

Note to Members: This is current approved policy as part of the main Repairs Policy and is supplied for information only.

Rechargeable Repairs

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure guide is intended to ensure the efficient administration of re-chargeable repairs, assisting Housing Services to maximise its income to the benefit of tenants.
- 1.2 This guide sets out the responsibilities of Officers to ensure a high level of service delivery in this area.
- 1.3 The responsibility for repairs is clearly defined in the Repair Policy and and leaflet “A Guide to Re-Chargeable Repairs” which should be offered to tenants where they are uncertain as to their responsibilities.
- 1.4 Where there are issues which will make the payment by a tenant of an invoice in a single transaction difficult, there are arrangements available to spread payments and there may be other agencies able to help in accordance with section 2.13 of the Corporate Debt Recovery and Management Policy, approved by Members in December 2008. However, financial standing is never a reason for placing the responsibility elsewhere other than on the tenant concerned.
- 1.5 All staff visiting homes will be expected to identify and report to the Repairs Manager within 1 working day any outstanding tenants’ repairs which lead to insecurity of the home or risk to the fabric of the property.

2.0 Re-Chargeable Repair Request

- 2.1 Where a tenant requests a re-chargeable repair be carried out, for example, a lock change following loss of keys, the Repairs Hotline staff will advise the tenant that the repair is re-chargeable. The same member of staff will also advise the tenant of the indicative cost. For repairs that cost more than £75, VAT and a 10% administration charge will need to be added (VAT will be due on both the works and the administration fee). Any repairs which are £75 or less are inclusive of VAT and the administration fee. Where appropriate, payment in advance will be sought to negate the need for billing for small debts.

The following rules are applicable when applying VAT:

- **VATable repairs - rechargeable to tenants**

When the charge is made to a tenant who is still in residence, then there is a supply of services to the tenant that is liable to VAT at the standard rate.

- **Non-VATable repairs - rechargeable to tenants**

Charges for repairs and making good when a tenant has vacated the property and left them in an unfit condition are regarded as compensation. Therefore no VAT is due on the charges made.

- **Non-VATable repairs - rechargeable to third parties**

Charges for repairs to third parties (i.e. not tenants) to recover costs of damage to Council dwellings are also regarded as compensation e.g. vandalism to a Council dwelling where the vandal being recharged is not the tenant, or a car (not the tenants) that drives into the wall of a Council house (where the car driver would be recharged). Therefore no VAT is due on the charges made.

2.2 Where necessary there may be a need for the Repairs Hotline staff to organise an appointment for the DLO or Repair Inspector as necessary. If the work is likely to be undertaken by a private company under contract to the Council a Repairs Inspector should be briefed and liaise with the relevant project officer.

2.3 Once the repair has been ordered, the Repairs Hotline staff/ Repairs Inspector will e-mail the following details to the Business Support Officer within 2 working days who will set the Person UDC on the Orchard system:

- Name and Address
- Nature of Repair
- How reported (eg via telephone)
- Estimated Cost of Repair
- Repair Job Number

The Repairs Team will issue a 'Re-Chargeable 1' letter.

2.5 Upon receipt of this information, the Business Support Officer will record the relevant information on the re-chargeables spreadsheet which is located on the V Drive\Housing\Performance & Business\General Info\Rechargeables\Rechargeables Spreadsheet.

2.6 Following completion of the job the Repairs Hotline staff/Repairs Inspector will e-mail the Business Support Officer within 5 working days with the final cost of the repair and with any information regarding the circumstances of the tenant which may affect collection of the debt or changes in work. The signed 'Re-Chargeable 1' letter will be passed to the Business Support Officer either in person by the Inspector or via the internal post.

2.7 Upon receipt of this information, the Business Support Officer will complete the 'Schedule of Evidence' pro forma, and submit this along with all evidence to the Accounts Department within 5 working days, where an invoice for the work will be raised and issued.

3.0 Void Re-Chargeable Repairs

3.1 In addition to Section 2.0, Repairs Inspectors may identify re-chargeable repairs upon inspection of void properties. Where possible inspectors carry out pre-void inspections whilst the tenant is in situ but it is not always possible to do this in all cases.

3.2 The Inspector must take photographs of the damaged items / rubbish requiring clearance. These photographs must be saved by the Repairs Inspector onto the V:/Housing/ Repairs & Improvements/Repairs and then into one of the following AW Voids, CM Voids or MW Voids. The Inspector must then complete and sign the void inspection ticket to confirm when and where the photographs were taken.

3.3 The Inspector will send a copy of the void sheet to the Business Support Officer. The re-chargeable works should be highlighted on this sheet, and the cost for each of the works should be marked next to them.

3.4 Upon receipt of this information, the Business Support Officer will record the relevant information on the re-chargeables spreadsheet and set the Person UDC within 5 working days, detailing the address for which the re-charge is being made, and the cost of the recharge. A forwarding address must be obtained by the Business Support Officer at this stage.

3.5 Following completion of the job the Housing Repairs staff will e-mail the Business Support Officer within 5 working days with the final cost of the repair and any information regarding the circumstances of the tenant that may affect collection of the debt. .

3.6 Upon receipt of this information, the 'Schedule of Evidence' pro forma should then be completed by the Business Support Officer, and submitted with the relevant evidence, to the Accounts Department, where an invoice for the works will be raised and issued.

3.7 The Business Support Officer will carry out monthly monitoring of the process including recovery and validity of invoices raised.

3.8 Details of any repayment plans should be added to the Person UDC by the Business Support Officer.

4.0 Urgent Repairs and Re-instatements

4.1 In addition to sections 2.0 and 3.0, Inspectors may identify re-chargeable works via their day-to-day duties.

4.2 Where the repair is deemed by the Inspector to be re-chargeable, and that failure to complete the repair as a matter of urgency would lead to further damage to the property, its fixtures or fittings, the repair should be ordered, and the tenant advised. At this point, the Inspector should attempt to gain signed confirmation from the tenant, that they accept responsibility for the repair. The Repairs Hotline staff/Repair Inspector should issue a 'Re-Chargeable Repair 1' letter and take photographs of the damage which needs to be rectified. Should the Inspector be unable to obtain photographs or a signature on the 'Re-Chargeable Repair 1' letter then this will need to be reported to their Line Manager.

4.3 The Inspector will raise the job(s) on the Orchard system in accordance with the appropriate timescales for the work. The Inspector must raise the job for the re-chargeable repair items that need to be charged. Any additional repairs which are required that are not part of the re-charge must be raised on a separate job number.

4.4 Once the repair has been ordered, the Repairs Hotline staff/ Repairs Inspector will e-mail the following details to the Business Support Officer within 2 working days who will set the Person UDC on the Orchard system:

- Name and Address
- Nature of Repair
- How reported (e.g. via telephone)
- Estimated Cost of Repair
- Repair Job Number

Upon receipt of this information, the Business Support Officer will record the relevant information on the re-chargeables spreadsheet.

4.5 The Inspector will save the photographs on the 'V' Drive/Housing/Repairs & Improvements/Repairs/AW Voids or CM Voids or MW Voids. The Inspector must then complete and sign the void inspection ticket to confirm when and where the photographs were taken.

4.6 The signed 'Re-Chargeable Repair 1' letter, signed void inspection sheet and copy of the repair sheet will be passed to the Business Support Officer either in person by the Inspector or via the internal post. The re-chargeable works should be highlighted on this sheet, and the cost for each of the works should be marked next to them.

4.7 Following completion of the job the Housing Repairs staff will e-mail the Business Support Officer within 5 working days with the job number and the final cost of the repair.

4.8 Upon receipt of this information, the 'Schedule of Evidence' pro forma should then be completed by the Business Support Officer, and submitted with the relevant evidence, to the Accounts Department within 5 working days, where an invoice for the works will be raised and issued.

5.0 Day-to-Day Rechargeable Repairs

5.1 Where a re-chargeable repair has been identified and the tenant wishes to carry out the work themselves, the Inspector will agree a timescale (usually within 8 weeks) for the completion of the works and a date for re-inspection, and issue letter 'Re-Chargeable Repair 2'.

5.2 The Inspector will re-inspect the work on the agreed date. Where the repair has been carried out satisfactorily, the Inspector will issue letter 'Re-Chargeable Repair 3'.

5.3 Where the work has either not been completed, or has been completed unsatisfactorily, the Inspector will advise the tenant of this, and agree a further timescale (usually within 4 weeks) for the completion of the works, and a date for re-inspection, and issue letter 'Re-Chargeable Repair 4'

5.4 The Inspector will re-inspect the work on the agreed date. Where the repair has been carried out satisfactorily, the Inspector will issue letter 'Re-Chargeable Repair 5'.

5.5 Where the work has either not been completed, or has been completed unsatisfactorily, the Inspector will raise the issue with the Repairs Manager and agree whether the repair should be carried out by Housing Services, or agreed for the tenant to effect the repair.

5.6 Where the work is to be carried out by Housing Services because the tenant does not wish to carry out the work themselves or because work completed by the tenant is not satisfactory, the Inspector must provide a reasonable estimate and obtain the tenant's signature on letter Re-Chargeable Repair 1.

5.7 The Inspector will raise the job(s) on the Orchard HMS within 5 working days. The Inspector must raise the job for the re-chargeable repair items that need to be charged. Any additional repairs which are required that are not part of the re-charge must be raised on a separate job number. The Repairs Hotline staff or Repairs Inspector will e-mail the following details to the Business Support Officer within 2 working days who will set the Person UDC on the Orchard system:

- Name and Address
- Nature of Repair
- How reported (e.g. via telephone)
- Estimated Cost of Repair

- Repair Job Number

Upon receipt of this information, the Business Support Officer will record the relevant information on the re-chargeables spreadsheet.

- 5.8 The Inspector should then send the signed Re-Chargeable Repairs 1 letter and a copy of the repair sheet to the Business Support Officer. The re-chargeable works should be highlighted on this sheet, and the cost for each of the works should be marked next to them. Photographs are not required in this instance.
- 5.9 Following completion of the job the Housing Repairs staff will within 5 working days e-mail the Business Support Officer with the final cost of the repair and any information regarding the circumstances of the tenant which may affect collection of the debt. .
- 5.10 Upon receipt of this information, the 'Schedule of Evidence' pro forma should then be completed by the Housing Administration Assistant, and submitted with the relevant evidence, to the Accounts Department within 5 working days, where an invoice for the works will be raised and issued.
- 5.11 Where it is agreed that the tenant should complete the repair, in recognition of the need to treat each case on an individual basis, the Repairs Manager will set the timescales for completion (usually within 4 weeks).
- 5.12 Where the repair remains unsatisfactory after this time, the Repairs Manager will consult the Repairs and Improvement Manager to agree a resolution.

6.0 Transfers and Mutual Exchanges

None of these will reach conclusion before outstanding debt for rechargeable repairs has been cleared unless authorised by the Head of Service; this includes those tenants making staged payments.

7.0 Appeals

- 7.1 The tenant concerned can appeal against any decision regarding responsibility, charges or reasonableness of our decisions. At the first stage of appeal the supervising officer of the case officer will consider any written, telephone or e-mail appeals and respond via the Business Support team to the tenant or their representative within 10 working days.
- 7.2 The Council's formal complaints process is also open to the tenant or their representative by contacting:

Customer Services Manager
Tel: 01283 595795

E-mail: civic.offices@south-derbys.gov.uk