



Repairs and Improvements Service Delivery Plan Leaflet

This leaflet outlines our Service Delivery Plan for our Council House Repairs and Improvements Services.

This leaflet covers three main areas: -

- 1) Who the service is for and what the services cover;
- 2) How the services are provided;
- 3) Improvements to the service.

This leaflet is intended as a plain language guide only, not as a precise statement of the law.

It is also available in other languages, on request, and in formats such as in large print, compact disc and Braille.

Orkney Islands Council is referred to as "we" throughout this leaflet.

Outline of Service Provided

Management of Council houses is the responsibility of Housing Services; while repairs and improvement work is delivered in partnership with the Council's Building and Architectural Services.

In addition, the Council's Customer Services Section is involved in repairs at the initial reporting stage.

We aim to provide a fully comprehensive repairs service which is geared to ensure that timely improvements are made to our stock to ensure it remains good quality and to limit repairs needed in the future. We aim to ensure that our services are responsive and person centred.

Efficiency and effectiveness of service provision

We evaluate continually all aspects of our repairs and improvements services to ensure overall efficiency and effectiveness and to make sure it remains reflective of our overall aims.

Services Offered by Housing Services

Within Housing Services, our Housing Management section is involved in the delivery of housing advice relating to the wider area of repairs, improvements and the management of void properties.

Given the broad role of Housing Services, this section has a wide remit but their duties that link to repair services include:

Housing Management Section

This section provides advice and assistance on a range of issues but relevant to the field of repairs and improvements, it advises on the following areas:

- ◆ Advice regarding the requirements of landlord and tenant relative to repairs;
- ◆ Procedures for adaptations required as a result of medical etc need;
- ◆ Planned improvements in an area;
- ◆ Suggested work to bring properties to standard prior to the end of a tenancy;
- ◆ Housing for particular needs;
- ◆ Correction of damage to property
- ◆ Permissions to adapt etc Council housing;
- ◆ Timescales for completion of repair work;
- ◆ Correction of damage to property;
- ◆ Advice on Right to Repair;
- ◆ Compensation for Improvements;
- ◆ Action against wilful damage;
- ◆ Disrepair;
- ◆ Actions to take where tenant is unhappy with work done/where work has failed to be done (repairs complaints)

Advice will always be tailored to the individual/household's needs. If appropriate, staff can liaise, on the household's behalf, with other parties involved.

In other situations, a referral may be made to another agency to provide support or advice specific to the situation.

Joint assistance

In addition to their specialist functions relative to repairs, our Housing Management Section's remit is broader. Therefore they can:

- ◆ Provide advice and assistance on a broad range of tenancy matters including security of tenure;

- ◆ Provide advice on housing options and allocation of Council and Housing Association property.

In addition they can signpost to provide assistance with related issues such as energy efficiency and related certificates etc.

The Housing Management Section works closely with other sections within Housing Services and various partner agencies to ensure that the applicant can access the best service for their needs. For instance we may refer a service user to a partner agency for help if they wish to dispute one of the Council's decisions about how to progress an improvement programme on their property.

Staff within our Building and Architectural Services provide technical advice and expertise to ensure appropriate standards are obtained and are responsible for liaison with contractors to ensure they meet agreed terms and timescales. Provision of specific advice in relation to the housing legislation is the remit of Housing Services.

Access to the Service

Our services are delivered through our One Stop Shop in Kirkwall. We work in partnership with a range of contractors all of whom are committed to our Code of Conduct. We introduced a Repairs Charter in November 2008 and our main contractors have signed up to this. All contractors who enter into contracts covering Council house improvements etc will be required to sign the charter after that date.

Our contractors will arrange a suitable time for them to visit to undertake the repair/improvement work.

If you wish to speak to a member of Council staff, our facilities at the One Stop Shop include private interview rooms, a comfortable reception area and waiting room, toilet facilities and toys for small children. A home visit could also be arranged and very often this may be particularly appropriate in relation to repairs and improvements. In order to make such arrangements please contact Housing Services directly at the address above.

We are committed to working in partnership with a range of other agencies in order to ensure that our services are seamless and appropriately tailored to the needs of the service user concerned.

A broad range of written information is also available and this can be found both from our One Stop Shop or on our website at www.orkney.gov.uk

Service Improvement

It is our intention to deliver good quality, person centred user friendly, sensitive and efficient services for the people of Orkney. We aim to continually improve our service and part of this process involves collecting information regarding our customer's views.

Central to this aim is the need to adapt to social change and also to determine what our service users think of a range of aspects to our services. In order to assess this we collect and analyse information from a range of sources including:

- ◆ Focus groups;
- ◆ Customer satisfaction surveys (repairs surveys, improvements surveys, adaptations surveys etc);
- ◆ Complaints;
- ◆ Appeals;
- ◆ Comments made by service users in relation to requests on footnotes of letters;
- ◆ Choices made in relation to improvement programmes such as style of kitchen doors chosen;
- ◆ Information relating to the profile of the local community;
- ◆ Statistical information from related policies.

This includes consideration of:

- ◆ Our premises;
- ◆ Our hours of business;
- ◆ Quality of our written information;
- ◆ Other methods of service delivery including our website etc;
- ◆ Extent of client involvement with other agencies;
- ◆ Standard of advice given;
- ◆ Provision/scope of services in rural areas;
- ◆ Accessibility of services.

Service user feedback is vital to the success of our services and staff are fully trained in the importance of this. Your views are very important to us.

The information we collect is monitored, assessed and included in an annual review of our service delivery. Therefore this information is vital to us in ensuring our services remain reflective of your needs and wishes.

Contact Details

Housing Services

Council Offices

School Place

Kirkwall

Tel:- (01856) 873535

Fax:- (01856) 886530

E-mail:- housing@orkney.gov.uk

Website: www.orkney.gov.uk