



NEW WORLD
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Maintenance Policy

– October 2025

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NEW WORLD HOUSING ASSOCIATION

<u>INDEX</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1 PURPOSE	4
2 INTRODUCTION	4
3 LEGAL DUTIES	5
4 TIMESCALE FOR REPAIRS	6-7
5 LANDLORD AND TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES	8
6&7 TENANTS IMPROVEMENTS & RECHARGES	9-11
8 CUSTOMER SERVICE	12
9&10 INITIAL REPORTING & REPAIR ORDER PROCEDURE	13-14
11 CONTRACTORS	15-16
12 ACCESS	17
13 TENANT SATISFACTION MONITORING	18
14 PROCESSING INVOICES	19
15 COMPENSATION	20-21
16 COMPLAINTS	22-26
17 LEGAL CLAIMS	27-29
18 VOIDS MANAGEMENT	30-33

NEW WORLD HOUSING ASSOCIATION

<u>INDEX</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
19 HEALTH AND SAFETY	34-36
20 ELECTRICAL SAFETY	37-39
21 GAS SAFETY	40-43
22 FIRE SAFETY	44-47
23 DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION	48-51
24 PEST CONTROL	52-53
25 LEGIONELLA CONTROL	54-55
26 LIFTING EQUIPMENT	56-58
27 AIDS & ADAPTATIONS	59-62
28 ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT	63-65

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

1. PURPOSE

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association complies with the statutory and regulatory requirements relating to property maintenance, ensures that expenditure is controlled within budget, provide a prompt and responsive repair service to tenants and ensures that the association receives value for money.

2. INTRODUCTION

New World Housing Association is committed to providing safe, secure, and well-maintained homes for our residents.

This Maintenance Policy outlines our strategic approach to managing and delivering an effective, efficient, and responsive repairs and maintenance service. It sets out the respective responsibilities of the Association and our residents, ensuring clarity and transparency in how we maintain our homes and communal environments.

The policy is structured around the core principles of safety, quality, value for money, and sustainability and to provide a service that is clear, accessible, and fair for all.

This policy has been compiled in conjunction with individual New World Housing Association policies concerning safety and compliance, all of which have been included in this document.

The application of this policy will ensure compliance with the Safety and Quality Standard (consumer standards) April 2024

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

3. LEGAL DUTIES

Applicable legislation:

The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985:

The Housing Act 2004

Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

The Electricity at Work Regulations (EWR) 1989

Legionella Risk Management

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012

Awaab's Law (from October 2025)

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

4. TIMESCALE FOR REPAIRS.

Emergency Repairs – 24 hour response time.

The aim of emergency repairs is to make safe, prevent further damage to the property or harm to a tenant and assess what further work may be required.

Examples of emergency repairs are detailed below:

- Make safe gas installations, isolate gas supplies where leaks detected, shut down unsafe appliances
- Isolate and stop the source of flooding or major leaks
- Restore the operation of a WC where there is only one facility in the property
- Restore the operation of heating in the event of a failure (winter only) or provide an alternate temporary source of heating
- Carry out works to prevent potential electric shock
- Restore at least partial electricity supply to property (where not caused by a faulty meter or interrupted supply from external sources)
- To ensure the property is secure

Urgent Repairs: 5 working day response time.

The aim of urgent repairs is to complete repairs to fittings or elements internal or external of the property which are regarded as fundamental to the operation of the tenant's home.

Urgent repairs may follow emergency repairs to resolve issues which have been temporarily made safe, and require a permanent fix as soon as possible.

The association aims to complete urgent repairs within 5 working days without issuing further orders on a longer timescale (such as Essential Repairs detailed below) wherever possible to facilitate continuity and tracking of repairs. However it is recognized that the availability of materials may unavoidably prolong the response time.

Examples of urgent repairs are detailed on the following page.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Examples of urgent repairs

- Reinstatement of fixed heating provision (during winter months)
- Replacement of gas boiler where repairs are unviable and heating and hot water are unavailable.
- Unblocking of baths, showers, sinks and secondary WCs
- Reinstatement of electricity to cooking appliances
- Total loss of hot water

Essential repairs – 30 day response time

The aim of essential repairs is to carry out less urgent maintenance requirements within a reasonable time scale.

Examples of essential repairs

- Repairs to dripping taps
- Extractor fan faults
- Repairs of internal door handles and hinges
- Kitchen unit repairs
- Fencing

Routine repairs – 130 day response time

Examples of routine repairs are mandatory periodical electrical testing, fire risk assessments and system maintenance, and servicing of communal equipment such as laundry room appliances. This type of maintenance will be timed to ensure compliance related certification remains valid at all times.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

5. LANDLORD AND TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Below are example of New World's responsibilities as a landlord

- Structural and exterior walls, chimneys, roofs, windows (but not most glazing), doors, drains, guttering, paths and steps
- Gas boilers and fixed electrical heaters
- Fuse boxes (consumer units), mains-powered smoke and heat detectors, fixed electrical fittings such as light pendants, extractor fans and switches
- Plumbing including basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing cisterns and overflows
- Kitchen worktops and worktops
- Shared parts – entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, rubbish chutes and lighting

Below are example of New World's tenants' responsibilities

- Blocked basin or sink/shower/bath wastes, replacing WC seats, shower hoses and handsets
- Replacing lost keys
- Decorations, including small or hairline cracks in plaster on walls and/or ceilings
- Maintaining own improvements and alterations
- Fitting and repairs to phone points or individual TV aerials and associated cables, and junction boxes (unless part of a shared installation).
- Resetting trip switches and replacing fuses, light bulbs and starters, smoke detector batteries
- Replacing broken window glass caused by accidental damage

5.1 Redecoration of common parts

Where more than three flats share an entrance hall, staircase or other internal common parts the Association will aim to redecorate every seven years although this may be adjusted for a particular property to take account of its age or condition. Where budgets do not allow redecoration to the above timescale, the actual year remains at the discretion of the association.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

6. TENANTS IMPROVEMENTS

Any improvements, alterations and additions by tenants must be agreed in advance by the association, and the responsibility for their maintenance will remain with the tenant.

7. RE-CHARGEABLE ITEMS

If New World is requested to carry out a repair or piece of work, which falls outside its responsibility, the Maintenance, Housing or Office Administrator receiving the request will normally explain the position and decline the request. If, however, New World carries out a repair for which it is not responsible, the association will charge the person responsible the cost of the repair.

The types of work for which New World is not responsible are set out in the Tenant's handbook, tenancy agreement and other documents.

Examples of the type of rechargeable repair that the association will undertake are listed below. An administration charge will be added to the cost of each invoice sent.

7.1 Re-chargeable items - current tenants:

The following items are rechargeable:

- Correcting alterations/repairs implemented by a tenant which are deemed by our surveyor to be of an unacceptable standard
- Damage within properties and vandalism where the offender is known and there is sufficient evidence to pursue a legal action for criminal damage
- Glass broken by the tenant
- Change of lock/forced entry due to lost keys or police intervention
- Electrical faults or flooding caused by the tenant's appliance
- Infestation if found to be caused by the tenant's own neglect
- An abortive call by a contractor in response to a tenant confirmed appointment

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

7.2 Re-chargeable items - former tenants:

- Cleaning and removal of rubbish left behind after the tenant has moved
- Re-instatement where the former tenant has left the property in a condition that breaks the terms and conditions of their tenancy/agreement with New World
- Repairs that are beyond normal wear and tear, such as damage by children or pets to internal fittings and fittings
- Corrective work before a re-let is possible resulting from the tenant carrying out alterations or DIY of a poor standard

The Tenant's Handbook and the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement or management agreement are the reference for repair responsibility.

If the repair is assessed as being rechargeable, the Housing Officer will explain that the association does not normally carry out repairs for which the tenant is responsible and that the tenant should make their own arrangements and employ a contractor to carry out the works.

If the tenant is unwilling or unable to make their own arrangements the Housing Officer will explain that New World will only carry out maintenance and repairs upon the following conditions:

- The works are agreed by the Housing or Maintenance Manager
- The full costs for the works to be undertaken will be paid in advance.
- If repairs are not carried out there is a risk of deterioration to the property

The Housing Manager will approve whether the cost should be recharged to the tenant and recharge debts will be monitored quarterly by the Office Administrator.

7.3 Recharging Procedure

- (a) The damage will be identified to be as a result of neglect/misuse
- (b) The tenant will be informed of the intention of making a charge for repairs in writing with the reason(s)
- (c) An estimate will be obtained for the cost of repairs, the tenant notified of amount of recharge in writing with a letter of demand, and finance provided with full details

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

(d) Once payment has been received, or direct debit agreement received (where a payment plan has been agreed) and the first payment has been credited to the association's accounts, an order will be raised for the contractor to undertake the required repairs, and a confirmation invoice sent to the tenant

(e) Costs will be charged to the Sundry Debtors Account, and any recovered sums will be credited to the Routine Maintenance Budget.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

8. CUSTOMER SERVICE

In order to work with our tenants to provide the best possible customer service, New World will undertake the following:

- Monitor tenant satisfaction using telephone, text, contractor and online surveys
- Respond to and follow up on negative feedback
- Measuring repair response times against published targets
- Undertake repairs inspections by tenant request or where contractors have raised concerns and more detailed works are required
- Confirm to tenants the work that we have ordered on their behalf
- Post inspect major repairs, refurbishments and sampling of routine maintenance
- Ensure that tenants are aware of the complaints procedure
- Consult with tenants and include in the design of major works such as kitchen and bathroom refurbishments, and cyclical maintenance.
- Clearly inform tenants of our actions, particularly if we are unable to meet specific requests

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

9. INITIAL REPORTING

Tenants should report maintenance issues or defects to the Office Administrator, Maintenance Officer or directly to the Housing Officer. The maintenance request is logged and work order raised.

We may visit the property or send a representative to ascertain the degree of works that need to be carried out depending the nature of the maintenance request.

We will inspect all reported cases of damp and condensation (see separate policy).

10. REPAIR ORDER PROCEDURE

10.1 Processing maintenance requests

- Name, address, contact details and full details of the repair to be recorded
- If the repairs are the responsibility of New World, the urgency of the repairs is to be determined. If the repairs are the tenants responsibility, the recharging procedure should be followed
- Housing management system (HMS) to be checked for history of similar repairs, items under guarantee or warranty etc., and the relevant contractor contacted accordingly if applicable
- Appropriate contractor to be assigned and the timescale to be determined, and the contractor to be contacted and availability checked against timescale
- Order to be processed on HMS and order to be emailed to the contractor
- Automated text message confirming detail of repairs, name of contractor and completion date sent to tenant contact number
- Contractor to contact tenant directly to make an appointment and to then confirm appointment details to New World

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

10.2 Repair order costs

All responsive repair orders are issued on the proviso that the appointed contractor can undertake works on the first visit up to the value of £500 to promote a 'first time fix' strategy to try to complete repairs during the first visit to minimise disruption for residents.. It is not anticipated that emergency repairs will exceed £500 as the nature of these visits is to make safe, isolate or secure a property. All invoices will be checked for labour and materials to ensure costs are proportional.

Contractors must report back when attending urgent, essential or routine orders and the repairs needed are estimated to exceed £500, and permission must be sought and authorised by the Maintenance or Housing Manager for works valued from £500 to £2000.

For higher value repairs typically exceeding £1000 (where urgent works are not required), comparative pricing from another source is expected, and approval memos presented to the Maintenance or Housing Manager detailing and justifying the costs, and the selection of contractor, for value for money purposes.

High value repairs which may form part of major repair programmes, and planned maintenance and refurbishments valued at over £5000, will be subject to discussions between the Maintenance Manager or Housing Manager and the Chief Executive to discuss the specification and nature of works required. Where possible the use of a schedule of rates will be implemented for kitchens and bathrooms based on comparisons with an industry standard costing system such as the current version of National Housing Federation Schedule of Rates with the appropriate adjustments. The appointing of specialist surveyors for larger projects will be considered for contract and tendering processes.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

11. CONTRACTORS

New World will maintain a list of approved day to day contractors to carry out general maintenance work.

All contractors will at the time of approval provide:

- Details of insurances held
- Copies of three years accounts
- Details of two referees (preferably other housing associations)
- Equal opportunities statement
- Evidence of registration to appropriate industry competency scheme (e.g. NICEIC, GasSafe, BM Trada etc)
- Accreditations (CHAS, SAFEcontractor, Constructionline etc)

11.2 Selection of contractors

The Maintenance Manager or Officer will select the appropriate contractor to use for each repair request or quotation sought bearing in mind:

- Electrical contractors are required to hold NICEIC Registration.
- Gas servicing contractors are required to be GasSafe registered.
- The current level of work given to each contractor
- The association is an equal opportunities employer. Thus contractors must comply with the Association's Equal Opportunities Policy statement. If an Employment Tribunal finds any contractor guilty of discrimination or harassment, whether it is racial or sexual, the association will review their involvement and suitability to remain on the approved list.

11.3 Tenants will be made aware of the following:

Contractors must not be left alone in the home at any time with children aged under 18, and should not enter or work in an empty property without prior written agreement between the tenant and New World. If the tenant leaves the home, the contractor may have to stop work, leave the property and wait for the tenant to return.

Contractors can refuse to carry out work under certain conditions. For example, if children and pets encroach on the workspace, furniture and possessions are blocking the work area, or hygiene levels are deemed unacceptable.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

11.4 Contractors code of conduct

We expect contractors and people who work for us to treat our tenants and their home with respect. All of our maintenance contractors will do the following:

- Make an appointment to carry out the work when it is convenient for the tenant.
- Introduce themselves and show photographic proof of identification.
- Explain the nature and purpose of the repair or replacement.
- Behave professionally at all times, not smoke, or use bad language. Take care of property and belongings and protect them from dust, paint and any other building rubbish. Keep homes secure while working there.
- Keep safe all materials and equipment used on site, to avoid danger to residents and visitors.
- Reconnect and test services such as gas, water and electricity at the end of each working day.
- Clear away any rubbish as a result of the repair.
- Repair any damage to internal decorations caused by carrying out any work.
- Perform all work to a high standard of skill, care and diligence consistent with industry best practices and in compliance with all relevant regulations, codes and manufacturer guidelines.
- Ensure all workers are appropriately trained, licensed (where required), and competent to perform the required tasks.
- Any defective or substandard workmanship identified by New World or tenants must be rectified at no additional cost and within a reasonable timeframe.
- Follow health and safety legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and other relevant codes of practice.
- Conduct all necessary risk assessments and provide method statements on request.
- Assess weather conditions when working at height (for example on ladders or scaffolding) and desist from such works during inclement weather. Follow our equalities policy.
- If major work is involved, outline the level of disturbance before the work starts and agree the extent of removing carpets, furniture and so on.
- Explain any follow-up work.
- Report back to New World any concerns identified during the works such as damp and mould, unsafe conditions, hygiene issues, sub-letting etc.
- Provide relevant information for aborted calls.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

12. ACCESS

12.1 General

If a contractor calls to carry out repairs and the occupier is not at home, then the contractor is to inform New World of dates of no access. The Housing or Maintenance Officer will contact the occupier for an explanation, to confirm a new date, and to discuss the cost of a recharge where applicable.

12.2 Actions

All contractors employed by the association should have calling cards which can be left at a property where access for pre-arranged appointments is unavailable. Copies of dated calling cards and time stamped photos of the entrance to the property where available should be presented on request where no access is disputed. When New World is informed of an instance of no access, the Housing Officer should take the following actions:

- Confirm with the contractor that an appointment had been pre-arranged
- Note the time and date where access was unavailable and request evidence from the contractor – calling card and photos
- Enter the details of the missed appointment on the Housing Management System
- Contact the tenant by telephone or email to discuss reasons for unavailability
- If the tenant cannot be contacted by telephone or email, or does not respond, write to the tenant with details of the missed appointment requesting reasons for no access and to contact New World or the contractor directly
- Instruct the contractor to make further attempts to gain entry
- In instances, where the contractor intends to impose a charge, check evidence is available of the visit, the reason given by the tenant for missing the appointment, and whether a recharge is appropriate and justifiable
- Payment to the contractor for an abortive call should only be considered for approval if an appointment had been confirmed with the tenant and the contractor attended on time.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

13. TENANT SATISFACTION WITH REPAIRS

- a. The Association continuously monitors Contractors performance in carrying out day-to-day repairs
- b. On completion of each repair order, once the invoice details are added to the housing management system, an automated satisfaction text survey is sent to the tenant's contact number requesting whether the repair was completed to the tenant's satisfaction. A link in the text message invites the tenant to complete an online survey to give more detailed feedback regarding the repair
- c. Tenants in properties subject to repairs within each reporting period are randomly contacted by telephone by the office administrator to obtain feedback regarding their most recent repair
- d. Contractors are asked to present a survey to the tenant on leaving the property when repairs are completed which asks whether the repair was completed to the tenant's satisfaction
- e. Post inspections will be arranged for all high value repairs, for unresolved instances of dissatisfaction with repairs or where extensive follow on works are required
- f. If a tenant has complained of poor workmanship either by contacting the association directly or in response to the various methods of survey, the Maintenance Officer will investigate the complaint as to why there is poor performance and rectify the complaint. Records of all complaints and action taken will be documented and saved in the relevant property folder
- g. If the Maintenance or Housing Manager considers it necessary, further investigation shall take place including interviewing the Contractor
- h. Completed satisfaction surveys will be collated and included in maintenance management reports on a quarterly basis and presented to the Management Board. Tenant satisfaction performance will be submitted for peer group benchmarking on a quarterly basis

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

14. PROCESSING INVOICES

Contractors will be asked to submit their invoices by the 20th of each month for work carried out in the previous month (e.g. work carried out in January should be invoiced to New World by 20th February) Payment will be made for all work invoiced in the previous month, i.e. work carried out in June and invoiced in July will be paid at the end of August.

Invoices from contractors should contain the following information:

- Current Date
- Repair order number
- Unique invoice number
- Address where work carried out.
- Brief summary of work carried out
- Breakdown of invoice – labour, materials, VAT, total – (Where possible)
- Date of completion
- VAT registration number
- Company registration number and registered office address
- Any appropriate notes

The invoice details will be checked for accuracy and queries raised with contractor where required by the Maintenance Manager or Maintenance Officer. Invoice values and completion dates detailed on the invoice will be entered into the Housing Management System

Invoices will be saved in the appropriate contractor file and copies passed to the finance department

Invoice recorded in the invoice register by the finance department

Invoice matched up with original repair order, and coded and signed as accurate and sent to the Housing Manager and Chief executive for counter signature

The Housing Manager and the Chief Executive sign and return to the finance department

Cheques and payments prepared for signatories

Cheques passed to Administrator to be recorded before being posted out

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

15. COMPENSATION

There may be occasions where New World's maintenance services falls short of the standards we have promised and tenants may be entitled to pursue compensation. Our compensation policy recognises that there are other remedies available to put a situation right and tenants are not automatically entitled to compensation, but in some instances, financial compensation may be the only and appropriate form of redress. Compensation payments must however be consistent, fair, and proportionate.

Tenants may claim compensation for a service failure where the lack of repair has affected the health, safety or security of the tenant or member of the household, or resulted in a quantifiable loss. This may be the result of poor complaint handling, delays in providing a service, failure to meet target response times or failure to follow policy and procedure.

Under the Right to Repair Scheme, repairs which cost less than £250 and are not completed within statutory target times, statutory compensation can be claimed. This is £10 plus an additional £2 per household per capped at £50, for emergency repairs completed after 48 hours, urgent repairs completed after 14 working days, and essential repairs exceeding 56 working days.

To claim compensation the tenant should make a written request to the Housing Officer giving details of the service failure. Any quantifiable costs must have been reasonably incurred and evidence of loss/receipts must be provided. Where the request appears to meet criteria for compensation the Housing Officer will pass the details to the Housing Manager with the claim for consideration. The Housing Officer will advise the tenant in writing of the success/failure of their claim, the amount of any compensation to be awarded and the nature of the payment. Compensation will be offset against arrears on a rent or service account where applicable. The Tenant can appeal to the Chief Executive in respect of compensation decisions made.

Compensation claims will not be usually considered for the following circumstances (see next page):

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- Where the problem or service failure has caused little or no problem to the resident
- For personal injury or other public liability insurance claims
- Where the resident or service user could make a claim against their insurance policy
- For claims of damage caused by circumstances beyond our control (e.g., through damage caused by storms and floods)
- For claims that should be covered by a home contents insurance policy, which tenants are responsible for obtaining. This includes damage to belongings (including floor coverings) due to leaks, flood, or fire
- Where the loss is due to lack of action, neglect, wilful damage, or misuse by the tenant, the household, or a guest
- For issues subject to legal proceedings or disrepair claims
- For loss or damage caused by a third party unrelated to Clarion Housing. For example, a utility company, or another resident or visitor
- When we have fulfilled our statutory and contractual obligations
- Our staff or contractors have been unable to gain access to carry out work
- We have acted reasonably and followed our policies and procedures
- For a resident's loss of earnings when taking time off work to allow access to their home for repairs to be carried out. This is an obligation in the tenancy agreement

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

16. COMPLAINTS

16.1 Introduction

We are committed to providing high-quality services and treating all residents fairly. Sometimes we may fall short. When this happens, we want to know so we can put things right and learn from our mistakes. This policy sets out New World's approach to managing complaints.

We accept complaints from: New World residents, or those acting on their behalf with consent; Third parties affected by New World's decisions, actions, or non-actions

At New World, it is important that:

You can easily let us know when you are unhappy with the service you experience

We can put matters right for you and improve our service for everyone

Our priority is to:

Resolve your complaint quickly and thoroughly

Take account of your personal situation

Keep you informed and ensure you understand our decision

Complaints can be made in several different ways. We will make reasonable adjustments for those who need additional assistance. Please contact us if you would like help making a complaint.

This procedure explains:

What a complaint is

How you can make one

What you can expect from us

16.2 What is a Complaint?

A complaint is: "Any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by New World Housing Association, our staff, or those acting on our behalf, which affects a resident, household, or group of residents."

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Residents are encouraged to raise concerns with relevant staff first, as issues may be resolved quickly. Formal complaints can be made at any time.

You do not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as one.

2Service Request - A service request is:

"A request from a resident to the landlord (or organisation working on their behalf) requiring action to be taken to put something right."

Service requests are not considered complaints. However, if you are dissatisfied with our response to a service request, it will be considered a complaint.

We will consider all complaints on their merits. If a complaint is not accepted, we will explain why and provide information about your right to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman.

16.3 What Can I Complain About?

You can complain about:

- Delays in responding to requests or enquiries
- Failure to provide a service
- The quality or standard of a service
- Failure to follow our policies or procedures
- The behaviour or attitude of staff or contractors
- The way we have applied a policy or decision

This list is not exhaustive. We welcome feedback on any aspect of our service.

16.4 What Cannot Be Considered

Some issues are handled elsewhere, for example:

Issues over twelve months old (discretion may be applied)

First-time requests for a service (e.g. reporting a repair)

Issues already decided by a court, tribunal, or Housing Ombudsman

Matters already dealt with under this complaints policy (unless new evidence arises)

Expressions of dissatisfaction via surveys (not defined as complaints)

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Matters being dealt with as legal claims

In all cases, we will explain why and signpost you to the correct process. Compensation requests linked to complaints will still be considered.

16.5 Our Principles

When you complain, we promise to:

- Make it easy to let us know when you are unhappy
- Apologise when you have cause to complain
- Listen and ask questions to understand your dissatisfaction and desired outcome
- Investigate thoroughly and consider your personal circumstances
- Be transparent and fair in communication and decision-making
- Resolve issues quickly
- Learn from feedback to improve services

16.6 Accessibility and Awareness

We welcome feedback from:

- Residents named on a New World tenancy or household members
- Third parties negatively affected by our actions or decisions
- Persons acting on behalf of a resident (with consent), e.g., family, advocate, neighbour, MP, or councillor

Complaints can be made via petitions, treated as one complaint, with correspondence addressed to the first signer.

Complaints about services New World is not responsible for can be raised to us. A resolution may not be possible by us but if requested we can provide support and signposting. This includes where the site has a freeholder or head-leaseholder responsible for communal issues and New World is the leaseholder.

Complaints about staff or other parties will be handled in line with HR and contract management policies. Relevant information will be shared, respecting confidentiality and data protection.

We will challenge all forms of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and fully investigate related complaints.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

16.7 How to Make a Complaint

Complaints can be made:

- In person, by phone, email, or letter
- Through our website or online complaints form
- Via an advocate, MP, councillor, or other representative

Support is available to make complaints, including advocacy services like Citizens Advice. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure accessibility.

16.8 Complaints Process

We follow a two-stage procedure in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code 2024.

Stage 1: Local Resolution

- Formal complaint logged if service request not resolved
- Acknowledged, logged, and desired outcomes confirmed within 5 working days
- Full response aimed within 10 working days; possible 10-day extension with explanation
- Stage 1 response includes: confirmation of conclusion, overview, decision, reasons, compensation details, outstanding actions, how to escalate to Stage 2

Stage 2: Investigation

- Escalation if dissatisfied with Stage 1, reviewed by different staff member
- Requests must be within 20 working days (exceptions considered)
- Acknowledged, logged, and outcomes confirmed within 5 working days
- Full response aimed within 20 working days; possible 20-day extension with Ombudsman details

Stage 2 response includes: confirmation of conclusion, overview, decision, reasons, compensation details, outstanding actions, how to escalate to Housing Ombudsman

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

16.9 If You Are Still Unhappy

In some cases, you may remain dissatisfied after going through our two-stage internal complaints procedure. You can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

You can consult the Ombudsman for advice at any time before or during the complaints process.

You do not need to wait or go through a designated person.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

17. LEGAL ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ORDERS

From time to time tenants will bring an action against the Association via a Solicitor because of disrepair. In most cases the tenant has been dissatisfied with the way the Association has dealt with their repair problem either by not carrying out the repairs or not rehousing them.

It is therefore extremely advantageous to the Association to ensure that tenants do not have cause to take to legal action. This is done by ensuring as far as possible the covenant contained within the Tenancy Agreement is complied with. Legal action can result in substantial compensation claims being made to tenants which must be paid for from the maintenance budget but would certainly result in substantial legal fees, particularly where the tenant is legally aided.

It is not the intention of this section to outline details of legal action for disrepair for this is a complex and detailed area, however, action against the Association will most likely be brought using three pieces of legislation.

- (a) Section 11, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Repair Covenant)
- (b) Part IV of the 1985 Housing Act (Fitness for Human Habitation)
- (c) The 1990 Environmental Protection Act - Sections 79 - 82 (Replaces 1936 Public Health Act)

While tenants may bring their own action via a solicitor, Local Authorities have a statutory obligation to deal with disrepair and this is delegated to Environmental Health Officers.

17.1 Legal Action

On receiving a letter from a solicitor threatening legal action for disrepair it is essential to respond promptly. There are three possible courses of action:-

- The Maintenance Manager or Maintenance Officer, in some cases accompanied by the Housing Manager, will visit and prepare a schedule of repair and a timetable for their completion.
- Where the Maintenance Manager/Housing Manager believes the tenant does not have a case, a letter and a brief is referred to the Association's solicitors to produce a response.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- The matter is referred to the Association's insurers after discussing the case with the Chief Executive.

All actions should be well documented to assist in the preparation and presentation of a court case.

17.2 Environmental Health Orders

Environmental Health Officers have the powers to issue notices to Landlords where they believe:-

- (a) there is a statutory nuisance - Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 79-82.
- (b) there is unfitness - the Housing Act 1985 Section 606.

In serving the notice the Environmental Health Officer will have regard to current Building and Fire Regulations.

Any Notice issued will be sent to the Chief Executive and is usually copied to the Housing or Maintenance Manager.

The Notice will state:-

- (a) Legislation which is being breached
- (b) Works required to comply with the legislation
- (c) The timetable for carrying out the works and any other conditions.

On receipt of a Notice a Landlord has 28 days to appeal from the date of that Notice. If there is no appeal or the appeal fails and the landlord does not carry out the work within the time scale the Local Authority can have the work carried out in default with all the costs being charged to the Landlord.

17.3 Initial Action - Environmental Health Orders

- (a) All Notices should be logged to enable the Maintenance Officer and Housing Officer to monitor the progress of each case.
- b) In most cases the order will be referred to the Housing Manager.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- (c) In some cases it might be necessary to decant the tenant; this will need to be agreed with the Chief Executive
- (d) It is important that all actions are agreed with the Environmental Health Officer.
- (e) If the Maintenance Manager/Housing Officer feels the Notice is not justified then the Housing Manager should explain the Association's case to the Environmental Health Officer. The Environmental Health Officer has the power not to enforce the order.
- (f) There may be occasions where it is felt that the legal challenge in the 28 days for the order is appropriate. This should only be done in exceptional cases where the Environmental Health Officer is acting outside of the law, and there could be significant financial implications for the Association.
- (g) Where a Notice has significant financial implications for the Association, it is important that extensive negotiations take place with the Environmental Health Officer to minimise the impact of the Order.

17.4 Management Action - Environmental Health Orders

- (a) On being passed the order, the Maintenance or Housing Manager should contact the relevant Environmental Health Officer and in some cases where appropriate agree a joint visit.
- (b) The Maintenance or Housing Manager should draw up a specification which is agreed with the Environmental Health Officer.
- (c) The specification should be treated according to estimated value as stated in the repairs procedure.
- (d) The Maintenance or Housing Manager should keep the Environmental Health Officer informed of progress. The Environmental Health Officer will agree an extension of the timetable where it is reasonable.
- (e) Once works have been completed the Environmental Health Officer should approve them and confirm that the order has been complied with.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

18. VOIDS PROCEDURE

It is important to ensure we have clarity and consistency of void management to ensure the Association is complying with Decent Homes Standards and minimum standards for lettings. It is also important for internal controls and risk management that we have clear guidelines for letting properties quickly to prevent loss of rental income. In addition to the above the association will also consult its long term asset management strategy and cyclical maintenance programme and the potential to bring forward certain planned works while a property is void.

18.1 Advanced notification/Pre inspections

If we are given advance notice that a tenant is vacating a property then the housing officer for the property should write immediately advising them that we would like to undertake a pre void inspection. This should be done for two reasons:

- To ensure that all necessary repairs are ordered as early as possible to reduce the void period.
- To ensure that the property has not been damaged or neglected by the tenant. Early inspection may give us the opportunity to get the tenant to make good any damage observed. We may also threaten to withdraw any offer of a transfer if any damage exists.

Our letter to the tenant will remind the tenant that they should:

- Leave the property, internally and externally in a satisfactory and clean condition
- Clear out all personal belongings including those in loft spaces and garages
- Return all sets of keys promptly on the Sunday or early Monday morning so that the tenancy can be terminated officially. (Tenants must also be advised that if they fail to return all keys by midday on the Monday an extra week's rent will be charged to their account)
- Clear their rent account in full
- Provide a forwarding address

Our letter will also have attached a "relinquishment of tenancy" form for the tenant to sign and return. Once this is received it should be possible to request a nomination from the Local Authority or identify a suitable transfer case for an offer. Where possible a viewing should be arranged prior to the departing tenant vacating.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

The housing officer will note the termination date in their diary and ensure this information is recorded and shared with other team members.

Once the keys are officially returned a further inspection will be carried out to complete a full void inspection or to pick up on any additional repairs or problems.

18.1 Late notification by tenant

In many cases no notice is given at all and keys are just returned. When this happens it is essential that a visit takes place within 24 hours of receiving them. The housing officer will make an immediate arrangement to change the locks of the property and consult with the Maintenance Manager or Maintenance Officer to assess any further security measures which may be needed in order to secure the property.

The housing officer will complete a tenancy change form which should be copied for the tenant's file. The original must be given to finance promptly so the necessary tenancy changes can be made.

18.2 Property Inspection Visit/Repairs

Property inspection will be undertaken by either the Housing Officer, Maintenance Office or Maintenance Manager. During a pre-inspection it will not always be possible to check the whole property due to furniture blocking certain areas, however, a check will still be undertaken when we know a tenant is due to leave and the housing officer must record as much information as possible.

A thorough inspection must be undertaken, picking up on any repairs required. It may be necessary to place repairs in categories of urgent and non-urgent. Non-urgent ones could be completed with a new tenant in occupation

Photographic records must be taken.

A note will be made of any structures, fixtures or fittings which are not the responsibility of the Association to maintain or renew. A decision will have to be made whether to remove these or offer to gift them to the new tenant. This would include any floor coverings or fitted white goods left behind by the previous tenant.

In order to ensure minimum disruption to the new tenant, bringing forward cyclical or planned maintenance works will be considered.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

In addition to inspecting for repairs, an assessment will also be made as to whether the flat needs cleaning and whether a decorating allowance is required for each room. Decorating allowances will not be automatically issued to new tenants. In the case of badly maintained or hard to let properties, the housing officer will consider if the property needs to be redecorated by the association prior to letting.

The removal of any minor aids and adaptations will also be considered at this stage if it is unlikely that the incoming tenant will have exactly the same needs

18.3 Repairs & Compliance

All empty properties must be subject to an Electrical Installation Conditions Report, and a satisfactory outcome achieved before re-letting. Similarly a gas safety check must be undertaken where there is a gas supply and a certificate issued by a GasSafe engineer. An energy assessment should be carried out if the property does not have a current certificate, and if the rating falls below 'D', all possible upgrades need to be considered to raise the rating to 'C' or above to comply with legislation expected from 2026.

The void should also be inspected with reference to and consideration of the following policies where they apply, with appropriate action if required included in the works preceding the new tenancy:

- Damp & Mould
- Legionella Control
- Aids & Adaptations
- Pest Control
- Asbestos Management

Locks to external doors must be changed for security reasons.

If repairs are minor, an order should be placed with a contractor immediately.

If expenditure is going to be high, then the Associations' policy on delegated authorities and levels of authorisation must be taken into account before orders are raised. Contractors should be informed that the property is a void and therefore works will need to be carried out within a tight timescale. Confirmation that contractors can meet this timescales should be checked before orders are placed.

When all safety checks and urgent repairs have been completed then a post inspection should be undertaken to ensure all works have been completed to a good standard. If major or planned repairs have been undertaken then the Associations' stock condition survey data on the housing management system should be updated.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

18.4 Void Period

The housing officer must monitor the void period closely and feedback progress to the Housing Management Team. The Housing Manager must also be kept closely informed of progress and any delays or problems. Our aim is to let our general needs properties within 2 weeks.

18.5 Offering the void property.

An accompanied viewing should be arranged for the prospective tenant. This can be done before all the works have been completed if it does not affect health & safety.

The prospective tenant should be given information about the work the association will or won't be carrying out before they can occupy the property.

The prospective tenant should also be informed of any structures, fixtures and fittings which are not the responsibility of the association to maintain and offered the choice of having them removed or of accepting them as a gift.

If items are to be gifted to a new tenant then this should be recorded in writing and signed for by the new tenant

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

19. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- a) New World Housing Association has the responsibility as an employer for health and safety and seeks to provide as far as is reasonably practicable safe and healthy working conditions in co-operation with its employees. Management shall consult regularly with staff on Health and Safety matters. It should be noted that breaches of Health and Safety policies and/or procedures may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member.
- b) The association shall comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, as well as subsequent Health and Safety legislation and all other relevant statutory provisions, and shall seek the support of its staff in achieving these aims.
- c) The association has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare at work of all its employees and to conduct its undertakings in such a way as to ensure that individuals not in its employment are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.
- d) Every staff member has a responsibility for their own safety and their actions should not put other people at risk.
- e) The association is required to do all that is reasonably practicable in the field of construction, operation and maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment to ensure standards are met in order that injuries and hazards are reduced as far as reasonably practical. Where appropriate, the Association will provide safety training together with necessary safety devices.

19.1 Aims and objectives

- a) To ensure all staff are fully conversant with the general duties and responsibilities of the association towards its staff and the general public.
- b) To keep all staff informed of relevant legislation and codes of practice and to ensure that these are complied with so as to eliminate hazards or prevent accidents and unhealthy working conditions and to provide technical advice on safety matters to assist employees to meet their responsibilities.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- c) To ensure the provision of initial treatment of injury or illness at work.
- d) To ensure that staff are fit to carry out the type of work they are required to do.
- e) To ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that occupational disease or injury due to physical, chemical or other environmental hazards is prevented
- f) To provide for the identification of all health hazards in relation to the use, handling, transport and storage of all goods, machinery and chemicals.
- g) To ensure the reporting of all occupational accidents, injuries, and the subsequent analysis and investigation of all information received.
- h) To ensure the regular monitoring of the working environment.
- i) To provide codes of good practice and recommendations for the maintenance of good health for use by employees.
- j) To ensure that all employees take such action as they can to eliminate hazards or prevent accidents and unsafe working conditions.
- k) To ensure that all articles for use are designed, constructed, installed, maintained and inspected so as to be as safe as is reasonably practicable.
- l) To ensure that each department or identifiable work area has adequate safety rules and that a programme exists or cover the systematic maintenance and proper functioning of all safety devices and guards on plant, instruments, tools and equipment in these areas.
- m) To ensure that safe access to and from the work place is provided for all persons at all times and to ensure that the place of work is free from hazards at all times.
- n) To ensure that provision of adequate means of escape in case of fire, fire warning systems and fire-fighting equipment and the training of staff so that they respond effectively in controlling a fire emergency and are aware of fire hazards.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- o) To ensure the provisions of protective clothing where necessary and that where articles and clothing are supplied, they are used.
- p) To ensure that the codes of good practice and recommendation for good health are followed.
- q) To ensure that provision of information, instruction, training and supervision to help all staff to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their own safety and health at work.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

20. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

20.1 Aims

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association meets the requirements for electrical safety under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), Landlords and Tenant Act 1985, the Housing Act 2004, the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994, and ensures all electrical installations are appropriately maintained and safe to use. This includes meeting the requirement that all domestic electrical fixed wiring systems should be tested at intervals of no longer than 5 years from the previous inspection, or when the property is void or subject to a mutual exchange.

20.2 Introduction

The main risks associated with using electricity, electrical installations and electrical appliances are electrical shocks which can cause ill health or death and the potential for a fire to start. UK regulations place an explicit duty on owners of buildings with electrical installations or equipment is installed. New World are required to take reasonably practicable measures to ensure that all buildings, are safe and without risk to health.

The aims and duties of the Electrical Safety Policy are:

Ensure the safety and welfare of all residents, visitors, staff and contractors in relation to properties owned or managed by New World Housing Association.

Ensure New World Housing Association complies with all electrical safety legislation and regulations.

Ensure that all domestic and non-domestic (communal) properties owned or managed by the association with fixed wiring systems have a valid Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) that is no older than 5 years from the date of the previous EICR

Ensure that we will hold accurate records against each property the association owns, or manages, identifying when the electrical installation was last inspected and tested, including annual Portable Appliance Tests (PATs) of all electrical portable appliances that the association owns for communal use or in communal areas.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

To demonstrate and provide evidence that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure access to all properties and to undertake Electrical Installation Condition Report testing within a 5 year timeframe.

20.3 Legal duties

Applicable legislation and regulatory framework for Electrical Safety is based on but not limited to the following:

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
Building Safety Act 2022
Defective Premises Act 1972
Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
Housing Act 1988
Fire Safety Act 2021
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
Equalities Act 2010
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Construction (Design and Management Regulations) 2015
Building Regulations (England) 2010 (Amended 2023)
Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
BS 7671: (Latest edition including Guidance notes)
The provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
The Supply of Machinery Regulations 2008
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
British Standards

20.4 Periodical electrical safety testing access

New World Housing Association will ensure Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) inspections are carried out no later than 60 months after the date of the previous EICR.

All contractors procured to undertake electrical testing must be accredited with the
National Inspection Council Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC).

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

The electrical contractor will undertake the administrative work associated with access for annual safety checks, and arrange an appointment directly with the tenant.

If after making the initial appointment the tenant does not allow access to carry out the safety check, the electrician must leave a calling card giving details of the date and time of the visit and contacts to re-arrange the appointment.

If the electrical contractor is unsuccessful in contacting the tenant by any means or there is no response to a calling card, New World staff will attempt on at least 3 occasions to contact the tenant by telephone, text message and letter which will include reference to the statutory nature of the check. If no contact from the tenant is forthcoming, a letter will then be hand delivered to the property, and an information poster affixed to the front door.

Records of all attempts to contact the tenant will be entered on the housing management software (Pyramid), and copies of letters or photos of access attempts will be saved for future reference.

If no contact has been made following all of the above actions and 60 months has passed since the last inspection, the Housing Officer will discuss further action with the Housing Manager. If deemed appropriate, an application for an injunction to force entry will be sought.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

21. GAS SAFETY

21.1 Purpose

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association fulfils its duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and ensures all gas installations are appropriately maintained and safe to use. This includes the statutory duty to carry out annual gas safety checks and the provision of carbon monoxide detection.

21.2. Introduction

Fatalities, injury or ill health from carbon monoxide poisoning or explosions are risks associated with the use of gas as a fuel for heating systems and cooking appliances. New World Housing Association has a duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure appropriate management systems are in place to ensure tenants, staff and any others are not put at risk from the effects of gas or carbon monoxide.

To manage these risks requires a commitment to ensuring all gas fittings, appliances and flues are properly installed and maintained.

The aims and duties of the Gas Safety Policy are:

Ensure the safety and welfare of all residents, visitors, staff and contractors in relation to properties owned or managed by New World Housing Association.

Ensure New World Housing Association complies with all gas safety legislation and regulations.

Ensure all gas appliances and fittings are installed properly, and are maintained and serviced in accordance with regulations and manufacturer's instructions.

To ensure gas safety checks are undertaken in all properties with a gas supply on an annual basis, and records are retained for a minimum of 2 years. And to undertake gas safety checks prior to any new tenancy, mutual exchange or transfer.

To demonstrate and provide evidence that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure access to all properties and attain a gas safety certificate within a 12 month timeframe.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

21.3 Legal duties

The principle legislation for the installation, maintenance and use of gas appliances, and gas safety checks are set out by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. These regulations place a statutory requirement on New World Housing Association to ensure that:

- All relevant gas fittings, appliances and associated flues are installed and maintained in a safe condition.
- All relevant gas fittings, appliances and associated flues are checked and serviced annually by a competent person
- Records of gas safety checks are retained, and issued to tenants

Other relevant legislation:

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (2006 Amendment & 1999)

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000

Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996

Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Gas Acts 1986 and 1995

Gas Appliance (Safety) Regulations 1995

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005

Building Regulations and Building Standards Regulations

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022

21.4 Annual gas safety access

New World Housing Association will ensure landlord gas safety checks are carried out between two months before the 12 month anniversary date of the most recent landlord's gas safety certificate and its expiry date.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Only Gas Safe registered engineers appropriately qualified will be permitted to carry out gas repairs and safety testing at New World's properties.

The gas contractor will undertake the administrative work associated with access for annual safety checks, and arrange an appointment directly with the tenant.

If after making the initial appointment the tenant does not allow access to carry out the safety check, the engineer must leave a calling card giving details of the date and time of the visit and contacts to re-arrange the appointment.

If the gas contractor is unsuccessful in contacting the tenant by any means or there is no response to a calling card, New World staff will attempt on at least 3 occasions to contact the tenant by telephone, text message and letter which will include reference to the statutory nature of the check. If no contact from the tenant is forthcoming, a letter will then be hand delivered to the property, and an information poster affixed to the front door.

Records of all attempts to contact the tenant will be entered on the housing management software (Pyramid), and copies of letters or photos of access attempts will be saved for future reference.

If no contact has been made following all of the above actions and 12 months has passed since the last inspection, the Housing Officer will discuss further action with the Housing Manager. If deemed appropriate, an application for an injunction to force entry will be sought, or capping the gas supply at the external meter will be considered to ensure no gas can enter the property to make it gas safe.

In cases where the gas supply is capped at the external meter, prior notice must be given and details provided to explain to the tenant the action to be taken to enable the meter to be uncapped at the earliest opportunity.

21.5. Annual gas safety check

Any unsafe gas appliances or installations will be identified and the appropriate action taken according to the Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure

Visual only checks will be carried out on tenants own appliances; if applicable, warning notices will be issued and disconnection undertaken along with advice to the tenant from the Gas Safe engineer.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Annual checks and testing of carbon monoxide alarms will be included as part of the gas safety check and the findings recorded on the Landlords Gas Safety Record. The engineer will replace any existing defective alarms at the time of the gas safety check with a battery-operated replacement.

Annual checks and testing smoke detectors will also be included as part of the gas safety check and the findings recorded on the Landlords Gas Safety Record. We will ensure that any alarms or detectors are repaired or replaced by a suitably qualified electrician once informed that they are faulty.

Landlords Gas Safety Records will remain available to access on the housing gas management system (currently Gasengineerssoftware) for at least two years.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

22. FIRE SAFETY

22.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association effectively manages the prevention and risk of fire, and complies with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements while safeguarding residents, staff, contractors, and visitors. The key aims are to:

Minimise ignition risks and hazardous conditions.

Prevent or reduce the risk of harm to residents, staff, and visitors.

Safeguard and limit damage to buildings and assets.

Meet legal obligations under fire safety regulations.

Promote fire safety awareness residents, staff, and visitors

This Fire Safety Policy outlines our approach to fire prevention, risk management, and emergency procedures in compliance with all relevant English legislation.

22.2 Legal duties

This policy complies with the following legislation:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO 2005)
- Housing Act 2004
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015
- Equality Act 2010 (to ensure fire safety measures accommodate vulnerable residents)

Other relevant legislation:

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (2006 Amendment & 1999)

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

22.3 Duty holders & responsible persons

All employees of New World Housing Association (NWHHA) have a duty to ensure fire safety by reporting hazards immediately such as blocked escape routes, faulty alarms, damaged fire doors, or other risks, and by following fire safety procedures and engaging in fire safety training.

Under the RRFSO 2005, the following roles have legal responsibilities:

Responsible Person (RP):

The Maintenance Manager is the primary Responsible Person for fire safety by overseeing fire safety compliance, fire risk assessments, and staff training.

Housing Officers and the Maintenance Officer conduct routine fire safety checks, report hazards, and support resident awareness.

Duty Holders:

NWHHA Board & Senior Management – Ensure compliance with fire safety laws, allocate resources, and review fire risk assessments (FRAs).

Contractors – Ensure fire safety systems (alarms, emergency lighting, fire doors) are maintained and report fire risks (e.g., faulty wiring) immediately to NWHHA. Ensure the appropriate fire safety provision is incorporated within the scope of any work

Residents – Follow fire safety advice, report hazards, maintain clear escape routes, test smoke alarms and report defects to New World

22.4 Fire risk assessments (fras)

FRAs must be conducted and reviewed as specified (or sooner if significant changes occur) by a suitably qualified independent assessor. Findings must be recorded, and action plans implemented.

22.5 Stay put policy

Where a "Stay Put" policy applies, residents are advised to:

Stay-Put = If a fire starts elsewhere in the building, to stay inside the flat (unless heat/smoke enters)

Evacuate = If a fire starts in their flat, to leave immediately and close all doors behind them.

Evacuation Policy

Immediate evacuation upon alarm activation, using designated routes to nominated assembly points.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

22.6 In the event of a fire

In the event of a fire, any staff member on site who is suitably fire warden trained, will be the key point of contact for the fire brigade, providing information about the situation and assisting with the overall emergency response.

The fire warden will help manage the evacuation process where safe to do so, including guiding people to safety and conducting roll calls.

They will also support individuals who may need extra help during evacuation where safe to do so.

22.7 Fire safety measures

The following fire safety testing and servicing will be undertaken where applicable and records kept:

Emergency lighting will be tested on an annual basis by an external nominated contractor and inspected and certified in accordance with BS 5266-1:2016 Emergency lighting - Part 1: Code of practice for the emergency escape lighting of premises.

Fire-fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers and smoke blankets where present will be checked on an annual basis by an external nominated contractor and inspected and certified in accordance with BS:5306-3: 2017 and part 8 2012

Fire alarm systems will be tested on a biannual basis by an external nominated contractor and inspected and certified in accordance with British Standards.

Smoke control equipment where present such as automatic opening vents will be checked on a biannual basis by an external nominated contractor and inspected and certified in accordance with BS7346-8:2013.

Dry Risers where present will be tested and serviced on a biannual basis by an external nominated contractor and inspected and certified in accordance with British Standards

The Maintenance Manager is responsible for resolving any non-compliance or defects identified from routine testing and inspections, and all staff must report any concerns regarding fire safety and vulnerable residents to the Maintenance Manager or Maintenance Officer and record such findings on the housing management software

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

22.8 Training & awareness

Staff will receive regular training including but not limited to how to identify and reduce fire hazards in the workplace and prevent fires; emergency procedures, including evacuation routes and assembly points; the proper use of fire safety equipment; understanding roles and responsibilities including those of fire wardens; and complying with legal requirement.

Residents will be provided with a full fire safety induction on assuming residency in New World's properties.

The importance of smoke detectors and the upkeep and use of fire doors will be communicated in written correspondence on at least one occasion annually, or more frequently should reminders be required.

Signage will be clearly visible within flats describing the stay put or evacuation procedure, and relevant fire safety information and signage will be on display throughout the building, including the locations of assembly points.

Fire safety information and procedures including escape routes and fire assembly points will be made available where applicable to all visitors, staff and contractors.

All staff, contractors and visitors will be instructed to report any fire safety concerns or issues to New World Housing Association

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

23. DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION

23.1 Purpose

The overall aim of this policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective management of damp and mould across the association's housing stock and to ensure that New World provides dry, warm and healthy homes in relation to the properties under its control. We will investigate and identify causes of damp and condensation, adopt reasonable repair solutions and work with our residents to manage and control condensation.

23.2 Introduction

Damp and mould affects large numbers of homes throughout the UK; the causes of which range from penetrating and rising damp originating in a fault in the building's structure, to the growth of mould as a result of condensation. Left unchecked, dampness and mould can have negative respiratory and asthma health outcomes, particularly for elderly people and children. Social housing homes are at particular risk where factors such as overcrowding, lack of ventilation, and high energy costs prevent the adequate heating of many homes during winter (fuel poverty) and can lead to increased condensation and mould growth.

23.3 Legal duties

Registered Social Landlords who rent out property have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of their tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards. Legislation and regulations to which New World must comply which are relevant to damp, mould and condensation include the following:

- The Housing Acts 1985 and 2004
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating
- Decent Homes Standard
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act 2018)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Awaab's Law

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

23.4 Identifying damp, mould and condensation

The common causes of damp and mould include those created by water ingress from inside and outside the building such as:

- Blocked or leaking gutters, leading to penetrating damp
- Defective or leaking plumbing
- Missing or defective external brickwork pointing and render
- Drain faults
- Bridging of damp courses

Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface and then condenses producing water droplets, promoting the growth of mould, characterized by black staining and spores typically in bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms. Common contributory building factors include:

- Blocked vents limiting ventilation
- Absent, underpowered or non-operational mechanical ventilation
- Undersized or poorly functioning heating provision creating colder external walls
- Unvented and condensing tumblers dryers producing excessive water vapour

Excessive humidity leading to condensation can be due to lifestyle, frequently as a result of the following:

- Poor ventilation from keeping windows closed, and/or not using extractor fans or cooker hoods
- Insufficient use of heating
- Drying clothes on radiators
- Overcrowding
- Leaving bathroom door open when bathing and showering, and/or the kitchen door when cooking

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

23.5 Managing damp, mould and condensation

We will investigate to identify the possible causes of damp and condensation, and specify any necessary remedial works and the timescales to complete them.

New World will undertake all remedial actions to rectify penetrating and rising damp, and will take all reasonably practical measures to make improvements to assist in the control of condensation damp. General written guidance to manage damp and condensation will be provided to tenants, including recommendations on lifestyle changes where applicable.

Where tenants are unable to heat their homes effectively as a result of fuel poverty, creating or exacerbating the conditions for damp and mould, New World will offer all available advice and information regarding sources of financial assistance.

General preventative measures will be undertaken including the promotion of information and advice to reduce condensation in newsletters and on our website. Contractors will be encouraged to report back on instances of suspected damp and mould issues during non-related repairs. All stock condition surveys to highlight HHRS instances of damp and mould, as well as general observations such as overcrowding and hoarding.

23.6 Damp, mould and condensation procedure

- On first point of contact, undertake a telephone questionnaire to collect relevant information, and request photographic evidence for review
- Log all reported instances of damp, mould and condensation on Pyramid where further investigation is required
- Arrange a property inspection within 14 days of the report of a damp and condensation to visually review the building structure and components for possible causes of water ingress or conditions promoting mould growth. Discuss and assess tenants' lifestyle, and inform of changes to reduce condensation
- Provide a written summary of findings within 48 hours of the inspection using the Housing App software to generate the report
- Inform tenant of the findings from an inspection within 14 days, including detailing any remedial works, and/or recommended changes to lifestyle. Include any guidance or advice regarding reducing condensation as appropriate

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- For serious cases where there is significant risk to health, a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment should also be undertaken
- Emergency repairs to commence and be completed within 24 hours of a serious hazard to health being identified
- Repair works to commence within 7 days if the hazard poses a health risk
- Raise repair order instructions for building remedials works - such as re-pointing, replacing extractor fans, repair leaks etc - to be completed within a reasonable timescale for cases where there is not a risk of endangering the occupier's health
- Re-inspect after remedials works or advisory actions at a suitable interval to reassess original issue. Schedule further monitoring if required. Tenants will be asked to report further issues or recurrences should visible signs remerge or become apparent.
- All instances of Damp, Mould and Condensation requiring an inspection, remedials works or guidance to tenants will be recorded in the form of maintenance requests, repair orders or tenants correspondence, and will be available for review annually

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

24. PEST CONTROL

24.1 Purpose

The overall aims of this policy is to ensure we have a clear and consistent approach to pest control; to ensure New World meets its legal and regulatory obligations; and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of New World and our tenants.

24.2 introduction

New World strives to ensure that our properties are safe, comfortable, and free from pests.

Pests are commonly considered to include wasps, fleas, bed bugs, mice, rats, cockroaches and ants.

Bees and foxes are not regarded as pests and cannot be killed

24.3 Legal duties

Registered Social Landlords who rent out property have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of their tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards. Legislation and regulations to which New World must comply which are relevant to pest control include the following:

- The Housing Acts 1985 and 2004
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act 2018)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) 2002

24.4 Responsibilities

New World tenants are responsible for the removal and treatment of most common household pests and insect infestations within their property, unless there is clear evidence that pests have arisen because New World has failed or neglected to fulfil its responsibility as a landlord.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

Tenant Responsibilities:

Tenants are expected to take all reasonable actions to prevent and remove pest infestations from their properties, examples of which are as follows:

- Maintaining gardens, preventing overgrowth, and refraining from allowing rubbish or animal waste to accumulate.
- Disposing of rubbish carefully, by using sealed or tied up bin liners or sacks and placing in containers such as wheelie or food bins
- Using communal bin stores correctly by not dumping rubbish on floors instead of bins, and by disposing of bulk items at local recycling and waste centres.
- Ensure good hygiene within the home by maintaining cleanliness, disposing of leftover food, and ensuring food is stored securely and covered.
- Proactively prevent and address seasonal pests such as garden ants and flies infesting the home.

New World will not become involved in resolving infestations if it is apparent that they are the result of a lack of reasonable actions expected of tenants such as those outlined above.

Bedbugs and Fleas – these infestations are typically brought into the property via used furniture, luggage, backpacks, or via pets or people in the case of fleas, and are therefore not the landlord's responsibility.

New World Responsibilities:

Sealing gaps or holes in walls, floors or doors allowing pests such as mice to enter the property.

Treating infestations of communal areas such as shared hallways and gardens.

Where multiple flats within a block (approximately 25%) are affected by an infestation of a particular pest, we will arrange pest control treatment within those flats as well as communal areas, for the duration of a standard treatment program as prescribed by an accredited contractor. Typically these necessitate up to 3 visits to bait and remove pests such as mice and Pharaoh Ants.

Failing to provide access for pest control treatment may result in the recharge of the full cost of the treatment. We may also consider enforcement action relating to tenancy agreements should access not be provided for pest control treatment or where the property is kept in an unacceptable condition.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

25. LEGIONELLA CONTROL

25.1 Purpose

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association complies with the requirements of The Health and Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8 "The control of legionella bacteria in water systems" in relation to the properties under its control.

25.2 introduction

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella. Legionella bacteria is normally contained within fine water droplets (aerosol) that may be caused by operating a shower, spray apparatus, running a hot or cold water tap outlet or operating a humidifier.

The bacteria survive low temperatures and thrive at temperatures between 20-45 degrees Celsius if the conditions are right. Although Legionella is usually associated with large systems such as those in hospitals, schools, offices and factories, it can also be found in smaller systems used in residential accommodation.

Legionnaires' disease has the potential to affect anybody. However, those more susceptible are normally in the age range of 45 and above, smokers, heavy drinkers, or suffer from chronic respiratory or kidney disease or have impaired immune systems.

The primary method used to control the risk from Legionella is water temperature control. E.g. hot water will be stored at a temperature of at least 60°C, water pipes will be as short and direct as possible and pipes and water tanks will be effectively insulated to ensure cold water will be stored and distributed at a temperature of less than 20°C.

25.3 Legal duties

Under section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA), landlords who rent out property have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of their tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards. Therefore there is a legal duty to:

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

- Identify and assess sources of risk
- Develop a course of action for preventing or controlling the risk
- Implement and manage any identified courses of action
- Keep records and check the effectiveness of past actions completed

ACoP L8 Approved Code of Practice is the accepted method that should be used (or standards to be met) to comply with Health and Safety legislation.

25.4. Identifying, managing and controlling the risk

As a landlord we recognise our health and safety responsibilities and the need to take the right precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to legionella. We will:

4.1. Identify and assess sources of risk

A risk assessment, re-evaluated at intervals determined by the level of risk, will be undertaken by an accredited and competent individual or organisation to ensure that suitable procedures are implemented for the management of Legionella at those schemes or properties where there is an identified risk of infection from Legionella.

4.2. Manage the risk

We will implement and monitor the preventative maintenance schedule to ensure that in schemes or properties where there is an identified risk of infection from Legionella that this is managed and the risk minimised as far as possible.

4.3. Prevent or control risk

We will monitor results, inspections and checks undertaken, any remedial work carried out and any risks identified which may require additional attention

4.4. Keeping records

We will retain records of maintenance, inspections and testing for a minimum of five years.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

26. LIFTING EQUIPMENT

26.1 Purpose

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that New World Housing Association meets the requirements for the safety of Lifting Equipment in its properties under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), Landlords and Tenant Act 1985, the Housing Act 2004, the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, and ensures all lifting equipment is appropriately maintained and safe to use. This includes meeting the requirement that all lifting equipment should be examined and tested at the prescribed intervals or when the property is void or subject to a mutual exchange.

26.2 Introduction

This policy describes that measures are in place to identify, manage and/or mitigate the risks associated with lift safety and that New World Housing Association will comply with the applicable legislation.

This policy relates to all properties owned by New World Housing Association and is designed to ensure the safety and welfare of all our employees, tenants, care providers, contractors and other persons or other stakeholders who may work on, occupy, visit, or use its premises, live in its properties or who may be affected by its activities or services.

It will ensure that all lifting equipment is examined and tested at the prescribed intervals and that we will hold accurate records against each property the association owns, or manages, identifying when the lifting equipment was last inspected and tested.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

26.3 Legal duties

Applicable legislation and regulatory framework for Lifting Equipment is based on but not limited to the following:

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 and BSEN 12453:2001
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Electrical Safety (Building Regulations) – Approved Document P (2013)
Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
The Housing Act 2004 (England and Wales)
The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
Building Safety Act 2022
Defective Premises Act 1972
Fire Safety Act 2021
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
Equalities Act 2010
Building Regulations (England) 2010 (Amended 2023)

26.4 Periodical lifting equipment safety testing

New World Housing Association will ensure passenger lifts will be subject to a formal contract for regular preventive maintenance scheduled at 3 monthly intervals and undertaken by suitably competent contractors ensuring compliance in respect of lift safety management. New World Housing Association will request, review and record confirmation of lift contractors qualifications and competencies for all areas of work they undertake on behalf of the association.

6 monthly Independent safety checks of passenger lifts will be carried out under LOLER (Lift Operation Lift Equipment Regulations) 1998. When LOLER inspections for domestic lifts are received they are checked and any defects actioned with our incumbent lift contractor.

Preventative maintenance and safety testing of domestic through floor lifts, domestic person hoists and stair-lifts will be undertaken on an annual basis.

New World Housing Association will hold accurate records against each property it owns, or manages, identifying when the lifts were last inspected and tested, and a

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

property database will be maintained that clearly details the property's lift equipment's safety history records including the date of the last preventative maintenance visit and LOLER inspection where applicable and the next due dates. Records will also include any repairs, callouts for defects or non-operation, and any modernisation works undertaken.

Compliance data related to lifting equipment will be reported to the Management Board Management on a quarterly basis including the number of LOLER /Services completed, due or overdue and if remedial works are outstanding or overdue.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

27. AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

27.1 Purpose

The aims of this policy are to ensure that tenants with a disability or mobility issue can live independently and safely in their homes. This involves providing reasonable, necessary modifications and equipment to meet their specific needs, enhancing their quality of life and promoting equal access to housing. New World Housing Association will aim to reasonably meet the needs of tenants whilst also ensuring the association manages its property portfolio effectively and responsibly, and we make the best use of our properties and tenants' homes. The term 'aids and adaptations' refers to modifications or specialist equipment designed to assist tenants in carrying out everyday tasks more easily and safely.

27.2 Introduction

The principal legislation applicable to this policy is The Equalities Act 2010 (Chapter 2, Section 20 – Duty to Make Adjustments).

If requested to do so by (or on behalf of) a disabled person put at a substantial disadvantage, a landlord must:

- make reasonable adjustments to a provision, criterion or practice;
- make reasonable adjustments to a physical feature;
- provide an auxiliary aid
- consent to the making of disability-related improvements to rented residential premises by the tenant unless the request is unreasonable.

What is 'reasonable' will depend on the particular circumstances relating to each individual request.

27.3 Legal duties

Applicable legislation and regulatory framework for Aids and Adaptations is based on but not limited to the following:

Equalities Act 2010
Human Rights Act (1998)
Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act (1970)
The Care Act (2014)
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
The Housing Act 2004 (England and Wales)

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

27.4 Minor adaptations

Minor adaptations are defined as work that doesn't significantly alter the structure of the property, and typically costs less than £500; examples include:

- Grab Rails
- Banister Rails
- Lever Taps
- Key Safes

At the initial request stage, a request for an adaptation will be dealt with by the Housing Officer. If the adaptation required is minor, considered reasonable and expected to cost less than £500 an order will be raised with a responsive repairs contractor. Depending on the extent and complexity of the work, the Housing Officer, Maintenance Officer or Maintenance Manager may need to inspect the property before the work is approved to clarify the scope and budget.

Minor adaptation requests will be treated on a case-by-case basis and may be identified from Occupational Therapists visits and ensuing Minor Adaptation Requests, or from direct requests from tenants.

27.5 Major adaptations

Major adaptations are defined as work to the property that typically costs more than £500 and usually alters the structure of the property, examples include:

- Wet Rooms
- Level-Access Showers
- Over-Bath Showers
- Ramps
- Stair Lifts
- Specialist door intercom systems

If a request for an adaptation is received, the Housing Team will discuss with the tenant to establish whether a transfer to a more suitable or adapted home is a preferred option, whether this be a property owned by New World Housing Association or another housing provider.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

New World Housing Association does not typically carry out major adaptations but will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services by signposting to the relevant local authority or service provider, depending on the requirement. Through this close collaboration, we will ensure tenants know what support is available to them.

The relevant service provider (usually the local authority) will assess the requirement and suitability of the requested adaptation, with the support of an occupational therapist's report.

The association expects all tenants to apply to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) scheme for funding major adaptations, and this will be communicated when responding to permission requests from service providers.

The association will aim to respond to all permission requests from service providers for major adaptations within a reasonable timescale unless the requested works are deemed urgent, in which case the response will be expedited.

Tenants who wish to obtain consent and fund adaptation works themselves can do so with prior permission from the association subject to any conditions that may be applied such as appointing Competent Persons, applying for Building Control approval and providing electrical installation certification.

EPIC reserves the right to refuse provide permission for adaptations for a number of reasons including where:

- There is a current Right To Acquire application
- There is no record of the person requiring the adaptation recorded as a tenant or household member
- The adaptation primarily appears to be to alleviate overcrowding.
- The tenant is actively seeking rehousing.
- The tenants' needs would be better suited by transferring to more suitable accommodation.
- There has been a serious breach of tenancy resulting in a legal notice being served
- It would have an adverse effect on neighbouring properties or residents.
- The adaptation is unreasonable for the property or would affect future letting ability

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

6. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Minor adaptations funded and provided by the association will continue to be maintained in line with our maintenance policy.

Typically, adaptations funded through DFG are covered by a 12-month warranty after which time the adaptation becomes the tenant's property and responsibility.

Adaptations provided through a DFG that become a key component of the property will be maintained by the association after the warranty period, for example:

- Wet Rooms
- Adapted Kitchens
- Stair-lifts

New World Housing Association will make every effort for a new tenant to benefit from existing adaptations and avoid removing adaptations on void properties where possible. We will endeavour to allocate adapted homes appropriately based on need.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

28. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

28.1 Purpose

To ensure that all reasonably practicable steps have been taken to prevent the risk of exposure of New World Housing Association tenants, visitors, staff, and contractors to asbestos in a manner that could adversely affect their health.

To effectively manage all asbestos containing materials across the property portfolio and to reduce the asbestos related risks to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

To ensure asbestos works are properly scoped, serviced and managed in accordance with legal requirements and best practice.

28.2 Introduction

The presence of an asbestos containing material in itself does not constitute a danger. However, there is a potential risk to health if such material is disturbed and damaged. Regular exposure – even at relatively low levels – can present a risk. It is important, therefore, to have in place a management system which minimises the potential for exposure to asbestos.

This document represents New World Housing Association's commitment, in line with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, to the management of asbestos in its managed properties.

28.3 Legal duties

Applicable legislation and regulatory framework for Asbestos Management is based on but not limited to the following:

- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- The Housing Acts 1985 and 2004
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act 2018)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

28.4 Asbestos control measures

- New World will implement a systematic programme for identifying the presence of asbestos in properties where information suggests that there is a risk of asbestos
- Identify the current condition of asbestos in the association properties
- Assess the risk of likelihood of anyone being exposed to asbestos
- Monitor and manage the discovery of suspected asbestos materials and any work in proximity to asbestos.
- Co-ordinate awareness training for relevant staff, contractors, and any other relevant persons.
- Where the association's premises and common areas of housing stock were built or renovated prior to 2000, an asbestos management survey programme will be carried out by a competent UKAS accredited asbestos management consultancy. (HSE expects that no asbestos containing materials would be in use from 2000.)
- The findings of all surveys undertaken will be used to prepare a Register of Asbestos containing materials including their location and condition in all relevant premises
- Prior to any work being carried out on the fabric of (pre-2000) buildings, the asbestos register will be checked to determine whether asbestos may be encountered and appropriate precautions (including the use of HSE licensed contractors where necessary) will be taken.
- Prior to any refurbishment, demolition or repair works on building fabric, which is not known to be asbestos free, a competent UKAS accredited asbestos management consultancy will be commissioned to carry out a 'Refurbishment or Demolition' (i.e., intrusive) asbestos survey of the area to be worked upon. Prior to works starting, the information obtained from any Refurbishment/ Demolition Surveys will be discussed with the proposed works contractor to ensure that Asbestos Containing Materials will not be disturbed by their works. In the event that works would have the potential to disturb ACM's, appropriate measures will be taken, including the prior removal of ACM's
- Periodic inspections of ACMs left in place will be undertaken to ensure that the condition of the material has not changed. The period between inspections will depend on the type of material, its location and condition. This information will be used to update the asbestos register.

New World Housing Association Maintenance Policy

28.5 Asbestos removal

Where licensed contractors are required to carry out asbestos works, the following documentation will be requested from the contractor prior to commissioning:

- Current asbestos licence check on HSE website
- Insurance certificate indicating the insured is covered for asbestos work
- Method statements and risk assessments
- Certification on completion

28.6 Asbestos disturbance

This includes procedures to be adopted where a material suspected of being asbestos is discovered either accidentally or during work.

Those potentially exposed include all users of Association premises and others including contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Association. The person locating the suspected asbestos has a duty to inform the association who will stop the work if this has not already happened, consider the desirability of vacating the building or part of the building to avoid exposure and appoint a UKAS consultant to advise the Association.

It is the responsibility of all staff to report to the Maintenance Manager if they suspect that disturbed or damaged asbestos containing materials may be present in a building owned or occupied by the association.

In such cases, an external consultant having UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) accreditation for asbestos sampling and analysis, will be contacted to conduct identification. If asbestos is identified within the sample, advice will be obtained from a competent consultant on the appropriate course of action. Where damage to any material known to contain asbestos has taken place and is likely to give rise to airborne respirable fiber release, the Maintenance Manager will arrange for isolation of the area pending an investigation.

When remedial action becomes necessary after exposure, the relevant facts may have to be reported to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). (Advice may be sought from a competent Asbestos Consultant to determine whether the incident is in fact RIDDOR reportable.