.</p>	<p>Within 24 hours of the inspection taking place</p>
<p><b>3. Repair request logged</b></p>	<p>The CSC must decide whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise a notification if it is clear that Sanctuary Scotland is responsible for the repair; or</li> <li>• contact a regional Surveyor to carry out an inspection if the repair responsibility is still unclear; or</li> <li>• contact the Mid Market Rent Housing Officer for the development</li> </ul> <p>Once a notification is raised CSC staff will raise and authorise Works Orders as appropriate.</p>	<p>During the call</p> <p>Within 24 hours of notification being raised</p>

Step	Action	Timescale
<b>4. Works Order</b>	<p>The CSC raise the Works Order immediately if no pre-inspection is required, and if the Works Order is within the agreed authorisation limit.</p> <p>If a pre-inspection is required this must be scheduled at the point of contact with the service user.</p>	Immediately on receipt of repair request.
<b>5. Confirmation of appointment time</b>	<p>The CSC must confirm appointment times for all repairs where access to the property is required.</p> <p>If the service user has reported the repair via telephone, the agreed appointment time will be confirmed with the service user whilst they are on the telephone.</p> <p>If the service user has reported the repair via email or the Sanctuary Scotland website, the appointment time will be confirmed via return email, telephone or letter, as appropriate.</p>	<p>When appointment is arranged with service user.</p> <p>Once the works order has been raised.</p>
<b>6. Identification of repair priority</b>	<p>Repairs are identified as either an 'emergency' or 'appointed' repair. See <b>Appendix 10</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>, Repairs categories for further information.</p> <p>All emergency repairs must be attended to and made safe within six hours of receipt of the repair request.</p> <p>All appointed repairs aim to be remedied within 20 working days.</p> <p>All appointments agreed with the service user must be attended, unless an alternative appointment has been agreed in advance with the service user. However, if an unforeseen situation delays/prohibits attendance, the CSC must contact the service user as soon as is practicable to advise of the delay and agree a suitable way forward.</p> <p>Where a service user fails to keep an appointment, a second appointment will be offered when the service user re-contacts the CSC.</p>	

Step	Action	Timescale
<b>7. Pre - inspection of property</b>	<p>If the repair cannot be fully diagnosed at the first point of contact the CSC must log all known information of the repair so an initial assessment can be made by the Designated Officer - Maintenance. Any additional information or actions must be noted on the system by the Surveyor.</p> <p>A suitable appointment must be allocated by the CSC between the service user and the Designated Officer - Maintenance with the service user kept informed at all stages of the process, (please refer to the pre-inspection procedure detailed in <b>Appendix 4</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>).</p> <p>Where a service user is unable to accept an appointment within the timescale, the appointment can be extended further. Likewise, if the Designated Officer requires further time due to availability, the target date can be extended for a suitable appointment to be arranged.</p> <p>If criminal or other damage is suspected the Surveyor must assess the damage that has been caused. (Please see <b>Appendix 5</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a> Criminal or unforeseen/accidental damage guidance).</p>	Arranged and completed within 10 working days of works being requested.
<b>8. Assessment of damage</b>	<p>Where the damage has been caused through vandalism, the Mid Market Rent Housing Officer must be informed by the Surveyor who completed the pre-inspection and action must be taken in accordance with the <a href="#">Antisocial Behaviour, Harassment - Scotland Policy and Procedure</a> and <a href="#">Domestic Abuse - Scotland Policy and Procedure</a> by the Mid Market Rent Housing Officer.</p> <p>Where damage has been caused by an infestation of pests, the responsibility lies with the service user, unless it is in a communal area or due to a repair requirement that is the responsibility of Sanctuary Scotland.</p> <p>Where the damage has been caused by unforeseen or accidental damage, such as roof damage caused by severe weather, the Sanctuary Scotland must claim back the cost of the work through Group Insurance (<a href="#">Insurance - Group Policy and Procedure</a>).</p>	Assessment must be completed within 10 working days

Step	Action	Timescale
	<p>Where repairs have been caused by failure to previously report a repair, the subsequent repairs will be logged but damage due to neglect will be the responsibility of the service user. Refer to <b>Appendix 8</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>, Rechargeable repairs for further information.</p> <p>Where damage has been caused to items belonging to the service user, the service user may claim on their home insurance. If damage is a result of Group action or inaction this will be investigated as a complaint.</p> <p>Where damage has been caused by a third party (for example, a car driving into a wall), this must be reported and repaired in accordance with the Group's building insurance. For further information visit the <a href="#">Group Insurance SOLIS</a> page.</p> <p>The service user must be kept informed at every stage of the process by the Surveyor.</p>	
<p><b>9. Standing Orders (external contractors only)</b></p>	<p>For extra works less than £75, the contractor should proceed with the works and advise of the additional works (specifying the relevant repair code).</p> <p>The CSC will authorise extra works under £500 (including VAT). All extra works above the value of £500 - £750 (including VAT) must be approved by Regional Contract Surveyors. Extra works over the value of £750 should be entered onto the major works spread sheet and approval of these values should follow the financial regulations policy. Any works over £1500 should enter into the quoted works process to ensure value for money.</p> <p>For extra works under £75, the contractor does not require authorisation. If over £75, the contractor should submit an extra works request using the template (<b>Appendix 6</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>) to the Regional Extra Works mailbox (e.g. CSC East requests).</p>	<p>Refer to the Group's Contract Management Framework for timeframes.</p>

Step	Action	Timescale
<b>10. Works completed</b>	<p>Completion dates are reported by contractors to the CSC via weekly reports. These are input onto the system within 24 hours by the CSC.</p> <p>In the case of completions by a Sanctuary Maintenance operative these must be updated immediately via their smart phone. Where operatives do not have a smart phone, the completions are communicated by phone and entered directly in to OneSanctuary by the CSC.</p>	
<b>11. Post inspections</b>	<p>Post inspections are generated as per the Group's Post-Inspection Process Guidance, <b>Appendix 7</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>.</p> <p>Contact must be made with the service user to agree an appointment and explain the need for a post inspection by the Maintenance Surveyor who must log all information, correspondence and actions on OneSanctuary.</p>	See <b>Appendix 7</b> for timeframes and responsibilities.
<b>12. Follow up to completion of work</b>	<p>In addition, where any discrepancies over costing or quality of work become apparent the Surveyor must carry out a post inspection, as per <b>Appendix 7</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure</a>, the Post Inspection Process Guidance.</p> <p>Where a service user is unable to accept an appointment within the timescale, the appointment can be extended further. Likewise, if the Designated Officer requires further time due to availability, the target date can be extended for a suitable appointment to be arranged.</p> <p>Where the job was an 'emergency' priority, the operative will complete via their smart phone. Where any further repairs are required, a new notification and Works Order must be raised.</p>	<p>Arranged and completed within 10 working days</p> <p>Once the initial emergency repair has been completed.</p>
<b>13. Satisfaction surveys</b>	Following the completion of responsive repairs, a sample of service users will be contacted to participate in a satisfaction survey. Findings are reported and used to drive service improvements.	Within one day
<b>14. Invoice process</b>	All invoices dealt with by the CSC must be assigned the correct codes for example, recharge or homeownership with the correct payment terms adhered to as per the Group's Contract Management Framework.	Upon receipt

## Supporting Information

### 1. Additional support and guidance

- [Permission for Improvements - Group Procedure](#)
- [Safeguarding Children - Sanctuary Scotland Procedure](#)
- [Safeguarding Adults - Sanctuary Scotland Procedure](#)
- Mid Market Rent - Terminations Policy and Procedure

#### 1.1 Appendices attached to the [Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure](#):

- Appendix 1 - Repair responsibility table
- Appendix 2 - Defects and the repairs process
- Appendix 4 - Pre-inspection process guidance
- Appendix 5 - Criminal or unforeseen/accidental damaged damage guidance
- Appendix 6 - Extra Work Request Form
- Appendix 7 - Post inspection process guidance
- Appendix 8 - Rechargeable repairs
- Appendix 10 - Repair categories

#### 1.2 Additional guidance attached to the [Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure](#):

- AG01 - Code of Conduct for Operatives and Contractors
- AG02 - Cancelling a Works Order - Guidance
- AG03 - Follow On and No Access - Guidance for Operatives