



Your Homes
Newcastle

YHN Repairs and Maintenance Strategy 2011-2013

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1. Introduction

The efficient repair and maintenance of properties is a key requirement for any successful housing organisation.

The development of a repairs and maintenance strategy is designed to deliver an excellent repairs and maintenance service for tenants and leaseholders, that sees performance in the 'top quartile' as a benchmark 'norm', and enables them to live in well maintained, warm and safe homes that contribute to sustainable communities.

This strategy concentrates on the delivery and the development of the repairs service and should be read in conjunction with YHN's Asset Management Strategy that describes how we will deliver the decent homes standard.

The Repairs and Maintenance Strategy should also be considered alongside the void management and environmental sustainability strategies.

We recognise the importance of a highly performing value for money appointable repairs service. During the Tenant Services Authorities' (TSA) National Conversation repairs and maintenance was seen as the number one priority for tenants and the second highest priority for the TSA.

This document builds upon our 2008 repairs and maintenance strategy and complements the work which has already been undertaken. We will continue to improve our levels of service delivery and reduce our reliance on responsive maintenance; carry out more planned (programmed) maintenance, and adopt national best practice.

Our action plan details the work which we plan to undertake over the next two years, and demonstrates our commitment to ongoing service delivery and improvement.

1.1 Scope of strategy

This document sets out YHN's strategic vision for the delivery of repairs and maintenance, and gas servicing from 2011 – 2013.

This strategy outlines how our repairs and maintenance service will be delivered to all our tenants and leaseholders and how we will work with our contract partners. It also outlines how YHN staff will be involved in this delivery.

1.2 Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of our strategy document is to set out our approach to repairs and maintenance and detail how this meets our organisational strategic

objectives. It outlines how we will deliver the repairs and maintenance aspects of the 2009-2014 YHN Business Strategy.

The strategy sets out our priorities for the physical care of the housing stock and surrounding environment. It also explains how, through our approach to repairs and maintenance, we will meet the needs of local people.

1.3 Links with our organisational mission and strategic objectives

Our Repairs and Maintenance Strategy will meet our organisational strategic objectives through delivering a high quality service which offers excellent value for money. Our mission is to be the best housing provider in the North East. We will achieve this by investing in:

- Support and care to communities
- Three star excellent services
- A quality workforce
- Refurbishing and building homes

1.4 Our core values

In November 2009, following consultation with staff, Board and customers, our new core values were agreed. They are:

- **Accountability** – acting openly and taking responsibility
- **Integrity** – acting fairly and honestly
- **Passion** – working positively with enthusiasm
- **Respect** – treating everyone with care and professionalism
- **Forward thinking** – proactively seeking improvements and solutions

Our core values are at the heart of the business, and are the principles and standards that influence the way we work and behave. They make a difference by giving us a sense of pride and belonging at work, and show we care and are committed to people and the work we do. Our core values are what will help us to achieve our organisational objectives.

2. Our Repairs and Maintenance Strategy vision

Our Repairs and Maintenance Strategic vision is to ensure our tenants and leaseholders receive a repairs and maintenance service that delivers the high quality service that they have a right to expect, and which offers excellent value for money:

‘To do the right repair, first time at the right quality and cost’

3. Background

Your Homes Newcastle manages 29,393 properties on behalf of Newcastle City Council, 17 properties on behalf of Leazes Homes, and 1,465 leaseholder properties (information correct as of 31 March 2010). A breakdown of the property types and sizes is attached in appendix two.

3.1 The Repairs and Maintenance contract

In 2006, following an extensive procurement exercise City Build, Newcastle City Council’s direct labour organisation, was appointed to deliver the repairs and maintenance service for all properties we manage. The Repairs and Maintenance contract with City Build was for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend it to a maximum of ten years. As a result of the good performance of City build, high levels of customer satisfaction, and value for money provided the repairs contract was extended for a period of two years until 2013. This document will provide the strategic direction required to take us through to 2013.

The Repairs and Maintenance contract specifies how the repairs service is to be provided to customers, and the levels of performance and standards required. Work covered by the contract includes all repairs that are the landlords’ responsibility. The tenancy agreement issued to all city council and YHN tenants clearly identifies the repairing obligations of the landlord and identifies tenant’s own repairing obligations. On behalf of the council, we are responsible for maintaining:

- The structure and outside of all homes
- The shared (communal) areas in block dwellings
- Fixtures and fittings that we have provided (or we have inspected and approved).

There are certain repairs which are excluded from the repairs and maintenance contract, known as ‘tenants own responsibility repairs’. A list of these repairs is included in appendix four.

We also carry out rechargeable repairs on behalf of tenants, including the installation of electric fires and security alarms, and modern homes work. Further details are attached in appendix five.

The repairs and maintenance contract is managed by our Property Maintenance Team. Further information about our Property Maintenance team is attached in appendix three.

3.2 A customer priority

Our repairs and maintenance service is one that is in high demand and significantly contributes towards ensuring our customers homes are fully functional and comfortable. When we consult with our customers about what is important to them and how their rent should be spent, repairs and maintenance consistently features as a priority service. Additionally, during the Tenant Services Authorities' (TSA) National Conversation the repairs and maintenance service provided by landlords was ranked as the top priority for tenants and leaseholders, and was seen as the third highest priority for the TSA. Therefore we recognise that the repairs and maintenance service is one of the top priorities for tenants and leaseholders and understand the importance in developing an effective strategy to guide the delivery of this service over the next three years.

3.3 Delivering what our customers need and want

As an organisation we strive to understand the diverse needs of the tenants and leaseholders who access our services. We are fully committed to using customer insight in an effective and meaningful way to enable us to improve and deliver a service which meets the needs of our customers.

A significant part of customer insight is about understanding who our customers are. This allows us to understand their individual needs and target our resources towards meeting them. In the past we have used our demographic profile to improve the way we inform tenants about the repair service and the way we carry out the work.

We recognise the value of listening to our customers and involving them in decision making and service improvement. The strategic direction outlined within this document reflects discussions the service has had with tenants and leaseholders since the development of the previous strategy.

Our tenants and leaseholders have told us that they:

- Would like us to make appointments for batched maintenance repairs which we carry out

- Would like us to investigate whether we can carry out all repairs (including tenants own responsibility repairs) on behalf of vulnerable tenants
- Would like us to ensure that the service is accessible to all by reviewing our working hours and repairs documentation. This also links into our skills to work strategy which strives to increase the number of our customers who are in full time employment.
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All of these suggestions are included in the strategy action plan for further investigation. The action plan is included as appendix one.

3.4 Building upon what we have already achieved

This document builds upon our 2008 repairs and maintenance strategy, which initiated the following service improvements:

- Introduction of a Handyperson scheme
- Review of repair categories and timescales
- Review of our repairs and maintenance contract
- Review of the repairs and maintenance customer satisfaction.

We recognise that to continue to provide an excellent repairs service we need to review, benchmark and continually improve the service which we deliver to our customers.

4. Context

4.1 National drivers/legislation

There are a number of key national and local drivers that have informed the development of this strategy, a summary of which is provided in the tables below.

National drivers
<p>Tenant Services Authority</p> <p>In April 2010, Tenant Services Authority (TSA) became the new regulator for all types of social housing. They regulate social landlords using a set of national standards and local offers across a range of service areas. The aim of the new regulatory system is to be more outcome focussed and to allow organisations to tailor services to respond to their tenants' priorities.</p> <p>In October 2010 we produced our first annual report to the TSA. This is the first time we were required to report against the national standards. The national standard for 'Home' includes repairs and maintenance.</p>

Tenants were involved in helping to produce the report which is something we plan to continue.

We have been working with tenants to develop local service offers for a number of key services including Repairs and Maintenance. We introduced these offers in April 2011. The offers will be reviewed every year and tenants will be involved in monitoring our commitments against the offers.

Review of the Major Repairs Allowance

Communities and Local Government, in conjunction with HM Treasury, is conducting a Review of Council Housing Finance to develop a system of subsidy which is sustainable in the long term and that is affordable and fair to all. The review is in a period of consultation with potential application in 2010/11.

The review consultation has resulted in proposals to move away from the current centralised and redistributive nature of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy system. This old system will be replaced by a structure within which local authorities manage their HRAs on a self-financing basis.

This will affect the financial resources available to local authorities for the financing of their repair and maintenance activities. It will also allow authorities to gain control over longer term financial strategies which will in turn provide the basis for greater economy and efficiency in planning repair and maintenance works.”

The aim is to update the major repairs allowance (MRA) to ensure sufficient funding to maintain homes to the Decent Homes standard beyond 2010.

Decent Homes Standard

The Decent Homes Standard sets the standard for council and other tenanted properties. Work completed through Your Homes Newcastle’s modern homes programme impacts on repairs and maintenance expenditure, and on planned maintenance programmes.

Right to Repair

In 1994 the government introduced [The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities \(Right to Repair\) Regulations](#). The regulations allow tenants and leaseholders to arrange for repairs to be carried out to their properties where we have failed to meet our repairs obligations. The legislation has not been widely used by tenants. Repairs covered by this scheme (known as Qualifying Repairs) are detailed in appendix six.

Health and Safety Legislation

There are a number of strands of health and safety legislation and other government codes of practice that impact on repairs and maintenance provision and associated costs. These include:

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994
- Building Regulations Approved Documents A-P
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and Health and Safety guidance (HSG264) issued 2010
- The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8
- Safe use of lifting equipment. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- BS7671 Regulations for Electrical Installations
- BS5266 Emergency Lighting
- BS5839 Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems for Buildings

All of these impact on the way work is carried out and/or how planned maintenance work is arranged.

4.2 Local drivers/legislation

This strategy is closely linked to our 2009-14 business strategy as well as the following wider strategies:-

Local drivers
<p style="text-align: center;">Regional Housing Strategy</p> <p>Prepared for the North East Assembly, the Regional Housing Strategy is a key document that impacts upon this strategy. It provides a framework for policy in the North East and manages the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP). The strategy aims to rejuvenate housing stock and markets, provide a better choice of housing, improve existing homes and meet the specific housing needs of the communities in the region.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Newcastle Partnerships Sustainable Communities Strategy</p> <p>The Newcastle Partnerships Sustainable Communities Strategy is an over-arching partnership agreement which identifies strategic priorities for Newcastle. These priorities include making and maintaining homes that people want.</p>

Our repairs and maintenance strategy contributes to providing well maintained homes that people want to live in.

Newcastle City Council's Housing Strategy

In November 2006 the Newcastle City Council approved a new fifteen year [housing strategy](#). This strategy recognises the key role we have in providing high quality services to customers, and contributing to creating a good quality of life. Themes within the strategy include:

Sustainable economic growth

- Offering the homes that people want
- Delivering more affordable homes
- Addressing student housing need

Quality of life

- Delivering high quality homes
- Delivering sustainable neighbourhoods

YHN Delivery Plan 2010-2011

Our 2011-12 [annual delivery plan](#) explains how we provide our services. It is also an opportunity for us to say what we have achieved over the previous year and what we intend to achieve during the current year. The service plan consists of a set of action plans for each of our services. It sets out how all teams contribute to meeting the strategic objectives identified in the delivery plan. Each action plan provides information about what the teams do (including the Assets and Programming section), and what targets and actions have been identified for 2011-12.

Customer Service Strategy: Every Customer Matters

Our [customer service strategy](#) sets out our vision for customer service and identifies our strategic priorities, which are:

- A customer focused workforce
- Providing accessible services
- Using customer insight
- Investing in effective technology

All of the above priorities are particularly important for the way in which we provide our repairs service as we know that repairs are the number one priority for our tenants. The repairs and maintenance strategy reflects the need to develop excellent repair services.

Tenants Federation

[Newcastle Tenants Federation](#) acts as an umbrella organisation for about 85 tenant groups. We have worked with the Tenants Federation to improve our services for many years. The Tenants Federation recognise that repairs are the number one priority for the majority of tenants.

Through the Repairs Development Group of the Tenants Federation, we have regular meetings with tenant representatives to discuss all aspects of the repairs service and any changes that are proposed.

YHN Asset Management Strategy

Our [asset management strategy](#) is designed to set out our approach to asset management and detail how this meets our organisational strategic objectives.

This strategy has been drawn up to complement and inform our future business strategy. It sets out our priorities for the physical care and improvement of the housing stock and surrounding environment. It also explains how through our approach to asset management we will meet the needs of the local people.

YHN Corporate Equality Plan

YHN see treating everyone equally and fairly as valuing people's differences. This is the base assertion for our [Corporate Single Equality Scheme](#). It is also about ensuring that all people achieve equal outcomes, either in the standard of service they receive or as employees. It is not about treating 'everyone the same' but recognising that everyone's needs must be met in different ways. It is something at the heart of YHN and is built into all our governance, performance and service delivery frameworks. It is an essential part of developing new services around the needs of all customers and working in partnership to deliver these services to the diverse communities where we work.

YHN Procurement Strategy

Procurement is the process by which we obtain goods, services and works. Procurement is more than just purchasing. The procurement process covers a full lifecycle of activities starting with the identification of needs through to evaluation, purchasing and contract management. Our [procurement strategy](#) sets the vision and strategic aims which direct and govern all of our procurement activities. We developed our procurement strategy to ensure that an effective and consistent approach

to procurement is taken across the organisation whilst ensuring efficiency and value for money.

YHN Value For Money Strategy

Our Value For Money Strategy sets out the role efficiency and value for money will play in providing excellent services, and how we will deliver value for money. Value for money is a requirement for any successful organisation. It means better services for customers, more choice and ensures needs and priorities are met. Since our establishment in 2004 we have been focused on ensuring that we provide value for money services.

Repair Surveys

Customer satisfaction is an integral part of the repairs and maintenance contract, and is monitored through performance indicators and reported on a monthly basis.

To ensure that our customers are able to tell us whether they're satisfied with the service we provide we monitor satisfaction through a number of methods:

- Annual STATUS standardised tenant satisfaction survey
- Telephone surveys of 10% of customer who've had a repair completed
- Text surveys of all customers who have given us their mobile telephone numbers
- Telephone surveys of customers who telephone our Repair Centre.

We also scrutinise formal and informal complaints which we receive from customers and report complaint trends on a quarterly basis to YHN's Performance Committee.

5. Our Repairs and Maintenance priorities

Our vision for our Repairs and Maintenance Strategy is to ensure our tenants and leaseholders receive a repairs and maintenance service that delivers the high quality service that they have a right to expect, and which offers excellent value for money:

'To do the right repair, first time at the right quality and cost'

In order to achieve this we have identified three overarching priorities:

Priority 1 – Review and improve our key repair and maintenance processes to enable us to deliver excellent services.

Priority 2 – Plan for the long term maintenance and investment needs of the housing stock.

Priority 3 – Develop an effective consultation framework and act upon what our customers have already told us.

To ensure that these priorities are delivered an action plan has been developed which is included as appendix one. The plan has been developed from benchmark data, TSA guidance and feedback from tenants and leaseholders. It outlines the actions to be undertaken over the next three years and the officers responsible for the delivery of these actions.

5.1 Priority 1 – Review and improve our key repair and maintenance processes to enable us to deliver excellent services

Our responsive maintenance service is the repair of components upon failure. Such works are, by their very nature, unforeseeable and must be dealt with relatively quickly. These works include the following:

- Day-to-day responsive repairs – e.g. the replacement of a kitchen unit.
- Normal repairs prior to re-letting void properties – e.g. replacing an internal door.

5.1.1 Day to day responsive repairs

We aim to provide an excellent day to day responsive repair service that delivers ‘top quartile’ performance standards, is responsive to customers’ needs and enables them to live safely in their homes. To ensure that properties are functioning these repairs are categorised according to urgency.

We aim to ensure value for money when providing the repairs and maintenance service by regularly reviewing the repair categories and priorities. We also ensure that only repairs that meet the criteria for inclusion in a reactive service are carried out in this way. To meet this objective, repairs reported by tenants that are not identified and prioritised as emergency or urgent, but are of a routine nature, are included in longer term programmes of work. In this circumstance we will always ensure that customers are informed of the dates the work is to be completed.

5.1.2 Normal repairs prior to re-letting void properties

The reinstatement of void properties is a key priority for us (a copy of our Void Lettable Standard is included in appendix seven). The YHN Void Lettable Standard aims to deliver an efficient service which offers value for money, and minimise the amount of time a property remains empty, thus maximising rental income.

To contribute towards reducing void re-let times we aim to complete normal repairs to void properties in an efficient and timely manner. In order to do this we use the pre-termination period to survey the condition of the property and produce an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). If a property requires minor repairs we will aim to carry out these repairs during the pre-termination period, or as Repairs After Allocation (RAA's).

5.1.3 Handyperson Scheme

As an organisation we are fully committed to providing support and care to vulnerable people and ensuring that their homes are maintained to the highest possible standard. A number of our tenants who are vulnerable cannot carry out the minor repairs within their homes which we would usually expect tenants to complete. In response to this, and in partnership with Anchor Staying Put, we developed a [handyperson scheme](#) which is offered to all tenants over the age of 60 years or in receipt of Council Tax Benefit or Pension Credit Guarantee.

The handyperson service carries out minor repairs which aren't provided through the repairs and maintenance service. These tasks include:

- Installing curtain rails
- Minor internal repairs
- Replacing light bulbs

5.1.4 Services for leaseholders

We aim to meet our legal obligations to all leaseholders by providing an efficient and effective repair and maintenance service for those repairs that are our responsibility. This involves:

- Complying with Section 20 procedures under the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 and notifying all leaseholders of any and all proposed future works identified as necessary for their properties.
- Consulting with leaseholders over the projected cost of work where applicable and also consulting leaseholders over the procurement of contractors and qualifying long term agreements where applicable.

- Providing leaseholders with the opportunity to comment at each stage of the procurement process.

Leaseholders may be required to pay estimated sums in advance within their annual service charge for cyclical and/or programmed works. The leaseholders account will then be adjusted accordingly at the end of the financial year. Leaseholders will also be required to pay a service charge for works undertaken to their individual property, block and/or common areas for items such as general cleaning.

5.1.5 Service standards

In conjunction with tenants and leaseholders we have developed and published service standards so that all responsive repairs service users are clear about the level of service they can expect to receive from us. The service standards cover:

- How, when and where residents can report repairs
- Details of access arrangements including appointments
- Categories and prioritisation of repairs with timescales for completion of works.

To ensure that the service standards remain up to date and consistent with service delivery we:

- Review all service standards every two years, and involve service users in this process.
- Publish service standards through the use of leaflets in Community Housing Offices and in other appropriate YHN offices. We also publish them on the YHN website, www.yhn.org.uk.
- Monitor all Service Standards and publish the results of the monitoring in 'Homes and People' newsletters produced quarterly for all tenants and leaseholders, and in reports to our performance committee.
- Meet all our legal obligations as a Landlord and those required under Right to Repair legislation.

Our current service standards are attached in appendix eight.

Our strategy action plan details six service developments and improvements linked to this priority. The actions are based on feedback from our customers, national best practice and benchmarking.

Priority one strategy actions include:

- Provide customers with an arrival time by telephone
- Review of the void lettable standard
- Review of the gas servicing warrant process

We will consult our customers and work with the Newcastle Tenants Federation as we develop and implement the proposals in the action plan.

Once consultation has been undertaken the action plan will be jointly delivered by YHN and City Build staff.

5.2 Priority 2 – Plan for the long term maintenance and investment needs of the housing stock

5.2.1 Cyclical works

We recognise the positive impact good quality housing stock has on our customers and their communities and therefore we are fully committed to ensuring that our properties are maintained to the highest possible standard. We understand that this involves more than just responsive repair work; it is also about planning and carrying out long term maintenance works as routine, to sustain high standards and prevent deterioration.

These works include the servicing, inspection and testing of equipment, which is required by regulation, and is carried out as part of a regular maintenance cycle. These are called cyclical works and examples include:

Type of cyclical work	Maintenance details
Domestic gas servicing	<p>We recognise our duty to ensure that all gas appliances, flues and gas pipe work installed in the City Council's Housing properties managed by YHN are annually serviced and a gas safety check is carried out - in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and YHN's duty as a Landlord under Section 7(a) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.</p> <p>Our current Gas Servicing Policy is currently under review, and is due to be republished in March 2011.</p>
Domestic smoke alarm testing	<p>We aim to protect our tenants by providing smoke detectors in their homes to give audible warning of a fire situation.</p> <p>To ensure the continuous safe operation of these alarms we have developed an annual programme to allow us to test and inspect the detectors.</p>

<p>Servicing of passenger lifts, electrical installations and appliances, door entry systems, fire fighting equipment etc.</p>	<p>We have contractual arrangements in place for the annual safety checks, and regular servicing and maintenance of all YHN owned electrical appliances, mechanical and electrical equipment and associated materials and equipment in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.</p> <p>We also have contracts in place for the specialist regular testing, servicing and repair as necessary of all fire fighting equipment, intruder and fire alarms, etc. where installed in YHN properties, including communal schemes and office premises.</p> <p>We regularly review our electrical and mechanical installations and equipment to ensure that it is meeting the required legal standards and meeting customers' requirements.</p>
<p>Water testing and treatment</p>	<p>We have a duty regarding the operation of the Health & Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice for the Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems (L8).</p> <p>We developed and implemented a Policy for the prevention of health risks from Legionella bacteria for the managerial control of Legionella precautions and for enlisting competent technical advice, thereby complying with our legal responsibilities to control Legionella bacteria within water systems in buildings under our management.</p> <p>We also have appropriate contracts are in place for the specialist regular tests and treatment of water storage cisterns and systems, in accordance with 'best practice' and specialist advice, to prevent Legionella bacteria developing.</p> <p>Records of the testing and treatment of water systems are maintained at a central point and copies are left with the Managers of the respective buildings where water storage systems are installed.</p>
<p>Asbestos management</p>	<p>We recognise our responsibilities under The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2006 and Health and Safety guidance 264</p>

	<p>issued 2010 (HSG264), and have published and implemented our Asbestos Policy and Management Plan.</p> <p>The policy and procedures will reduce, so far as is reasonably practicable, any exposure of staff members and any other persons who will potentially be exposed to Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) within the properties we manage.</p> <p>The Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to meet the current legislation and 'best practice'.</p>
<p>External and internal decorations</p>	<p>We have a programme for the regular inspection of the external redecoration of every property, any repairs necessary prior to painting are identified and properties are redecorated. Details of the external redecoration programme are published for tenants on our website.</p> <p>All tenants and leaseholders affected by the annual programme will be informed about the proposed works and given a choice of colours; they will also be invited to comment on the YHN and contractor's performance following completion of the works.</p> <p>Internal decoration to domestic properties is the responsibility of tenants and leaseholders but we inspect all internal communal and common areas on a regular basis and include any works, dependant on need, in the cyclical programme.</p>

Carrying out an effective programme of planned maintenance works enables us to be proactive and contributes towards reducing the level of responsive maintenance required. It is considered good practice to achieve a ratio of 60:40 planned to responsive maintenance, we are currently achieving 50/50. We recognise the need to improve our performance in this area in order to provide a service which offers excellent quality and value for money.

As part of the action taken to increase our planned maintenance works and reduce our responsive works, we work in partnership with City Build to frequently review the responsive repairs service. This review involves assessing whether specific areas of expenditure can be predicted and minimised through a proactive (planned) approach.

5.2.2 Planned (batched) maintenance

To provide value for money, and better utilise resources we batch certain types of repairs together, and complete work on an area by area basis. Currently the following types of repairs are batched:

- Fencing and gates
- Gutters and rainwater goods
- Brickwork and concreting, including paths

We recognise the positive impact such works have on the environment of our estates, ultimately impacting upon the communities within which our customers live. In response to this we have prioritised such works and allocated a significant budget to completing them.

We are committed to continually developing and improving our planned maintenance programme. To enable us to understand how we can do this we will carry out a review of the planned maintenance service and develop challenging targets around the areas of service which our customers have told us are important.

Our strategy action plan details five service developments and improvements linked to this priority. The actions are based on feedback from our customers, national best practice and benchmarking.

Priority two strategy actions include:-

- Review of the out of hours service
- Monitoring the R&M customer experience
- Reviewing tenants' own responsibility repairs

We will consult our customers and work with the Newcastle Tenants Federation as we develop and implement the proposals in the action plan.

Once consultation has been undertaken the action plan will be jointly delivered by YHN and City Build staff.

5.3 Priority 3 – Develop an effective consultation framework and act upon what our customers have already told us

5.3.1 Repair and maintenance consultation

Customer consultation and involvement are an integral part of the management and delivery of the repairs and maintenance service. This takes place at both operational and strategic level. We will continue to pro-actively seek representational involvement of tenants and leaseholders through a variety of methods to provide the following:

- Views of the repairs, maintenance and improvement services from a resident's perspective
- Shaping policy review work on maintenance and investment
- Contributing to procurement processes
- Recommending and agreeing standards of service for repairs and maintenance
- Monitoring performance and continuous improvement activity.

Over the years tenants and leaseholders have emphasised that the repairs and maintenance service is of high importance to them and consistently features in their highest priorities. We will continue to consult with our customers through the following initiatives:

- Establishment of the Tenants Repairs Development Group
- A Tenants Investment Forum
- Status Surveys
- Exit and new tenant surveys
- Involvement in Best Value Service Reviews of repairs and maintenance, Planned Investment programmes and other services
- Mystery shopping by tenants

During 2009/10 we consulted tenants and leaseholders on specific areas of service delivery and improvement through service user focus groups and the Newcastle Tenant's Federation Repairs Development Group.

Consultation topics included:

- Customer satisfaction for BME customers
- Review of the repairs and maintenance contract
- Review of the customer satisfaction process
- Review of repair categories

The Newcastle Tenants Federation Repairs Development Group (RDG) has been closely involved in service development and in monitoring performance of the repairs and maintenance contract since 2004. The RDG carries out quarterly monitoring of contract performance indicators and provides robust challenge to proposed contract developments and improvements.

5.3.2 Leaseholders

To ensure that we are providing the services our customers need at the standard that they want we have established formal consultation methods with leaseholder groups and individuals and regularly survey leaseholders to assess their satisfaction with the services provided. These satisfaction results are then fed back to leaseholders via an

annual report which details how the service has been developed accordingly.

5.3.3 Business and Financial Planning

Our business and financial planning process involves extensive consultation about what should be included in our delivery plan for the following year. We get views from a wide range of people including customers, staff and managers about issues that need to be addressed through service plan actions or targets for the following year. For example, in September 2009 we held a consultation event with group of around 30 tenants to discuss a wide range of issues. Through discussion about the repairs and maintenance service at this event, some repair issues were identified for further action, and this led to four actions for the Property Maintenance Team being included in the service plan for 2011/12, as follows:

- Benchmark repair cancellation figures through Housemark and achieve top quartile performance by 31 March 2012
- Extend text messaging for all repairs where tenant telephone numbers have been provided, by 31 March 2012
- Review the tenants responsibility repairs list and clarify list and clarify issues around the re-instatement of original features by 30 September 2011
- Review repair access arrangements for tenants to reduce missed calls by 31 December 2011

5.3.4 Using demographic information

We believe it is important for us to have an in depth understanding of our customers in order to provide excellent services. Through consulting with customers, we have developed detailed knowledge about the demographic make up of our customers. Increasingly, we are using this information, through business and financial planning and in other ways, to help plan the services we provide.

In terms of providing an excellent repairs service, there are a number of ways in which demographic information has been used to improve the way we inform tenants about the repair service, and the way we carry out work. Below are some examples:

- Repair service standard booklets include strap lines to assist customers who do not speak English as their first language. The booklets are available in a number of community languages, and strap line information is reviewed regularly based on demographic information and usage. Around 3% of tenants have English as a second language. Whilst non-English speaking tenants tend to be dispersed across the City, there are locations where non-English communities are concentrated (e.g. Bangladeshi in Fenham, the

Portuguese in Byker and Walker, the Polish in Benwell and Scotswood).

- Demographic information about the age composition of our customers and the high proportion of tenants who are aged over 60 (approximately one third) has led to repair initiatives specifically for older people. For example, a Tenant Services Authority pilot scheme operating from April 2010 has included provisions for a higher specification for void property repairs in council sheltered accommodation across Newcastle.
- Insight that we have about religion, culture and disabilities of customers has led to special arrangements being made for individual tenants, or groups of tenants. For example, tradesmen working for our repairs contractor have all been issued with diversity guides. These help to ensure that the services they provide are respectful and sensitive to the cultural or religious needs of certain customers (e.g. workmen taking shoes off when in Muslim households).

Such information is imperative as it helps us identify who is over 60 years old, who may need a translator when we contact them, or whether tenants or a member of their household has a disability or impairment, so that any special needs in relation to carrying out repairs can be accommodated. Around 16% of tenants have a disability. The most common types of disability include having difficulty walking, being deaf, or having a sight impairment.

As we develop the insight we have about our customers, we will continue to use this information to improve the ways in which we carry out repairs, and make information about our repair service available to the increasingly diverse range of customers that we provide services for.

5.3.5 Tenant Services Authority (TSA)

To ensure that the service we provide meets the expectations and aspirations of our tenants and leaseholders we have developed Local Standards in conjunction with guidance from the Tenant Services Authority (TSA).

The 'local offers' are incorporated into the strategy action plan for 2011/12.

We will consult our customers and work with the Newcastle Tenants Federation as we develop and implement the proposals in the action plan. Once consultation has been undertaken the action plan will be jointly delivered by YHN and City Build staff.

6. Equality and diversity

Our Equality Policy and Corporate Equality Plan (CEP) outline our vision, aims and targets in regards to Equality and Diversity. They also outline our responsibilities:

- As an employer
- In providing services to our customers
- In working with other organisations
- To involve communities
- As a procurer of services and contracts.

Our commitment to equality goes beyond our legal duties and our policy outlines the need to address equality of opportunity through avoiding direct and indirect discrimination, making sure that all areas of YHN are involved in meeting this objective.

Equality and diversity issues have been considered as part of the development of our Repairs and Maintenance Strategy through carrying out an equality impact needs assessment (EINA). This has helped to identify implications of introducing the strategy with regard to race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation and age to identify where there may be unmet needs or potentially discriminatory outcomes. Diversity issues will also be considered as part of the process in progressing many of the actions in our action plan.

7. Impact of the Strategy

7.1 The organisation

This strategy will have a positive impact upon the Repairs and Maintenance Service and therefore upon the organisation as a whole. The strategy will:

- Improve tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with property standards and the repairs service.
- Contribute towards having a well maintained property portfolio, ensuring that capital and revenue funding is effectively priorities and utilised.
- Deliver projects effectively and efficiently.
- Maximise returns on any investment into properties.
- Deliver continuous improvement through performance management.
- Allow an effective utilisation of resources.

7.2 Tenants and Leaseholders

This strategy will have a positive impact upon maintaining and developing high quality and sustainable environments. It will also have a direct impact upon the services our customers receive and the homes they live in through the following:

- Homes will meet and be maintained to the Modern Homes standard as a minimum.
- Homes will be made warmer and more energy efficient, reducing fuel costs for the customer.
- Homes will meet their individual needs.
- Customers will tell us what is important to them and we will listen and act upon this.
- They will receive a service which is timely, consistent and delivers value for money.

8. Implementation and monitoring of the strategy

We have established clear governance arrangements to monitor progress made against the action plan. Progress will be:

- Reported to Programme Board on a monthly basis which is chaired by the Chief Executive and subject to external scrutiny.
- Reported to Customer Service and Delivery Committee on an annual basis.

To ensure that the repairs and maintenance service delivers continuous improvement and sustained customer satisfaction, key performance indicators (KPI's) have been established in conjunction with tenants and leaseholders, through benchmarking and nationally prescribed Best Value Performance Indicators. The KPI's aim to ensure that our performance benchmarks nationally in the top quartile. Our current contract KPI's are detailed in appendix nine.

Contract performance is reported to our Performance Committee on a quarterly basis.

9. Responsibility for the Repairs and Maintenance Strategy.

The Head of Property Maintenance has overall responsibility for ensuring that this strategy is delivered to the timescales outlined within the action plan.

To assist with ensuring that the strategy is delivered within timescales a strategy development project group has been established to implement the action plan and monitor progress. The strategy action group comprises of the following staff:

- Head of Property Maintenance (YHN), joint chair
- Head of Building Services (City Build), joint chair
- Contract Performance & Development Manager (YHN)
- Area Technical Support Manager (YHN)
- Contract Performance Manager – YHN
- Business & Performance Development Specialist (City Build)
- Principal Contract Managers (City build), as and when required

10. Review

The strategy will be formally reviewed in January 2012, though interim amendments will be made as necessary.

Appendix One – Repairs and maintenance action plan

Priority One – To provide a prompt, efficient and responsive service

Ref	Action to be Delivered	How we will do this	Responsibility	By when
1.1	Agree SOR's for Building Services and District Heating (no dayworks)	<p>Review current service delivery and resources</p> <p>Assess impact of merging two teams</p> <p>Document areas of work undertaken</p> <p>Draft SOR document</p> <p>Undertake trade union consultation</p> <p>Introduce SOR's for one specific trade area</p> <p>Trial SOR's for appropriate period of time</p> <p>Document timetable for full implementation</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	30-Jun-11
1.2	Investigate options for operatives to contact customers and provide an arrival time for appointed works	<p>Review current arrangements for contacting customers to confirm appointment times</p> <p>Benchmark best practice with similar organisations</p> <p>Research technological solutions i.e. generation of a text or telephone call on completion of works</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	30-Sep-11

		<p>Assess the feasibility of utilising operatives to contact customers by telephone</p> <p>Assess categories of repairs where arrival needs need to be provided</p> <p>Trial proposed solution</p> <p>Assess customer feedback</p> <p>On receipt of positive customer feedback – agree timetable for confirmation of arrival time for all agreed categories of repairs</p> <p>On receipt of negative customer feedback report review results into R&M Partnering Group</p>		
1.3	Assess the possibility of introducing two hour appointments for all emergency and urgent repair categories	<p>Review the current appointment arrangements</p> <p>Measure satisfaction with the current appointment structure</p> <p>Benchmark best practice with similar organisations</p> <p>Assess operational impact</p> <p>Assess suitability of current IT systems to support two hour appointments</p> <p>Carry out customer consultation</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	31-Dec-12

		<p>Review feedback from customers</p> <p>Introduce two hour appointment trial in one area</p> <p>Re-assess operational impact and customer satisfaction</p> <p>On receipt of positive customer feedback – agree timetable for the implementation of two hour repairs for all emergency and urgent repairs</p> <p>On receipt of negative customer feedback report review results into R&M Partnering Group</p>		
1.4	Review of void lettable standard	<p>Circulate current standard to relevant officers for review</p> <p>Agree changes to standard</p> <p>Rewrite void lettable standard</p> <p>Circulate document for comment</p> <p>Consult tenants and leaseholders on proposed KPI</p> <p>Publish revised lettable standard</p>	<p>Contract Performance & Development Manager (YHN)</p> <p>Principal Housing Manager (YHN)</p>	31-Dec-11

1.5	Review the gas warrant process and assess the feasibility of recovering costs associated with court action	<p>Review current warrant process</p> <p>Collate detailed demographic data and identify properties which have has more than one warrant served during a five year period</p> <p>Identify the cost of obtaining and serving a warrant</p> <p>Obtain legal advice on the proposal to recover court costs</p> <p>On receipt of approval from legal team to recover costs associated with serving a warrant report recommendations to YHN's Management Team</p> <p>On receipt of negative customer feedback report review results into R&M Partnering Group</p> <p>Subject to Management Team approval introduce a procedure to recover costs associated with serving a warrant to gain access to carry out a gas safety inspection</p>	<p>M&E Senior Technical Surveyor (YHN)</p> <p>Contract Performance Manager (YHN)</p>	31-Mar-12
1.6	Extend text messaging for all repairs where tenant telephone numbers have been provided	<p>Benchmark best practice with similar organisations</p> <p>Assess suitability of landlines to receive automated text messages</p> <p>Document issues associated with texting</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Business & Performance Development Specialist (City)</p>	31-Mar-12

		<p>landlines</p> <p>Assess suitability of current IT systems to support text messaging to all telephone numbers</p> <p>Trial texting to landlines for a small number (<100) customers</p> <p>Assess customer feedback and satisfaction</p> <p>On receipt of positive customer feedback – implement text messaging for all tenants who want to utilise the service</p> <p>On receipt of negative customer feedback report review results into R&M Partnering Group</p>	Build)	
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Priority 2 – Plan for the long term maintenance and investment needs of the housing stock

Ref	Action to be Delivered	How we will do this	Responsibility	By when
2.1	Review of out of hours service (handhelds, innovative ways of working)	<p>Review current working practices & process map</p> <p>Review service costs & levels of provision through benchmarking</p> <p>Assess options for service provision</p> <p>Carry out impact analysis on proposals</p> <p>Implement revised working practices, subject to tenant & leaseholder involvement (if required)</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	30-Jun-11
2.2	Joint review of sub-contractors (VFM, performance, customer satisfaction, post inspection)	<p>Identify current sub-contractors and contract terms</p> <p>Assess performance and Vfm of sub-contractors</p> <p>Prioritise sub-contractors to review</p> <p>Undertake review of sub-contractors</p> <p>Identify any areas where services need to be re-procured</p> <p>Document re-procurement timetable</p>	<p>Contract Performance & Development Manager (YHN)</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	30-Jun-11

2.3	Review arrangements for monitoring customer experience of repair work	<p>Identify five instances where customers have not received the level of service expected</p> <p>Journey map five customer journeys</p> <p>Report journey map outcomes into R&M Partnering Group</p> <p>Assess the benefits of journey mapping a percentage of customer complaints</p> <p>Agree percentage of complaints to be journey mapped and timetable for reporting them into R&M Partnering Group</p>	<p>Contract Performance Manager (YHN)</p> <p>Business & Performance Development Specialist (City Build)</p>	30-Jun-11
2.4	Review repairs categorised as tenant's responsibility, including the re-instatement of original features	<p>Review repairs categorised as tenants own responsibility</p> <p>Report findings into Customer & Service Delivery committee</p> <p>Assess the costs associated with the re-instatement of original features</p> <p>Document the original features being re-instated on a frequent basis</p> <p>Obtain legal advice on the proposal to recover costs associated with re-instatement (if applicable)</p> <p>Introduce process to recover costs (if applicable)</p>	Head of Property Maintenance	30-Sep-11

2.5	We will publicise our levels of performance, satisfaction, and customer feedback on a quarterly basis through our website and in Homes & People	<p>Publicise repairs and maintenance key performance indicators on website quarterly</p> <p>Publicise the availability of performance information through the website home page</p> <p>Publicise repairs and maintenance key performance indicators in Homes & people magazine throughout the year</p> <p>Review presentation format subject to receipt of negative customer feedback</p>	Contract Performance Manager (YHN)	31-Mar-12
2.6	Benchmark repair cancellation figures through Housemark and achieve top quartile performance	<p>Collate current and historical cancellation level and categories</p> <p>Analyse and trend use of cancellation codes</p> <p>Review number of cancellation codes and challenge use by City Build</p> <p>Benchmark cancellations against other similar organisations</p> <p>Identify best practice from other organisations</p> <p>Report review findings to R&M Partnering Group and agree cancellation code performance indicator and performance improvement plan</p>	Head of Property Maintenance Head of Building Services (City Build)	31-Mar-12

Priority 3 – To engage tenants, leaseholders and users in decisions about the maintenance service

Ref	Action to be Delivered	How we will do this	Responsibility	By when
3.1	Review contractual working hours	<p>Benchmark hours worked by other organisations</p> <p>Review work life balance working rotas for operatives</p> <p>Identify operatives who are available to work revised hours</p> <p>Consult with tenants and leaseholders</p> <p>Advertise revise working hours (website, Repair Centre recorded message, Homes & People, vehicles?)</p> <p>Trial working hours for three month period Review demand and success of pilot</p> <p>Fully implement if trial is successful</p>	<p>Head of Property Maintenance</p> <p>Head of Building Services (City Build)</p>	31-May-11
3.2	We will review eligibility for the handy person scheme, and increase awareness of the scheme through our website and Homes & People	<p>Assess current eligibility criteria for Handyperson service</p> <p>Benchmark eligibility criteria against other organisations and Supporting People funding criteria</p> <p>Identify eligible groups currently excluded from the service</p>	Head of Property Maintenance	30-Jun-11

		<p>Perform cost benefit analysis on current service demand against potential service demand</p> <p>Consider increasing eligibility to the Handyperson service based on cost benefit analysis</p> <p>Report outcome into R&M Partnering Group.</p>		
3.3	<p>We will investigate how we can use the information that we have on customers to provide a better service (for example ensuring that we give customers enough time to answer the door)</p>	<p>Review information held on YHN and City Build computer systems</p> <p>Identify any information sharing gaps</p> <p>Consult legal advisors on information sharing and compliance with the Data Protection Act</p> <p>Assess capability of current computer systems to hold and share demographic information</p> <p>Perform gap analysis on current computer systems and detail development requirements</p> <p>Identify any system alterations/upgrades which can be implemented within project timescales</p> <p>Identify longer term system developments and document timeline for implementation</p>	<p>Contract Performance Manager (YHN)</p> <p>Business & Performance Development Specialist (City Build)</p>	30-Sep-11

		Report project outcome into R&M Partnering Group		
3.4	Review repair access arrangements for all tenants to reduce missed calls	<p>On completion of strategy action 3.3 measure the effectiveness of alterations to computer systems through no access statistics</p> <p>Review level of demographic information available to operational staff</p> <p>Carry out 'back to the floor' exercise with R&M operatives</p> <p>Consult with YHN surveyors, City Build staff and managers</p> <p>Review current working practices and procedures in place for no access visits</p> <p>Benchmark best practice access procedures</p> <p>Implement revised access procedures and practices in one trial area</p> <p>Review success of pilot scheme</p> <p>Report outcomes to R&M Partnering Group and detail implementation timetable for IT changes and revised working practices</p>	<p>Contract Performance Manager (YHN)</p> <p>Business & Performance Development Specialist (City Build)</p>	31-Dec-11

3.5	Update repairs handbook	Review current documentation Identify documentation to be updated Draft revised documents Consult tenants and leaseholders Produce management team report detailing costs and distribution options Approve printing of documentation Distribute revised documentation	Head of Property Maintenance Business & Performance Development Specialist (City Build)	31-Dec-11
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Appendix 2 – YHN property types & sizes

Rented Accommodation

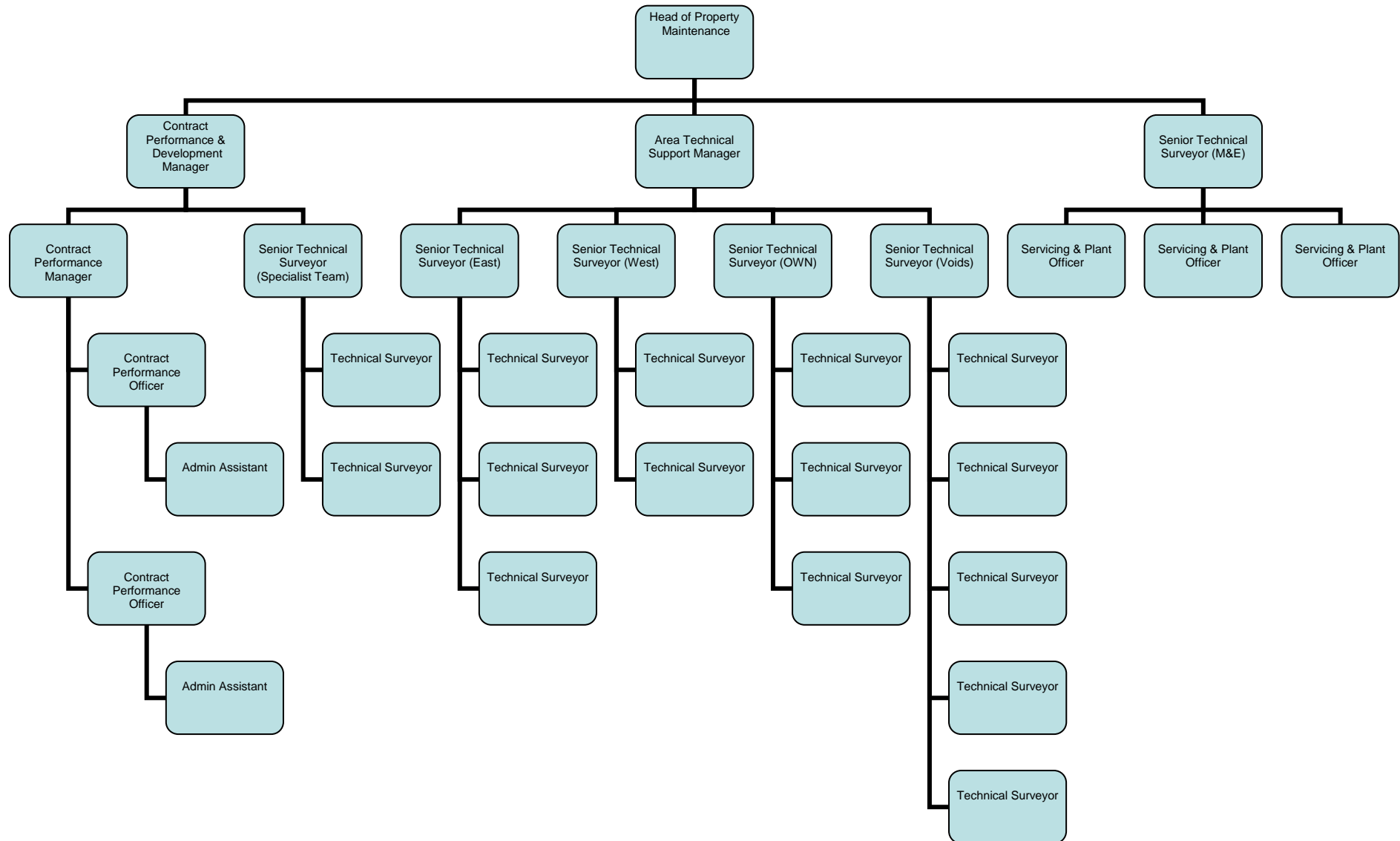
Property type	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed & above	Total
Acquired Properties	2	280	453	455	33	1223
Multi-storey properties	23	1414	2958	115	0	4510
Non-Traditional built properties	4	190	693	1221	75	2183
Sheltered Accommodation	318	510	39	18	0	885
Traditional built properties	59	3286	7,113	9,507	627	20592
	406	5680	11256	11316	735	29393

Leasehold Accommodation

Property type	Property subtype	Total
Bedsit	Mid Rise (3 to 5 Storeys)	4
Bungalow		4
Flat	High Rise (6 Storeys and over)	77
Flat	Low Rise (Up to 2 Storeys)	950
Flat	Mid Rise (3 to 5 Storeys)	292
Leasehold House		18
Maisonette	High Rise (6 Storeys and over)	15
Maisonette	Low Rise (Up to 2 Storeys)	9
Maisonette	Mid Rise (3 to 5 Storeys)	93
	Total leaseholders	1,462

All information correct as of 31 March 2010

Appendix 3 – Property maintenance staffing structure



Appendix 4 – Tenants own responsibility repairs

Which repairs are you responsible for as a tenant?

Under your tenancy agreement you are responsible for the minor repairs you need from time to time, and for keeping your home painted and decorated. What this means is that you are responsible for:-

- Decorating the inside of your home
- Replacing locks
- Draught exclusion, provided the doors and windows fit reasonably
- Fitting extra catches and safety devices to doors and windows and installing burglar alarms
- Your letterbox (in low rise properties)
- Plugs and chains in baths and sinks
- Toilet seats and lids
- Small cracks in plaster
- Minor repairs to kitchen units
- Fitting TV aerials or satellite dishes (subject to permission)

These are known as your repairing responsibilities.

You will also have to pay for any repairs that are necessary because you have misused or neglected the property.

Appendix 5 – Rechargeable repairs

What is the rechargeable works scheme?

The scheme covers certain work that you would like to have carried out, which is not Your Homes Newcastle's responsibility. You are responsible for providing all the information that is needed and for paying for the work.

What types of work are covered by the “Rechargeable Works Scheme”

The following work is covered

- Security alarms
- Electric fires
- [Modern Homes](#) work. This is replacement of any of the following: kitchen, bathroom, external doors, windows, electrical rewiring, and central heating system.

What standard of work can I expect?

The work will be done to [Modern Homes](#) Standard specification. Contact us on 0800 091 1255 for details

What choice of material or colour can I have?

The choice will be the same as the [Modern Homes](#) Programme. Contact us on 0800 091 1255 for details.

What financial checks will you carry out?

We will check that your rent account has been clear for at least three months before you applied. We will also check that you have not missed any other payments you owe us.

How do I apply for works to be done under the scheme?

You must complete the “Request for Rechargeable Work” form giving details of the work that you would like done. You can get the form from your [Community Housing Office](#) and we can help you fill in the form if you would like.

Will I get an estimate of how much the work will cost?

We will give you an idea of the cost soon after you apply to help you decide if you want to go ahead.

What information will I need to give you?

Some work needs consent, some does not. The Area Maintenance Surveyor will send you a letter telling you which planning, building control and structural consents you need to send us before the work can go ahead.

How do I get the planning, building control and structural consents?

[Newcastle City Council](#) Planning and Building Control departments will ask you for a description of the work. After you have given this they will write to you to tell you if an application for approval is needed.

Will I have to pay any fees for planning, building control and structural consents?

There will be fees to pay to [Newcastle City Council](#) for any consents and you are responsible for paying the fee. When they write to tell you that you need approval they will tell you what fees you have to pay.

Once I have the consents where do I need to send them?

You must send **two** copies of the consents to us at the [Community Housing Office](#).

How do I find out the actual cost of the work?

After you have provided us with the information we have asked for we will write to you with a fixed quote for the work and tell you how to pay the deposit.

Will I be told when the work is starting?

Yes. When the deposit has been paid the work will be ordered with [City Build](#) who will contact you to make an appointment to start the work. Once the work is completed by City Build they will ask you to sign a completion certificate.

How do I make the payments for the work?

When the work is complete we will send you a swipe card which you can use to make payments. The swipe card is like a bank or credit card. You can agree with us how often you need to make payments. You must make all payments on time. If you are having difficulties making payments then contact us immediately.

Appendix 6 – Right to repair

Some of the repairs carried out on your home by Your Homes Newcastle are categorised as 'Qualifying Repairs'.

Qualifying repairs are small urgent repairs which may affect your health, safety or security, and are covered by the Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994.

The Right to Repair scheme allows residents and leaseholders to arrange for their repair to be carried out by another contractor where Your Homes Newcastle has failed to meet its repairs obligation. In certain circumstances you may be eligible for compensation.

Below is a schedule of qualifying repairs and the timescale in which they are to be completed (as extracted from secure tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulation 1994)

1 working day repairs

- Total loss of electrical power
- Unsafe power of lighting socket or electrical socket
- Total loss of water supply
- Total or partial loss of gas supply
- Blocked flue or boiler
- Total or partial loss of hot water services during winter months
- Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack, or toilet
- Toilet that will not flush, where there is only one toilet in the property
- Leaking heating pipes, tank or cistern
- Insecure windows or doors

3 working day repairs

- Partial loss of electrical power
- Partial loss of water supply
- Total or partial loss of hot water services during summer months
- Blocked sink, bath or basin
- Tap that cannot be turned
- Loose banister or handrail
- Rotten timber flooring or stair tread

7 working day repairs

- Door entry phone not working
- Extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working
- Leaking roof

Appendix 7 – Void lettable standard

It is important to YHN that all of the properties we let across the city are of a good standard, safe, clean and in good condition for a new tenant to move into.

Safe

YHN will make sure that, amongst other repairs, the property has no:

- Bare wires or damaged electrical fittings
- Missing flooring, floor tiles or floor treads on stairs
- Insecure doors
- Missing or damaged handrails
- Missing or damaged glazing
- Damaged gas and electrical appliances
- Missing fencing

YHN will check the safety of gas and electrical installations, and provide the new tenant with a copy of the gas safety check report.

Clean

YHN will clean the property before a new tenant moves in, including:

- Clean kitchen units, toilets, baths and wash basins
- Wash down all paintwork and clean the inside of all windows
- Clean the outside windows in low-rise properties (two-storey blocks of flats)
- Clear all rubbish from the house and garden, including any rubbish from building work
- Clear all rubbish from outbuildings and shared areas
- Put air fresheners in the house
- Clean and disinfect all baths, toilets, wash basins and sinks

Good condition

YHN will complete all repairs needed to bring the property up to a good standard, including:

- Doors and windows are not damaged and will open and close correctly
- Kitchen units and worktops are in good condition
- Flooring and floor coverings are in good condition

- Toilets are not damaged or cracked and are flushing correctly
- Baths are not cracked and work properly
- We will complete any major plaster repairs
- Complete work that is needed following gas, electric and central heating inspections that find problems

Decoration

YHN recognises that in some cases it will be necessary for new tenants to redecorate some rooms in their new homes so we will provide decorating vouchers to enable them to buy decorating materials.

YHN will also refer new tenants to an advice and support worker who may be able to assist them to access more help, depending on their individual circumstances.

Appendix 8 – Repairs & maintenance service standards

What is the repairs and maintenance service?

Our service manages all repairs and maintenance, repairs to empty properties, minor work and planned programmes of work for Newcastle City Council's housing. We aim to provide good quality repairs, and get them right first time.

We try our best to make appointments at times to suit you. It is important that you are at home for your repairs appointment. If you are not in when we call it costs our service money and we may charge you for this.

[Visit the Reporting Repairs section to find out more about the service](#)

What can I expect from the service?

Service standards provide an indication of how we are performing. However, we also do more to help our customers, such as:

- Publishing how you can report repairs in our tenant handbook and on our website.
- Publishing the repairs that are your responsibility. If you want us to carry out these repairs we will do so and charge you.
- Making sure that all workers provide identification, have the skills they need to carry out your repair, use good-quality materials, tidy up after all work we do and treat your home with respect.
- Agreeing a convenient time with you for all appointments that we make, and ensuring that we take account of any special needs that you may have when we carry out your repair.
- Wherever possible trying to complete your repair as agreed with you. If, however, we have to cancel your repair or appointment or carry out additional work required, we will contact you to rearrange it at a convenient time for you.
- Operating an allowance scheme for you to make a claim if there is an unreasonable delay in carrying out your repairs.
- Monitoring the performance and quality of our repairs service.
- Publishing our performance figures at least every three months.
- Keeping a record of all complaints made about repairs and making sure we pass them to the relevant person to investigate and reply.

Our service standards

These are the standards we monitor regularly. If any of these standards are not being met we will develop a plan to improve performance.

- For emergency repairs we say we will carry out within four hours, we aim to carry out 99.5% of those repairs within that time.
- For urgent repairs we say we will carry out within either one, three or seven days we aim to carry out 99% of all those repairs within relevant timescales.
- For routine repairs we say we will carry out within 15 days, we aim to carry out 99% of those repairs within that time.
- We aim to complete at least 98% repairs at the first visit whenever possible.
- We monitor how satisfied our customers are with the service and we aim to achieve at least 92% satisfaction.
- We aim to keep at least 97% of appointments that we have made for repairs
- We aim to carry out an annual gas safety check to 99.9% of all properties we manage

Appendix 9 – Key Performance Indicators

- 1 – Achieve 92% customer satisfaction with the repairs service
- 2 – Achieve 92% customer satisfaction with the Repair Centre (telephone surveys)
- 3 – Attend 99.5% of emergency repairs within four hours
- 4 – Attend 99% of urgent repairs within specified timescales (1, 3, or 7 working days)
- 5 - Attend 99% of routine repairs within 15 working days
- 6 – Achieve 98% of repair completions at first visit
- 7 – Achieve a maximum of 8% of repairs raised on emergency status
- 8 – A maximum of 8% of repairs cancelled as ‘tenant not in’ (No access)
- 9 – Percentage of appointments made as a percentage of appointable repairs

Joint client/contractor Key Performance Indicators

- 10 – Achieve 99.9% of properties to have a valid Landlords Gas Safety Certificate (CP12)
- 11 – Average days to complete void omit works (decent homes voids)
- 12 – Percentage of non-decent homes voids completed on time
- 13 – Respond to 98% of complaint within 10 working days