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# Sanctuary Scotland

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

**Business Function:** Sanctuary Scotland - Sanctuary Homes (Scotland)  
Limited

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**Authorised by:** Director - Sanctuary Scotland

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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 focused 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;
  - proactive communication for all repairs;
  - 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 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 \(SHQS\)](#)
- [Letting Agent Code of Practice](#)

### 3. Responsibilities for implementation

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

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

4.1 April 2024 - Formal review, in line with the policy review cycle. The following changes have been implemented:

- Minor adjustments have been made throughout the procedure for clarity and formatting.
- Changes have been made to staff and team member roles to align with the new Property Services and Customer Hub structure.
- The reference to heating repairs during winter season in paragraph 1.3.3 has been removed as emergency criteria are addressed year-round.
- Timescales in paragraph 1.4.3 have been updated from 20 days to 20 working days.
- Pre-void process and arranging pre-term inspections in paragraph 2.2 have been updated to comply with current process.
- Reference to the lifecycle of components in paragraph 2.5 has been removed, and guidance now states that components can be replaced at staff discretion.
- Responsibility of approving access the property due to health and safety risks in paragraphs 3.2 has been changed to the Head of Housing.
- Step 2 section B - The section on pest and infestation has been updated to align with current processes.
- Step 9 Approval limits have been updated.
- **AG01** - Guidance for completing end of tenancy inventories and voids inspections has been updated. For white goods and carpets where criteria are not met, the decision to modernise will be at the discretion of the Area Manager or Housing Manager, and for carpet replacement, at the discretion of the Maintenance Surveyor and Housing Officer.

## Detailed Procedures

### 1. Repair categories

- 1.1 Diagnosed responsive repairs will be allocated a distinct priority category. This ensures 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 Operations - Property Services, 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 that inhibits the safety of the tenants and property;
  - water leak coming through the ceiling;
  - no water supply;
  - heating repairs where there is no other heating; and/or
  - total loss of electrical supply.
- 1.3.4 A second appointment may be required to complete all remedial works following the 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 working 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 working days 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 The person who receives notice should advise the Assistant Housing Officer. The Assistant Housing Officer should schedule a pre-termination inspection and populate the Housing Officer's and Maintenance Surveyor's Outlook calendars with the relevant details. If the Maintenance Surveyor is unable to attend a pre-termination inspection, the Housing Officer should still attend. Every effort should be made to gain access to complete the inspection. If a suitable date cannot be arranged, the Assistant Housing Officer should email the relevant Housing Officer. The Housing Officer should then take responsibility for arranging the pre-termination inspection. This will provide an opportunity to complete a final inventory check and to inspect the property's condition. This should be done before Property Services commence any voids works. If inspection cannot be arranged, Housing Management must send a No Access pre-void letter the tenant and record the inspection using the pre-void app.
- 2.3 To assist with the inspection, a lettings standard is available for MMR properties, which is available on [Pulse](#).
- 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 Property Services 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, one-off repairs, replacements, cyclical or planned replacement of components within MMR properties will be the responsibility of Property Services. Any queries relating to replacements of components should be directed to the local [Property Services Administration Mailbox](#).
- 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 electrical inspection, including PAT tests where accessible, for appliances owned by Sanctuary. It will also include 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 (Head of Housing or Head of Operations – Property Services). If the customer is not contactable after multiple attempts and forced access is considered necessary, the 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 the Customer Hub team must keep service users informed of the progress of their repair and provide an update when the work will be completed.

The appropriate Customer Hub team would liaise with the customer to book a further appointment complete any works once additional parts/resources have been acquired to complete the job. Any queries related to this process should be directed to the following mailbox: [CSCEXtraWorksandQuotes@sanctuary.co.uk](mailto:CSCEXtraWorksandQuotes@sanctuary.co.uk).

4.2 Where unforeseen events occur, repairs may need to be prioritised; appointed repairs may be rescheduled. Should this happen, Customer Hub team must ensure service users are given as much warning as possible.



## 5. Detailed processes

Step	Action	Timescale
<p><b>1. Repair requests and response times</b></p>	<p>If the service user telephones the Customer Hub team, 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 once the system is available, normally within 24 hours of contact (there is possibility this may be longer in certain circumstances).</p> <p>If the work has to be sent to an external contractor, then the customer should be informed that the external contractor will notify them of an appointment date/time.</p> <p>The CSC team 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>
<p><b>1a. Identification of repair need:</b></p>	<p>The following must all be adhered to by Customer Hub team 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 Maintenance Surveyor.</li> </ul> <p>The Customer Hub team must contact the relevant Maintenance 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>



Step	Action	Timescale
	<p>For further information please visit the Pulse Group Insurance page - <a href="#">Group Insurance Pulse</a> page.</p> <p><b>C)</b> If the repair is considered a 'defect' (SAP 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 team.</p>	
<p><b>3. Repair request logged</b></p>	<p>The Customer Hub team 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 Maintenance Surveyor to carry out an inspection if the repair responsibility is still unclear; or</li> <li>• contact the Housing Officer for the development</li> </ul> <p>Once a notification is raised Customer Hub team will raise and authorise Works Orders as appropriate.</p>	<p>During the call</p> <p>Within 24 hours of notification being raised</p>
<p><b>4. Works Order</b></p>	<p>Customer Hub team 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, the service user will be informed that Customer Hub team will contact them to book an appointment within two working days.</p>	<p>Immediately on receipt of repair request.</p>
<p><b>5. Confirmation of appointment time</b></p>	<p>The Customer Hub team 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>

Step	Action	Timescale
<p><b>6. Identification of repair priority</b></p>	<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 Customer Hub team must contact the service user as soon as is practicable to advise of the delay and agree a suitable way forward. Where a service user fails to keep an appointment, a second appointment will be offered when the service user re-contacts the Customer Hub team.</p>	
<p><b>7. Pre - inspection of property</b></p>	<p>If an operative cannot undertake a repair because the issue is outside the scope of works which has been initially diagnosed (for example, structural damp), an inspection by the Maintenance Surveyor should be requested via Customer Hub team. The service user should be informed that Customer Hub team will contact them to book an appointment within two working days.</p> <p>The property should be made safe until the inspection has been completed and further repairs are appointed and completed.</p> <p>All known information relevant to the inspection must be recorded at the time of the appointment and recorded on the system for the Maintenance Surveyor to refer to when attending the inspection. Any additional information or actions must be recorded by the Maintenance Surveyor for Customer Hub team to refer to when completing the actions required to resolve the repair.</p> <p>A suitable appointment must be allocated by the Customer Hub team between the service user and the Maintenance Surveyor 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 Maintenance Surveyor requires further time due to availability, the target date can be</p>	<p>Arranged and completed within 10 working days of works being requested.</p>

Step	Action	Timescale
	<p>extended for a suitable appointment to be arranged.</p> <p>If criminal or other damage is suspected the Maintenance 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>	
<p><b>8. Assessment of damage</b></p>	<p>Where the damage has been caused through vandalism, the Housing Officer must be informed by the Maintenance Surveyor who completed the pre-inspection and action must be taken in accordance with the <a href="#">Antisocial Behaviour and Harassment - Scotland Policy and Procedure</a> and <a href="#">Domestic Abuse - Scotland Policy and Procedure</a> by the 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. For further guidance see Pulse: <a href="#">Pests and Infestations, Bed Bugs</a>.</p> <p>Where the damage has been caused by unforeseen or accidental damage, such as roof damage caused by severe weather, Sanctuary Scotland must claim back the cost of the work through Group Insurance (<a href="#">Insurance - Group Policy and Procedure</a>).</p> <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>, <a href="#">Rechargeable repairs</a> and internal guidance on <a href="#">Tenancy Deposits</a> for further information. Rechargeable repairs at end of tenancy will be done through the inventory check-out and voids inspection notes, Customer Hub team to liaise with CIT to post charges onto account.</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 Pulse</a> page.</p>	<p>Assessment must be completed within 10 working days</p>

Step	Action	Timescale
	The service user must be kept informed at every stage of the process by the Maintenance Surveyor.	
<b>9. Variation Orders (external contractors only)</b>	<p>Extra works for Day to Day under £750 can be raised by anyone in Customer Hub with approval from a Team Manager for any works over £500.</p> <p>Extra works for Major Repairs over £750 are raised in OneSanctuary and go through the Delivery Prioritisation System (DPS). This is an automated approval process in OneSanctuary with works under £1,500 approved by a Senior Surveyor/Operations Manager and works over £1,500 approved by a Head of Service. There is an option for high value works to go through a mini tender process and then raised as Quoted works when approved.</p> <p>For extra works less than £100, the contractor should proceed with the works and advise of the additional works (specifying the relevant repair code) – they do not require authorisation.</p> <p>If over £100, 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 Customer Hub Extra Works and Quotes mailbox <a href="mailto:CSCExtraWorksandQuotes@sanctuary.co.uk">CSCExtraWorksandQuotes@sanctuary.co.uk</a>.</p>	Refer to the Group's Contract Management Framework for timeframes.
<b>10. Works completed</b>	<p>Completion dates are reported by contractors to the CSC team via weekly reports. These are input onto the system within 24 hours by the CSC.</p> <p>In the case of completions by a Property Services operative these must be updated immediately via their smart phone.</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.

Step	Action	Timescale
<b>12. Follow up to completion of work</b>	<p>In addition, where any discrepancies over costing or quality of work become apparent the Maintenance Surveyor must carry out a post inspection, as per <b>Appendix 7</b> of the <a href="#">Repairs and Maintenance - Group Procedure, the Post Inspection Process Guidance</a>.</p> <p>Where a service user is unable to accept an appointment within the timescale, the appointment can be extended further. Likewise, if Property Services or External contractor 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>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Within one day</p>
<b>14. Invoice process</b>	<p>All invoices dealt with by the Customer Hub team 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.</p>	<p>Upon receipt</p>

## Supporting Information

### 1. Additional support and guidance

- [Permission for Improvements - Group Procedure](#)
- [Permissions \(Property\) Process Pulse process](#)
- [Safeguarding Children and Young People - Sanctuary Scotland Procedure](#)
- [Adult Support and Protection \(Safeguarding\) - Sanctuary Scotland Procedure](#)
- [Domestic Abuse - Scotland Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Mid Market Rent - Terminations Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Pest and Infestations Pulse process](#)
- [Bed Bugs Pulse process](#)
- [Major Revenue Pulse guidance](#)
- [Mid Market Rent internal guidance on Tenancy Deposits](#)
- [Scotland Voids Guidance, Resources and Map - Pulse](#)

#### 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