

# ***Report to the Cabinet***

***Report reference:***                   ***C-027-2024/25***

***Date of meeting:***                   ***11 November 2024***



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio:**                   **Housing and HGGT (Cllr Nigel Bedford)**

**Subject:**                   **Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy**

**Responsible Officer:**                   **Surjit Balu, Interim Director for Housing  
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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

To approve the proposed policy for repairs and maintenance to homes provided by EFDC.

## **Executive Summary:**

This is a new policy that sets out how we will deliver repairs and planned maintenance to our stock over 6,000 homes.

Aspects of the policy, such as repair responsibilities and priority timescales, will be incorporated into the next issue of the Tenant's Handbook.

## **Report:**

The policy covers:

- Planned and cyclical maintenance
- Responsive repairs
- Repairs between tenancies (void repairs)

## **Scrutiny Comments:**

The draft Cabinet paper and proposed policy was considered by the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024. The Committee recommended the following amendments to the policy:

- Clarify that the prioritisation of repairs should consider the effect of delays on vulnerable occupants
- Add indicative timescales for cyclical decorations
- Emphasise the importance of making and keeping appointments for electrical and gas safety checks
- Clarify responsibilities for dealing with pest infestations within homes and in communal areas

The attached policy incorporates these amendments.

## **Resource Implications:**

Implementation of this policy will have no resource implications. Qualis Property Solutions have confirmed the revised Void Relet Standard will be no adverse effect on the standard Price per Void.

### **Legal and Governance Implications:**

Implementation of this policy will support EFDC's compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 Consumer Standard.

### **Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

No implications.

### **Consultation / Scrutiny Undertaken:**

The following have been involved in the development of EFDC's Repairs and Maintenance Policy:

- Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel – A sub-group of the Panel met three times to examine and developed the draft policy. The full Panel met on 3 September 2024 to review and confirm agreement of the final draft policy.
- Qualis Property Solutions – Qualis was part of the sub-group and contributed to the development of the policy.
- Housing Management team – The draft policy was presented to the Housing Management team for comment.
- Rehousing team – The Rehousing team were consulted on the proposed void relet standard.

### **Background Papers:**

Proposed Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

### **Risk Management:**

The key risks arising from the Repairs and Maintenance Policy include:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Action to Mitigate</b>
<b>Cost of void repairs increases</b>	The Void Relet Standard was developed in consultation with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel and with Qualis Property Solutions. Changes to the Standard will have no adverse effect on cost.
<b>Tenancy refusals due to inadequate relet standard</b>	The Void Relet Standard was developed in consultation with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel and with Qualis Property Solutions. The development process prioritised works that would enhance lettable (e.g. the floor and wall finishes) and reduced costly works with limited impact on lettable (e.g. landscaping).
<b>Expenditure on void repairs on properties that are not subsequently let</b>	The policy allows for an option appraisal on properties where the cost of void works would be greater than a set figure (initially £10k). In cases where the property performs poorly (e.g. financially or desirability) or where there is a development opportunity, the property can be put forward for an option appraisal.

### **Equality:**

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out and there was no significant impact.