



POLICY DOCUMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Westway Housing Association (WHA) is committed to providing the best services possible for our customers who occupy properties across the London boroughs that we operate in the United Kingdom.
- 1.2 WHA aims to deliver a continuously improving and responsive repairs and maintenance service, by making sure that day to day repairs are carried out quickly, on time, to a high standard that customers are satisfied with whilst maintaining value for money in the service at all times.
- 1.3 Repairs and maintenance continues to be a top priority for our customers and WHA will make sure that all properties are repaired and maintained to a standard that promotes a safe home environment for all its customers.
- 1.4 To ensure value for money, this policy establishes a balance of cost and service delivery excellence.
- 1.5 From the outset it should be stated that WHA does not have its own in-house contractors, and instead WHA retains trusted external contractors both for day-to-day reactive repairs and cyclical maintenance. WHA ensures these external contractors are committed to providing the service levels required to achieve WHA's regulated repair and maintenance obligations.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 This policy does not apply to:
- 2.1.1 PSL (Private Sector Leasing) properties, where different arrangements are in place depending on the lease agreement with the customer. If PSL customers require clarification this can be obtained from the normal repairs reporting contact points; or
- 2.1.2 Customers residing in WHA owned and/ or managed hostel and rough sleepers (supported housing) properties. The details of the repairing responsibilities for these properties differ from those contained in this policy. If customers require clarification this can be obtained from the normal repairs reporting contact points.

3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The aims of this policy are:
- 3.1.1 To ensure all residents live in a safe, secure and warm environment at all times.

- 3.1.2 To responsibly and effectively manage the repairs and maintenance service to the homes of its residents
- 3.1.3 To comply with all relevant government legislation requirements
- 3.1.4 To provide guidance and information on the areas that affect the customers' ability to manage their properties

3.2 The objectives of this policy are:

- 3.2.1 To set a strategic, long term approach to maintaining decent, sustainable homes in accordance with the Homes Standard
- 3.2.2 To engage efficiently with customers about their homes
- 3.2.3 To effectively manage planned and capital programmes
- 3.2.4 To run an effective and efficient responsive repairs service
- 3.2.5 To continuously monitor and improve performance
- 3.2.6 To give high levels of customer satisfaction in the repairs and maintenance service provided
- 3.2.7 To provide a value for money service to customers

3.3 WHA seeks to achieve these aims and objectives by implementing thorough and considered procedures detailed in the preceding paragraphs of this policy.

4. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- 4.1 WHA will make sure that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are integral in the business planning and delivery of its repair and maintenance service.
- 4.2 WHA is committed to delivering a high standard repair and maintenance service which meets the diverse needs of local communities and will achieve this by treating people fairly and taking the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation) into consideration in all aspects of the repair service including access to the service.

5. ACHIEVING COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The Home Standard contained in the Regulator of Social Housing's regulations lays out the requirements for organisations in terms of repair and maintenance. The regulations state the following.

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Quality of accommodation

Registered providers shall:

- a) ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in Section 5 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard;
- b) meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard; and
- c) In agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard for Section 6 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance .

Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers shall:

- a) provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choice to, tenants and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements 'right first time'; and
- b) Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

The specific expectations in relation to repair and maintenance is that:

- a) Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work; work on empty properties and adaptations.
- b) Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants needs.

Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved.

The management of repair and maintenance services such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks as agreed with landlords, and the sharing or savings made.

5.2 WHA is committed to achieving full compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's regulations and this policy demonstrates the measures and procedures in place tailored for such full compliance.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 Responsibility for the maintenance of WHA properties is clearly divided between WHA and its customers. WHA encourages its customers to be involved in the management of their homes where possible while retaining responsibility for more significant repairs and maintenance. The preceding paragraphs give a high-level overview of the considered division of WHA and customer responsibilities. It should be noted that the final division of

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responsibility between WHA and the customer may change depending on the needs of the particular customer.

6.2 A more detailed table of the possible division of responsibilities is shown in Schedule 2, however for guidance:

6.2.1 WHA is responsible for the structure, services and common parts of property including:

- 6.2.1.1 drains, gutters and outside pipes
- 6.2.1.2 roof
- 6.2.1.3 external walls, doors and windows (excluding damage caused by customers to glass)
- 6.2.1.4 communal aerials
- 6.2.1.5 the installations for supplying water, gas, electricity and sanitation within a property
- 6.2.1.6 the installations and appliances for heating the property and for hot water
- 6.2.1.7 fixtures and fittings not provided by the customer
- 6.2.1.8 pathways and steps which provide main access to the front and back door of the property and communal areas
- 6.2.1.9 garages and outside store places provided for use of the customer
- 6.2.1.10 lifts and other communal amenities
- 6.2.1.11 painting the outside woodwork and metal work of properties including shared areas
- 6.2.1.12 servicing of specialist equipment installed by WHA or the property owner
- 6.2.1.13 Clearing away rubbish from repairs or improvements that have been carried out by WHA.

6.3 Customers' responsibility for repair and maintenance will be dictated by the terms of the occupancy agreement/Residents Handbook. These may include (but will not be limited to) obligations for the customer to:

- 6.3.1 take action to prevent pipes from freezing or bursting.
- 6.3.2 keep the property in the same condition (with allowance for reasonable wear and tear) as at the occupancy inception date.
- 6.3.3 decorate the inside of their property
- 6.3.4 report a repair to WHA as soon as they notice that it is needed to avoid the situation getting worse.

6.3.5 allow access to the property on at least 48 hours' prior notice (except in emergency) to carry out repairs, annual safety checks, services and any inspections necessary.

6.3.6 carry out minor repairs and replace any fixtures and fittings that have been installed by the customer in the property**.

** Note- This will only apply for Assured Tenancies where permission for non-standard or enhanced features has been granted. This does not apply to Starter Tenancies and Fixed-term Tenancies for a term of less than 5 years, where permission is not granted for improvements within the first year or duration of the fixed term of the tenancy.

6.3.7 clear away rubbish from repairs or improvements that have been carried out by the customer

6.3.8 take action to prevent and control condensation caused by customer acts or omissions. WHA shall provide the customer with reasonable suggestions as to how this may be achieved. This will include issuing literature to customers on the topic- an example of such literature is at Appendix 1 of this policy.

6.4 Customers may also be responsible for minor repairs to their property which may include but will not be limited to:

6.4.1 replacing electrical fuses and light bulbs;

6.4.2 care and maintenance of electricity, gas and water meters (customers are expected to liaise with service suppliers when reasonably necessary);

6.4.3 keeping the property and garden in good condition and free from any invasive species;

6.4.4 periodically checking the working of smoke alarms by pressing their 'test' button and if required replacing batteries in smoke alarms. Should a smoke alarm not work the customer shall immediately notify WHA;

6.4.5 draining of water supply when away from the property (such as on holiday, in hospital (if reasonably possible)) and during the winter months from October to April;

6.4.6 maintaining a garage or shed which has been provided as part of the property to the customer or which WHA is unaware of (limited to non-structural maintenance only);

6.4.7 maintaining a driveway provided as part of the property free from weeds and obstructions

6.4.8 clearing outside gullies if reasonably safe to do so;

6.4.9 replacing plugs and chains to wash hand basins sinks and baths;

6.4.10 repairing and replacing internal door furniture, locks latches and coat hooks;

- 6.4.11 replacing any items damaged by the customer, members of their household or visitors;
- 6.4.12 replacing lost keys to the customers property;
- 6.4.13 replacing filters for cooker hoods;
- 6.4.14 replacing clothes lines and posts (except in communal areas or when part of an independent living scheme);
- 6.4.15 keeping external air bricks and internal vents free of any obstruction to help ensure good operation of gas appliances;
- 6.4.16 keeping shared areas (including communal halls, staircases, landings, lifts, balconies, passageways and surrounding areas of any flats) in a tidy condition and without blockage or obstruction;
- 6.4.17 taking reasonable steps to prevent water pipes being damaged by frost; and
- 6.4.18 reporting all repairs for which WHA is responsible for (such as blocked drains, water leaks, structural defects and problems with water, gas, electricity and fire appliances) immediately to WHA, and in the event there is a repair for which the customer is required to carry out but for a reasonable reason the customer is unable to do so, to report the same to WHA who shall provide assistance to the customer.
- 6.4.19 Adjusting door when a new carpet fitted.
- 6.4.20 Repairing and replacing any floor coverings, vinyl tiles sheeting, carpets or laminates that the tenant has fitted. Floor covering that have been supplied by WHA as part of the Improvement Programme will only be provided once and so when ready for replacement this will be the responsibility of the customer.
- 6.4.21 Renewing broken clothes lines and posts.
- 6.4.22 Checking that heating controls (room thermostat, timer or programmer) are set correctly.
- 6.4.23 Installation of washing machines, dishwashers or tumble driers including waste, supply pipes and vents if not already provided by WHA.
- 6.4.24 Repairing any extra units that have been installed in the property by the customer
- 6.4.25 Putting up and securing TV aerials (except communal aerials). Customers need permission to put up a satellite dish.
- 6.4.26 Cleaning toilet pans.
- 6.4.27 Filling minor cracks and holes in walls and ceilings.

7. SERVICE DELIVERY

7.1 Repairs and Maintenance overview

7.1.1 Customers are able to report a repair 24 hours a day, every day of the year. We aim to offer an appointment for the majority of repairs and all repair inspections; and complete the repair right first time.

7.2 How to report a repair

7.2.1 A request for a repair can be taken

7.2.1.1 Via the WHA website (www.westwayha.org.uk) and logging into the MyTenancy portal

7.2.1.2 Via the phone 24 hours a day, every day of the week using our dedicated repairs line

7.2.1.3 Via email (INFO@WESTWAYHA.ORG.UK)

7.2.1.4 In person by visiting 292 Kensal Road London W10 5BE office

7.2.1.5 in writing to 292 Kensal Road London W10 5BE

7.3 When a request is received we will:

7.3.1 offer a convenient appointment date for the repair;

7.3.2 tell the customer approximately how long they will have to wait for the repairs to be completed;

7.3.3 complete repairs within 24 hours if it is an emergency; and

7.3.4 Complete urgent repairs within 7 days

7.3.5 Complete all routine repair requests within an average of 28 days .

7.3.6 Provide information leaflets about the repairs service will be made available at our offices as well within the Resident's Handbook and on the WHA website.

7.4 Appointments for Property Services Repairs

7.4.1 Appointments will be offered for the majority of repairs unless they are external to the property or to be carried out by a specialist contractor. Appointments will be offered for all repairs that require an inspection or a visit from an estimator.

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- 7.4.2 The repair appointment will be offered that is convenient to both the customer and WHA. Appointments will be offered for the morning (between 8am and 12pm) or afternoon (12pm till 5pm).
- 7.4.3 No appointments will be offered for emergency repairs. Emergency repairs are defined in Schedule 1. The aim is, within 24hrs, to make safe an emergency repair or complete the repair where possible. Any follow up work required will be appointed if appropriate to do so as set out above.
- 7.4.4 External repairs that do not require the customer to be present will not be given an appointment unless requested by the customer. 24 hours' notice will be given prior to commencement of the repair.
- 7.4.5 Specialist contractors and some contractors working on supported housing properties will make their own appointments with the customer within 3 days of the repair request. Customers will be informed of this when they report the repair.
- 7.4.6 Gas servicing appointments will follow the Gas Safety Policy .

7.5 No access for Property Services Repairs

- 7.5.1 The customer will be informed about their repair appointment via a repair receipt. This receipt will take the form of a text message, voicemail message or an email. The customer will be given the opportunity to ask for a paper copy via letter.
- 7.5.2 In all cases this information will give the appointment date and if the appointment is in the morning or afternoon.
- 7.5.3 The operative or contractor will also phone or text prior to visiting the property to ensure the customer is still available.
- 7.5.4 If there is no access when the operative visits the property then a no access slip will be left.
- 7.5.5 If access has not been gained when an appointment has not been made, then WHA shall attempt to contact the customer to re-organise. If a repair is of critical importance (for instance gas safety), WHA may seek an injunction requiring access to the property to effect such repair.
- 7.5.6 WHA will not send any further reminders regarding a repair where the operative has not gained access.

7.6 Communication with customers during repairs

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- 7.6.1 WHA will communicate in a number of different ways that wherever possible meet the preferences of the customer.
- 7.6.2 WHA will inform customers when they have reported a repair stating the job number and the expected completion date or appointment date. This will be either via text message or email. Paper letters will be made available on request.
- 7.6.3 WHA will ensure the customer is kept up to date of any changes to the details provided above.
- 7.6.4 When reasonably practicable, WHA will text or phone to say we are on our way to the repair giving the name of the operative and estimated time of arrival.
- 7.6.5 Contractors will phone giving as much notice as possible.
- 7.6.6 WHA will give the customer the facility to text back to make alternative arrangements.
- 7.6.7 When access has not been gained we will leave a calling card through the letterbox stating the date and time of visit and details of how to make alternative arrangements.
- 7.6.8 Where follow on works or materials are required we will arrange a convenient appointment before leaving the property if possible, where this is not possible we will contact the customer to re-arrange the works at a convenient time for them.
- 7.6.9 WHA will request feedback on the completed repair through the SMS deeplake by imputing completion date. This will take the form of a few questions. A text survey will be completed to measure how we've handled your repairs.
- 7.6.10 WHA will get the customer's opinion on whether your repair was completed right first time via the questionnaires.
- 7.6.11 Where possible WHA will give at least 48 hours' advance notice save that authorised staff of WHA may need to enter a property without notice in an emergency, using reasonable force if necessary, if WHA feel there is a risk of personal injury or damage to property or surrounding properties.

7.7 Code of Conduct for repairs

- 7.7.1 WHA staff and contractors will:

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- 7.7.1.1 answer calls promptly and be polite, honest and helpful at all times.
- 7.7.1.2 introduce themselves when calling the customer by phone and will show photo identification before entering a customer's home.
- 7.7.1.3 be polite and wear WHA uniform at all times or in the absence of uniform shall show a form of identification..
- 7.7.1.4 explain what work is going to be carried out and discuss with the customer how this might affect them.
- 7.7.1.5 take care of all customers' belongings whilst working in their property, protecting them from damage and dust for example.
- 7.7.1.6 make sure that materials and tools do not cause danger to anyone in the customer's home.
- 7.7.1.7 make sure that when having to use customers' electricity they ask first but wherever possible use portable battery tools. Where this is not possible the use of electricity must be kept to a minimum.
- 7.7.1.8 keep mess and rubbish to a minimum, making sure it is all removed at the earliest of the end of the working day or when the job has been completed.
- 7.7.1.9 make sure that electricity, water and gas are connected at the end of each day wherever possible.
- 7.7.1.10 limit the use of their mobile phones.
- 7.7.1.11 not smoke or play radios whilst working in a customer's home or garden.
- 7.7.1.12 not use a customer's phone or toilet without asking for permission first.
- 7.7.1.13 not make or receive personal phone calls during their work (except in emergencies).
- 7.7.1.14 not be in a customers' property with children under 18 without a responsible adult being present.
- 7.7.1.15 not accept gifts from customers
- 7.7.1.16 not keep keys for customers' homes

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7.7.1.17 take into consideration the specific needs of the customer and if necessary WHA will accompany a contractor should this be of benefit to a particularly vulnerable customer.

7.8 Customer code of conduct for repairs

7.8.1 Customers will:

7.8.1.1 allow authorised staff of WHA or other agents/contractors of WHA into their home at all reasonable hours to:

- (a) inspect its condition;
- (b) do any repairs or improvements needed;
- (c) service appliances;
- (d) carry out work WHA consider necessary to make sure the property and surrounding properties do not put the customer or anyone else at risk.
- (e) inspect, clean or repair a home or neighbouring dwellings, or any sewers, drains, pipes, wiring or cable serving a home or neighbouring dwellings.
- (f) must have access to carry out gas servicing as and when required.
- (g) not cause or commit or allow anyone living with them or visitors to cause or commit any form of harassment or other anti-social behaviour towards WHA staff or contractors. Harassment and anti-social behaviour is any act or omission which interferes with the peace and comfort of or which may cause nuisance annoyance injury or offence to any other customers, members of their household, visitors, neighbours, our employees, agents and contractors or any other member of the general public and includes (but is not limited to):-
 - (i) harassment on the grounds of age, gender, race, religion, culture, sexuality, disability or lifestyle;
 - (ii) violence or threats of violence to any person;
 - (iii) abusive or insulting words or behaviour;

- (iv) offensive drunkenness;
- (v) damage or threat of damage to property
- (vi) for dealing in, storing, selling or the illegal use of any controlled drugs;
- (vii) any nuisance or annoyance caused by pets including barking and fouling;

7.8.1.2 refrain from smoking for two hours prior to a member of WHA staff or contractors visiting their homes. Customers must not smoke during the period WHA staff and contractors are in their home. These measures are to protect WHA staff and contractors from damage caused by second hand or passive smoking.

7.9 Post Inspections

7.9.1 To ensure that WHA and its customers receive a good quality repairs and maintenance service and to take appropriate checks on potential fraudulent activities WHA will undertake an appropriate regime of post inspections.

7.9.2 Post Inspection Aims:

7.9.2.1 Confirms the work is completed

7.9.2.2 Checks the materials purchased against the materials used on the job

7.9.2.3 Checks the quality of the job to ensure standards are being met

7.9.3 The program of post inspections will be between a 5% and 10% sample of all completed jobs generated to take into account the following:

7.9.3.1 Where the repair is of high cost defined as repairs with total costs of £500 or more

7.9.3.2 Where there is a variation of 25% more than the original estimated costs based on the schedule of rates codes.

7.9.3.3 Where the customer indicates that the repair has not been completed to a satisfactory standard

7.9.3.4 Where a customer has carried out improvement works.

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7.9.3.5 Where there are concerns with the quality of work delivered by a contractor or operative

7.9.3.6 Repairs that qualify for post inspections include all works that are physically complete in the following categories:

- (a) Responsive repairs
- (b) Insurance claims
- (c) Works undertaken following a disrepair claim
- (d) Works exceed £1000.00 value 100%

7.9.4 Void repairs and planned maintenance works are subject to 100% post inspections

7.9.5 A repair will not qualify for inclusion in the post inspection program where works are not practicably visible or accessible e.g. drainage works,

7.9.6 Repairs that are certified through specific codes and standards linked to legislative and compliance activities, such as gas works, electrical works, repairs and works to fire safety systems and lifts are not included under this policy but have separate auditing and inspection arrangements.

8. REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE POLICY STATEMENTS

8.1 Rechargeable Repairs

8.1.1 Repairs carried out that will be subject to an insurance claim by customers, their family members and any visitors to their home are responsible for any damage caused to the property, either deliberately or through neglect.

8.1.2 WHA aims to make sure that all customers and leaseholders are aware of their obligations not to damage or neglect WHA property and that they are responsible for damage caused by their children, pets and visitors. This will be formally agreed when the Occupancy Agreement is signed.

8.1.3 Damage that can be classed as rechargeable is for example, but not exclusively:

8.1.3.1 damage to sinks and toilets;

8.1.3.2 broken windows and doors;

8.1.3.3 floods from washing machines; and

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8.1.3.4 Lost keys .

8.1.4 Where damage or neglect has occurred (for which the customer is responsible) then the customer can arrange for the damage to be repaired themselves, however, if this does not meet current health and safety, building regulation requirements or in the case of gas and electricity the current legislation, WHA will carry out further works and charge the customer the additional costs. In addition WHA will not be liable if a customer has installed a defective system, fixtures or fittings without permission.

8.1.5 WHA may carry out and charge for repairs considered necessary for health and safety reasons or in situations of emergency, arising from the misuse of the property. This does not include repairs undertaken as a result of fair wear and tear.

8.1.6 These charges will continually be reviewed in line with current operating costs for the service area and updated in the Rechargeable Repair Policy .

8.2 Compensation, Goodwill and Sundry Payments Policy

8.2.1 Further details can be found in the Compensation, Goodwill and Sundry Payments policy where WHA constantly strive to improve the services it provides and aims to resolve problems quickly and effectively to the customers' satisfaction and within agreed timescales and to:

8.2.1.1 Apologise where service failure has been identified and where appropriate follow this up in writing;

8.2.1.2 Aim to resolve claims for compensation, goodwill or a sundry payment within the timescale of 8 weeks;

8.2.1.3 Learn from mistakes and change the way services are delivered as a result and provide feedback to individuals / other customers via the website and regular publications;

8.2.1.4 Endeavour to keep the running costs of the compensation scheme to a minimum and ensure value for money for WHA customers;

8.2.1.5 Comply with any recommendations to award compensation from the Housing Ombudsman.

8.3 Tenant match funding

8.3.1 The Tenant Match funding scheme is designed to help tenants specifically improve their homes. It provides an opportunity for tenants of WHA to receive 50% (with a maximum £500 contribution from WHA) to help fund home improvement works subject to certain conditions and prior consent from WHA.

8.3.2 This policy allows tenants to apply for financial assistance in carrying out certain specified improvements to their home. The policy provides opportunity for tenants to carry out improvements to their home with financial assistance from WHA which they may not ordinarily be able to do on their own. It encourages a sense of responsibility and pride in the homes that we let which it turn will improve sustainability of tenancy.

8.4 Improvements by customers

8.4.1 WHA recognise that customers will want to make alterations and improvements to their homes. Where requests are reasonable they will not be refused. However prior written permission must be obtained if customers wish to carry out any improvements, including (but not limited to).

8.4.1.1 Decorate any part of the outside of their home.

8.4.1.2 Make any structural changes or additions to the property.

8.4.1.3 Erect a shed, garage or any other external construction.

8.4.1.4 Remove, add or alter any part of a fence or garden wall or existing shed garage or any other external construction.

8.4.1.5 Add to or change or replace any fixtures and fittings provided by WHA.

8.4.1.6 Put up a satellite dish, television, radio or amateur radio aerial if the relevant occupancy agreement and/or registered title to the property permit this

8.4.1.7 Fit tiles to walls or floors.

8.4.1.8 Alter the electrical, gas, heating or water installations including having a water meter installed.

8.4.1.9 Install laminate or Vinyl flooring

8.4.2 WHA will not unreasonably refuse permission for such improvements or changes, but may impose conditions. If required, planning permission,

building regulations approval or any other permission must be obtained before starting the work.

8.5 Gardens

8.5.1 The maintenance of gardens within dwellings is the responsibility of the customer. Where communal facilities are offered then grounds maintenance will be carried out via WHA and charged to the customer via a service charge.

8.6 Fencing

8.6.1 WHA is regularly requested to undertake fencing work to properties and within its communities. WHA will do so when the safety of a property or customer is at risk due to outstanding fencing work.

8.7 Gutter cleaning

8.7.1 Gutter cleaning will only take place in communal schemes on cyclical programme. Gutters to individual households will not be cleaned unless it is causing significant damage to the property structure.

8.8 UPVC frame and window cleaning

8.8.1 The cleaning of uPVC window frames and glass within windows of properties is not the responsibility of WHA. Where cleaning is required within a communal area (or in the case of a block of flats the exterior windows of that block), this may be maintained via a service charge to the customers.

8.9 Pest Control

8.9.1 It is now the responsibility of WHA to deal with any issues with pest control, however, customers will be responsible to ensure that preventative measures are in place to minimise risk of infestation and there is a risk of damage to the property. Pest control within communal areas will be managed by WHA in conjunction with the local authority. To assist customers understanding of the issue, WHA will issue literature to the customers (a copy of such literature is at Appendix 1).

8.10 Adaptations

8.10.1 WHA is committed to meeting the needs of its customers for independence, privacy and dignity. We aim to help people continue to live independently and comfortably in their homes for as long as possible, with the minimum intrusion or intervention.

8.10.2 A budget is allocated for carrying out adaptation works each financial year and, in addition, grant applications will be made for Disabled Facilities Grants from the Local Authority wherever possible. This ensures that the maximum possible number of adaptations can be carried out. We will ensure our processes are cost effective and represent value for money.

8.10.3 The Aids and Adaptations Policy provides the basis to produce and implement procedures for providing aids and adaptations. There are many differences in the way each subsidiary handles aids and adaptations, however this policy provides a statement on WHA's (and its Group companies') stance on the provision of aids & adaptations.

8.11 Vinyl or Laminate Flooring

8.11.1 All reasonable care is taking with customer's floor coverings when undertaking a repair. However some floor coverings, in particular vinyl and laminate flooring are susceptible to damage if they have to be removed to undertake a repair. In these instances WHA will not be liable for the cost of replacement unless our actions have been negligent. Floor covering that has been supplied by WHA as part of the cyclical works schedule will only be provided once, and when ready for replacement this will be the responsibility of the customer

8.12 Gifted Items

8.12.1 Any items that are to be gifted to customers, usually at the start of their occupancy agreement will first require the customer to sign an agreement that explains future maintenance and replacement of the items is their responsibility.

8.13 Locks and key replacement

8.13.1 The security of customers is a basic requirement for WHA to ensure. All doors will be to the secure by design standard with 5 lever locks to main external doors and window locks to all windows. The customer will be provided with a set of keys to all relevant locks within the property. WHA does not hold keys for any occupied dwellings of buildings

8.13.2 If a lock is faulty then WHA will effect a repair where necessary. Where keys are lost or mislaid by the customer then it is the responsibility of the customer to replace the locks or gain access to the property. WHA does not provide a locksmith service out of hours.

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9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

9.1 There are a number of monitors that take place in respect of repair and maintenance. Performance figures are presented to the Tenants Committee, the Board and as well as being published in the newsletters and on the WHA website.

9.2 The monitors seek to demonstrate:

- 9.2.1 Repairs satisfaction
- 9.2.2 Number of appointments made and kept
- 9.2.3 Number of jobs completed when we said we would
- 9.2.4 Number of jobs completed right first time.
- 9.2.5 Performance on gas safety inspection
- 9.2.6 Performance on all repairs categories (Emergency, urgent and Routine)
- 9.2.7 Void turnaround times

9.3 Consultation with customers

- 9.3.1 WHA will continually work with customers in a number of ways to continually improve the repairs service in a range of ways including, focus groups, and scrutiny review and tenant inspections, in line with published regulatory standards as an effective means of promoting customer involvement and empowerment.
- 9.3.2 Where WHA has a dedicated text number integrated to our housing management system (deeplake), a text will be sent to ask how satisfied the Customer is with the repairs service, and if in their view the repair was completed first time. All feedback is evaluated and when a customer is less than satisfied a follow up phone call is made to establish the issue to rectify.
- 9.3.3 Further information on how customers can become involved in shaping the way we deliver services is available in our Resident Involvement and Empowerment Strategy.
- 9.3.4 Surveys issued to customers for their feedback will include repairs questions to gain a further understanding of our customers' requirements. This will be analysed to make sure that there is continuous improvement for the service area.

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9.3.5 WHA will provide feedback on performance via the customers' newsletter

9.4 WHA is seeking to establish Tenant Inspectors who will also carry out some checks to make sure that the service standards for repairs are being kept.

10. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

10.1 WHA aims to provide customers with the best possible service at all times and actively encourages feedback. Customers are frequently asked to provide us with their feedback through satisfaction surveys following a service they have received, through larger surveys such as STAR and through our complaints process.

10.2 WHA will ensure that feedback is dealt with consistently across WHA and in a way that reflects our Equality Policy.

10.3 An effective complaints service provides WHA with the opportunity to rectify any service failures. Feedback will be used for transparent accountability and continuous improvement of service delivery and policy development.

10.4 Further details are within the Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy & Procedure.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

11.1 WHA is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment at all times under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. All WHA staff and our representatives (individually or collectively) must adhere to Health and Safety policy which is designed for the protection of themselves and other people who they may have contact with.

11.2 In line with WHA's Health and Safety Policy all managers have responsibility for the employees they manage to make sure that all WHA working practices are in line with appropriate health and safety legislation and good practice making sure that employees, customers, buildings and stakeholders are safe.

11.3 It is the responsibility of the customer to ensure any health and safety issues with a property are reported as soon as possible.

11.4 Within our properties we have a duty of care to ensure the property is a safe habitable place to live. Major responsibilities include;

11.4.1 Compliance with the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

11.4.1.1 Under the decent homes standard it is the responsibility of WHA to ensure all category 1 hazards found under the HHSRS are dealt with within 24 hours of being found. Detail of the HHSRS are outlined in the Decent Homes standard.

11.4.2 Gas Safety

11.4.2.1 It is a legal and statutory requirement to ensure that all properties with a gas installation are checked on an annual basis. The gas safety policy outlines the requirements and procedures to ensure this is adhered to.

11.4.2.2 The gas installation is also checked when a property becomes empty prior to the new customer taking the property

11.4.3 Electrical Installation

11.4.3.1 It is a requirement for WHA to ensure the electrical installation within all properties is safe. Full electrical safety checks are carried out when a property becomes empty prior to the new customer taking the property. The electrical installation will also be visually checked for safety when an electrician visits the property. This includes planned maintenance works and repairs calls. The electrical installation will also be checked on a 10 year cycle when no other visits have taken place.

11.4.4 Asbestos

11.4.4.1 WHA will establish where asbestos containing materials (ACM) are within our properties, in line with our Asbestos Policy and Procedures. This information will be made available to our staff, contractors and customers where necessary

11.4.5 Legionella

11.4.5.1 WHA will carry legionella risk assessments in line with our Legionella policy and procedures. Legionella risk will be managed through regular monitors where necessary

11.4.6 Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors

11.4.6.1 Our aim is to fit hard wired smoke detectors to all properties. In homes with two or three stories a detector will be fitted on each floor. These will be linked so all detectors are activated when one is set off.

11.4.6.2 Smoke detectors have a battery back-up. These can either be a 9v battery that can be bought on the high street or a 10 year lithium battery that is embedded within the smoke detector. It is the responsibility of the customer to test the smoke detector on a

regular basis and to report any issues. Replacement of 9v batteries is the responsibility of the customer. Embedded batteries will be replaced by WHA.

11.4.6.3 Some homes have carbon monoxide detectors. WHA's policy is to install carbon dioxide detectors to all homes with a gas supply. Where installed it is the customer's responsibility to test the detector on a regular basis, change the batteries and report any issues.

11.4.7 Lifts

11.4.7.1 WHA will ensure that all lifts are maintained by appropriate lift contractors and that regular inspections are carried out

11.4.8 Fire Risk Assessments

11.4.8.1 WHA will carry out risk assessment to our properties in line with our Fire Risk Assessment strategy.

11.4.9 Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)

11.4.9.1 WHA will ensure that all voids properties have 10 years EPC cycle and this will apply to all relets.

12. **SHARED OWNERSHIP LEASEHOLDERS**

12.1.1 WHA manage a number of leasehold properties, including, Shared Ownership. The specific repairing responsibility for each of these properties is contained in the lease agreement. In the main, WHA retains repairing responsibilities for the structure of the building, communal areas and any communal systems and installations within the property. The leaseholder is generally responsible for maintaining the interior of their property. However, it is important that the specific detail of each property is ascertained from the lease agreement.

12.1.2 In addition to the repairing responsibility, the lease agreement will also confirm if the leaseholder is responsible for a proportion of the repairing costs incurred by WHA where we retain the repairing responsibility. These costs are recovered via a service charge, and presented to the leaseholder in the Annual Service Charge Statement.

12.1.3 Before any repair or maintenance work is carried out to a leasehold property, consideration will be given to the anticipated total cost of the work. If the cost to any leaseholder is expected to be £250 (inclusive of

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VAT) or more, then formal Section 20 Consultation is required before the work can be undertaken.

12.1.4 Should clarification be required regarding any of these matters the Leasehold and Service Charge Team should be contacted.

13. REPAIRS TO PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO RIGHT TO BUY/RIGHT TO ACQUIRE APPLICATIONS

13.1.1 Once an application under the Right to Acquire Scheme is received by WHA from a customer then there becomes a legal responsibility for WHA to carry out emergency repairs only. This will make sure that the property remains wind and water tight and is fit for human habitation. Examples of repairs that might be carried out are as follows:

- 13.1.1.1 serious water penetration;
- 13.1.1.2 no power;
- 13.1.1.3 no heating;
- 13.1.1.4 no bathing facilities; and
- 13.1.1.5 Not being able to use a toilet when there is only one in the property.

14. CONSULTATION PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

14.1 This policy has been presented to the WHA Housing Services Team, Senior Management Team and The Tenants Committee for consultation prior to Board approval.

15. REVIEW OF POLICY

15.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

16. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this policy providing a positive impact as the policy has been drafted to reflect the needs of vulnerable customers which is why some groups are affected differently.



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SCHEDULE 1Emergency repairs

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SCHEDULE 2: WHA - Repairing obligations

Please see definition of vulnerability which is highlighted below and consider information within the Repair with Care section of this policy.

Vulnerable customers

WHA's aim is to offer a flexible and customer focused repairs service to its vulnerable customers. A more flexible repairs service will be offered to ensure that repair responsibilities which would normally fall to the customer, are varied for the following groups: older people who are unable to carry out the repair due to the nature of their vulnerability and those who suffer from a disability which prevents them from carrying out the repairs themselves.

By way of an example WHA may arrange for staff to:

- Relight pilot lights on boilers and gas fires
- Bleed Radiators
- Replace plugs to sinks, baths and basins.
- Change electric fuses or reset trip switches

For all our vulnerable customers we will communicate using the method preferred by them; e.g. minicom, interpreter, large print letter etc.

As part of WHA service standards we will ensure that the needs and wishes of our vulnerable elderly and disabled customers are respected and matters relating to their safety and security taken into account.

We will ensure that our repairs and other staff:

- Make appointments (either am or pm)
- Liaise with social workers, support workers or Mobile Wardens to co-ordinate home visits with pre- arranged appointment times where necessary. This can be requested by the customer or a staff member.
- Carry identity badges at all times
- Be aware that older people or those who have mobility issues may take a little longer to come to the door. We will wait at the door for a reasonable time considering the customer's specific needs, to allow these customers time to answer.
- Speak loudly and clearly over the intercom or phone
- Keep the workspace tidy and clear of obstructions
- Ensure that a property is made secure immediately if external doors and windows have been damaged through a domestic violence incident.

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The table below gives guidance on the responsibilities of the customer and WHA in relation to repairs. Guidance is also given on the change in service due to responsibility.

Repair Request	WHA Responsible	Customer Responsible (service charge dependent)	WHA Responsible for Vulnerable customers
External Property Repairs			
Communal Areas			
Dustbins and the removal of household rubbish		✓	
Shared areas such as lifts, stairs rubbish chutes and communal TV aerials	✓		
Replacement or extra key fobs for communal door entry systems		✓	Additional key for carers
Door entry systems for shared areas	✓		
Driveways and shared driveways not always provided by WHA	✓ 1*	✓ 1*	✓ 1*
Roof			
Chimney and stacks	✓		✓
Roof structure and coverings	✓		✓
Guttering, rainwater pipes and clips	✓		✓
Fascias, soffits and barge boards	✓		✓
Walls and Canopies			
External walls and rendering	✓		✓
Foundations	✓		✓
Concrete canopies over doors or windows	✓		✓
Foundations	✓		✓
Rendering to property	✓		✓

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Windows and Doors			
Window frames, external cills if damage is fair wear and tear	✓		✓
Glazing where caused by criminal damage and reported to the Police		✓ 2*	
Repairing of faulty window or door locks	✓ 3*		✓
Window ironmongery	✓		✓
Security chains and spy holes	✓	✓ if fitted by customer	✓
External doors, frames, other boards and threshold strips	✓		✓
External doors if the damaged was caused by fair wear and tear	✓		✓
External door locks and ironmongery if damage is fair wear and tear	✓		✓
Provision of additional door or window locks	✓		✓ refer to ASB team
New or replacement keys		✓	
Locked out of a property		✓	
Pipes and Drains			
Soil and vent pipes and clips	✓		✓
Clearing blocked gulley grids		✓	✓
Blocked gulley		✓	✓
Blocked drains – if affecting one property only	✓		✓
Blocked drains – affecting more than one property	United Utilities		
Inspection chambers	✓		✓
Gardens and Boundaries			
Work carried out to gardens		✓	

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Garden walls if built by WHA	✓		✓
Front fencing and gates	✓		✓
Dividing fencing and gates		✓4*	
Paths steps and other means of access provided by WHA	✓		✓
Washing lines and posts (except in communal areas or part of an independent living scheme)		✓	✓
Replacement or repairs to sheds provided by WHA on new build sites		✓	
Replacement water butts provided by WHA on new build sites		✓	
Garages and Outbuildings			
Garages or outbuildings if provided by WHA	✓		✓
Locked out of a garage		✓	
Providing additional keys to garages		✓	

Internal Property Repairs			
Windows			
Internal timber, uPVC or tile window sill (unless affected by rot or woodworm)		✓	
Skirting boards, picture rails, battens (unless affected by rot or woodworm)		✓	
Doors			
Internal doors, ironmongery and threshold strips		✓	✓ If repairs found to be fair wear and tear
Walls			

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Structural walls inside a property	✓		✓
Major plaster repairs	✓		✓
Minor repairs to plasterwork for example small holes and cracks		✓	
Wall tiles to match existing as closely as possible where damage due to fair wear and tear	✓		✓

Repair Request	WHA Responsible	Customer Responsible	WHA Responsible for Vulnerable customers
Floors			
Concrete floors (not including floor tiles)	✓		✓
Vinyl fitted by WHA		✓	Disabled wet rooms only
Floor boards and joists but not including laminate flooring	✓		✓
Fireplaces			
Fireplace and surround if fitted by WHA	✓ Unless gifted		✓
Staircase			
Staircase, banister and handrails	✓		✓
Bathroom			
Bath panels (unless damaged by WHA whilst carrying out repairs) replacement may not match existing suite		✓	
Slatted shelving to airing cupboard	✓		✓
Internal pipe work boxing unless damaged by WHA whilst carrying out repairs		✓	
Kitchen			



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Kitchen Cupboards, drawers, door catches, hinges and handles where damage in not fair wear and tear		✓	
Worktops where damage is not fair wear and tear. Replacement will not necessarily match existing		✓	

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Repair Request	WHA Responsible	Customer Responsible	WHA Responsible for Vulnerable customers
Electrical Items			
Electrical wiring sockets and light fittings where fitted by WHA	✓		✓
Hard-wired smoke alarms	✓		✓
Plugs		✓	
Electrical consumer units (fuse box)	✓		✓
Electric storage heaters – if installed by WHA	✓		✓
Electric fires – if installed by WHA	✓		✓
Immersion heaters – if installed by WHA	✓		✓
Cookers – if installed by WHA	✓		✓
Extractor fans – if installed by WHA	✓		✓
Electric shower unit if fitted by WHA	✓		✓
Plumbing			
Water service pipes (from boundary to stop tap/SureStop) overflow pipes and water tanks	✓		✓
Blocked toilet, sinks, bath and hand basin waste pipes where the customer has previously tried to clear the blockage	✓		✓
Taps, stop taps SureStops and wheel valves	✓		✓
Sink units and wash hand basins where damage is not fair wear and tear		✓	
Toilet flushing mechanism	✓		✓



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Toilet seats – WHA will supply one on start of tenancy only		✓	✓
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Repair Request	WHA Responsible	customer Responsible	WHA Responsible for Vulnerable customers
Bath or shower trays where supplied by WHA	✓		✓
Sink and bath plugs and chains		✓	
Bath seals and two rows of splash back tiles	✓		✓
Kitchen sink seals and two rows of splash back tiles	✓		✓
Boxing in of new or existing pipe work if damaged caused by WHA	✓		✓
Gas			
Gas pipe work inside the property	✓		✓
Supply of gas and gas meters		✓	
Annual gas servicing of appliances	✓		✓
Gas fires – if supplied by WHA	✓		✓
Bleeding radiators (unless customer has a combination boiler or pressurised system installed)		✓	✓
Radiants for gas fires – if supplied by WHA	✓ 5*		✓
Gas water heaters	✓		✓
Radiator valves, time clocks and thermostats	✓		✓
Gas boilers	✓		✓
Other Heating Sources			
Air Source Heat Pumps	✓ 6*		✓
Heat Exchange Units	✓		✓
Solar Panels	✓ 7*		✓
Photovoltaic Panels	✓ 8*		✓

Repair Request	WHA Responsible	Customer Responsible	WHA Responsible for Vulnerable Customers
Adaptations			
Adaptations – fitted to a property by WHA	✓		✓
Cookers – if installed by WHA in an adapted kitchen	✓		✓
Shower tray or seat if fitted by WHA	✓		✓
Adapted toilet seats if fitted by WHA	✓		✓
Home Security			
Additional window and door locks		✓	✓ ASB Team
Home Energy Efficiency			
Hot water cylinder jackets (first provided by WHA)		✓	
Low energy light bulbs		✓	
Loft insulation	✓		✓
Pest Control			
Insects – internal		✓	
Insects - external		✓	
Mice – internal		✓	
Mice – external		✓	
Rats – internal and external to property		✓	
Spiders		✓	
Bees and Wasps		✓	
Ants internal to property		✓	

Notes

- 1* Driveways that are charged as part of the weekly rent will be maintained by WHA (save in respect of general de-weeding or removal of obstructions). Where permission has been granted for a driveway and this has been approved by WHA any repairing obligation on change of occupancy agreement will fall to WHA. However where a driveway has been installed without permission WHA reserve the right to remove and recharge for making good the area or will recharge an appropriate amount for repairs carried out

to shared driveways where remedial works have been unavoidable because of health and safety concerns.

- 2* If following inspection it is found that the glass has been broken from inside of the property then the appropriate recharge will be raised. If it is found that the glass has been broken from the outside of the property then a recharge will not be raised unless it becomes apparent that the damage was caused by the customer, visitors or family of the customer.
- 3* If following inspection of the lock foul play is suspected then following discussions with the customer a recharge will be raised if WHA conclude it appropriate in the circumstances.
- 4* This is as defined in the Boundary Policy.
- 5* Gas radiants will only be replaced if required by the regulations in force at the time. They will not be replaced for cosmetic reasons such as discolouration.
- 6* When a new customer accepts an occupancy agreement with an air source heat pump arrangements need to be made with the Gas Operations Contractor for a WHA Team Leader to visit the customer to provide awareness on how to set and operate the system so that the customer can benefit from it working to maximum efficiency.
- 7* Photovoltaic Panels work by converting direct sunlight into electric and should give customers free electricity during the day. The panels require very little maintenance. They are self-cleaning but do benefit from an annual clean to ensure that they are working at optimum efficiency.

Once fitted on a property the manufacturers details should be left with the inverter as this includes shut down procedures should they ever be required. An electrician can check that the inverter is working correctly by doing a visual check.
- 8* Solar Panels work by converting direct sunlight into heat and should give customers free energy to heat hot water during the day. The panels require annual anti-freeze checks, this will be carried out by WHA.

APPENDIX 1

Literature for Customers

Living in your home

Damp and condensation



A leak from the roof, guttering, pipes, plumbing, or rotten window sills can allow water to get into the building causing damp. Sometimes damp can rise from the ground if you live on the ground floor. We can diagnose and fix these faults if you call us.



However, condensation – which is worse in winter – is more likely to be the cause of your damp problem.

Condensation is moisture held in the air. It becomes a problem when you produce so much moisture that when the air settles on cold surfaces it leaves them dripping wet. Wet surfaces can develop mould.

Take these steps to reduce your condensation.

Reduce moisture

- Keep saucepan lids on when cooking and use your cooker hood.
- Vent tumble driers to the outside.
- Avoid drying clothes indoors. Use a room with ventilation if you must.
- Shut the bathroom door when bathing or showering.
- Shut the kitchen door when cooking.

Raise the temperature

Condensation is most common in homes that are difficult to keep warm. Improving your heating and insulation are the best way to raise the temperature.

Living in your home

Increase ventilation

Provide ventilation without too much cold air, which will lower the room temperature.

- Introduce extractor fans in areas where you produce a lot of moisture.
- Don't draughtproof kitchen and bathroom windows – to allow some natural ventilation.
- Leave a gap between items of furniture and outside walls, to allow air to circulate.



Remove mould

Treat any mould by washing walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash that has a Health & Safety Executive approval number. You will need to wear gloves and should always follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

Frozen or burst pipes



Frozen pipes can cause a lot of damage if they burst. You can avoid this happening by:

- insulating pipes that might freeze
- making sure you know where the stopcock is
- keeping your home warm – if you are away during the winter, keep your heating on low.

If your pipes freeze, do the following.

- Turn off the stopcock and the heating system.
- Thaw out the pipes gently, using a hairdryer or cloth soaked in hot water. Don't use a naked flame.

Living in your home

Pests



You are responsible for dealing with problems with pests such as ants, fleas, cockroaches, or wasp nests. You can call your housing officer for advice.

In some cases, you may need to involve the Environmental Health Department at your local council. They will probably charge you for the work they carry out.

Energy efficiency



Everyone wants to heat their homes effectively and save money on their heating bills. The following tips may help you to this.

- To check you haven't been overheating your home, turn your heating thermostat down by one degree and leave it for a day. If you still feel warm, try turning it down another degree. Carry on until you find the best temperature.
- Save on electricity by using kitchen appliances carefully. Use your washing machine at lower temperatures and your tumble dryer only when you can't dry clothes outside. Boil only the water you need for hot drinks and to cook vegetables.
- Use energy-saving light bulbs – they last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs.
- Don't leave electrical appliances on standby. Switch them off at the plug when not in use. Some items carry on using energy, even when they are switched off.