

# WICKHAM COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

## Repair and Maintenance Policy and Procedures

(for rented properties only)

Approved: Jun 2012

Last reviewed: Jan 2026

Next review: June 2029

Available on WCLT website.

Wickham Community Land Trust (WCLT) recognises its responsibility to ensure that all its homes meet the decent homes standard and that it satisfies current regulatory standards in respect of health and safety, repairs and maintenance, planned improvements and adaptations.<sup>1</sup>

WCLT's aims are as follows:

- providing cost effective repairs and maintenance
- responding to the needs/choices of the tenants
- completing repairs and improvements right the first time
- meeting all applicable statutory requirements relating to health and safety including Hazards in Social Housing Regulations (Awaab's Law).
- maintaining reasonably modern facilities and services
- ensuring provision of a reasonable degree of thermal comfort
- maintaining a balance between responsive repairs and planned maintenance.
- working with other agencies to provide adaptations for people who are elderly, have health requirements or disabilities which require adaptations.

To this end WCLT sets out below its policy and procedures for repairs and maintenance.

### 1. Repairs and maintenance

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<sup>1</sup> A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation, June 2006, Department of Communities and Local Government; Homes England Consumer Standards: Safety and Quality Standards 01/04/2024

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WCLT aims to respond to requests for repair within the following guidelines:

Emergency – 24 hours (see also the requirements of Awaab's Law where there is an immediate and significant risk to the health and safety of the occupier)

Urgent – 7 days (see also the requirements of Awaab's Law where there is a significant risk to the health and safety of the occupier)

Routine – at our discretion, but generally attended within 28 days.

Response times may be affected by when the repair is reported, i.e. whether it be a Sunday or a Bank Holiday, but we will do our best to take into account tenants who have special needs or those with very young children.

In general, repairs will fall into the following categories:

Emergency:

- Total loss of water or power supply
- A dangerous broken window
- A blocked toilet, where there is only one toilet in the property
- Total loss of heating in winter
- Making a property secure (such as after a break-in)
- gas or carbon monoxide leaks
- broken boilers
- electrical hazards such as exposed wiring
- significant leaks
- broken external doors or windows that present a risk to home security
- prevalent damp and/or mould that is having a material impact on a tenant's health
- significant structural defects or disrepair
- Any other hazard that poses an imminent and significant risk to the health and safety of the occupier as defined by Awaab's Law.

This only applies to the work that is needed to make the repair safe and further repair work may be finished later.

Urgent:

- Partial loss of water or power supply
- Minor leaks
- Removal of racist and other discriminatory or offensive graffiti
- A blocked toilet (where there is more than one toilet in the property)
- No hot water
- No heating
- Loss of roof tiles that can cause rainwater to enter the property.
- Any of the above

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- Any hazard that poses a significant risk to the health and safety of the occupier as defined by Awaab's Law.

Routine or non-urgent:

- Repairs that are not an immediate health or safety risk
- Broken gutters
- Inside doors
- Fixtures and fittings
- Minor plumbing and plastering jobs.

When a repair is requested we or the Managing Agents will notify the tenant(s) of who will be doing the work and when, and we ask that the tenant(s) co-operate in providing access to their home.

If WCLT fails to carry out the repair within the set timescale the tenant(s) should inform WCLT that the repair has not been done. WCLT will then, where it is reasonably practical, provide further notification of who will be doing the work and when.

## 2. Maintenance

2.1 WCLT is responsible for maintaining and repairing the structure and outside of the properties and shared areas.

- Foundations, roofs, chimney stacks, outside walls, window sills, window frames, gutters and outside pipes
- Inside walls, skirting boards, door frames, doors, plasterwork, ceilings and floors
- Fitted cupboards and kitchen units (if provided by WCLT)
- Cooker hood (other than changing filters) if provided by WCLT
- Hob and oven/cooker if provided by WCLT and not gifted.
- Access routes including pathways and steps, boundary walls and fencing, gates and rubbish facilities, such as bin stores for the flats
- Outbuildings, if provided by us
- Painting outside as part of our maintenance programme.

2.2. Tenants are responsible for reporting to WCLT's agent promptly any disrepair or defect for which WCLT is responsible.

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2.3. Tenants are responsible for:

- Replacing plugs in sinks (except the pull up fixed plugs), washers in taps, toilet seats and lids, shower hoses
- Replacing starters in strip lights, fuses, light bulbs, doorbells, broken glass to doors and windows
- Replacing keys and locks, cupboard catches and hinges
- Redecoration inside the home (neutral colours only) and keeping the decoration in good condition
- Maintaining fixtures and fittings, e.g. curtain rails, that the tenant has installed
- Treating household pests and infestations
- Clearing blockages in waste pipes and toilets due to lack of care
- Keeping airbricks and ventilators clear
- Changing filters in ventilations systems and cooker hoods
- Setting heating controls and relighting boilers
- Taking reasonable care to protect their homes from damage caused by fire, frost or water
- Avoiding the storage of materials or gases which catch fire easily
- Carrying out repairs to any alteration which has been approved and which the tenant has carried out
- Maintaining private garden
- Making minor repairs to fencing
- Making minor repairs to plaster (e.g. filling in small holes/cracks prior to decorating)
- Any leak and consequential damage caused by the tenant's washing machine or other appliance (unless the damage can be recovered from insurance)
- Making good damage to the premises caused by the Tenant, a member of the Tenant's household or a visitor (fair wear and tear excepted) and to pay any costs incurred by WCLT in carrying out related repairs.

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## 2.4. Access to the property

WCLT or their agent or contractor need to be able to go into a tenant's home from time to time to inspect or repair the property or to carry out safety checks. WCLT undertakes to contact the tenant and arrange a suitable time to visit.

WCLT may also have to enter the home without the tenant's permission in extreme emergencies such as a flood or fire. The tenancy agreement gives WCLT the right to do this without the tenant's permission or where the tenant is not available to let WCLT in.

## 3. Maintaining services

WCLT is responsible for maintaining gas, electricity water and sanitation services. (This applies only to service pipework and appliances that we have installed.)

- Electrical wiring, sockets and light fittings (except if the tenant has put them in themselves). This does not include fuses, bulbs or tenants own electrical equipment.
- Water heaters and central heating systems.
- Baths, showers (except if the tenant has installed it themselves), toilets, sinks, basins and taps.
- Water pipe

WCLT would urge tenants to read and abide by any instructions provided when they move in regarding the disposal of items in toilets. The good running of the sewage system for the homes relies on residents abiding by this advice.

## 4. Alterations

4.1 No alterations may be made during a 'Defects Liability Period'.

4.2 Tenants may only carry out alterations which qualify for approval. Qualification depends on:

- a) where that alteration is clearly seen as beneficial and
- b) one which has received the prior written consent of the Trust.

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Any tenant who wishes to carry out an alteration must **first of all apply to the Trust in writing** detailing the works they wish to carry out. The Trust's written approval must be given before any works can begin. It should be noted that although an alteration may be acceptable in principle, it may still be rejected on a number of grounds, such as:

- It is out of keeping with the rest of the dwelling
- It will be unduly expensive to maintain
- It would make the dwelling difficult to let in the future
- It would be unsuitable for possible future occupants
- It is one that the Trust expects to make within a reasonable time

Please note, the installation of laminate flooring for upper floor flats, is unlikely to be approved on grounds of noise affecting neighbours.

All requests for qualifying alterations will be carefully considered on their merits by the Trust, and where necessary, a site inspection will be carried out. Generally, any request under this policy should receive a response in writing to the tenant within 15 days following the next available meeting of the Housing Sub-Committee.

4.3 Please see attached schedule which sets out minimum standards to which work should be carried out.

4.4 Tenants must advise the Trust once the work has been completed so that the Trust can inspect the work and be satisfied that it has been carried out entirely to its satisfaction, and any relevant certificates or guarantees are obtained.

## 5. Planned Refurbishment

Within its financial model WCLT has allowed for the scheduling of regular refurbishment of properties.

When refurbishing properties WCLT undertakes to:

- 5.1. Ensure works undertaken do not make the home more difficult to use for a person with disabilities
- 5.2. Consider lifetime homes and carry out work in an environmentally sustainable way
- 5.3. When carrying out work to remove hazards, consider remedial action to ensure that the hazard does not recur within at least 5 years
- 5.4. To the extent that it is practical, work in accordance with tenants' wishes
- 5.5. Time any renovation work effectively so as to cause as little disruption to the tenant as possible

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- 5.6. Consider whether it is appropriate to carry out work to make the homes decent or whether it is more effective to carry out additional work(s) at the same time

## 6. Property Inspections

Properties will be inspected at tenancy review or when properties become void. Arising from this inspection a schedule of replacements will be drawn up.

### Alterations/Additions that may be permitted

| Alteration                  | Conditions to be complied with                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Shower                      | Must be installed by a competent electrician/plumber. 10mm cable and copper piping must be used and a copy of the electrical installation certificate supplied.                                                                                             |
| Laminate or wooden flooring | See note above re flats. The Trust will not be liable for any damage or requirement to uplift to allow repair/major works.                                                                                                                                  |
| Kitchens                    | Subject to 4.2 above. Full details of manufacturer's specifications and installer must be provided so that the Trust can make an informed decision on the quality of the kitchen, availability of spare etc.                                                |
| TV Aerial                   | When fixed to a bracket within the loft space                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Wall-mounted televisions    | Must be adequately fixed by a competent tradesman using a TV bracket recommended by the manufacturer. Any drill holes should not puncture the wall insulation.                                                                                              |
| TV Satellite dish           | Not to place or erect any satellite dish on any wall which faces any road, footpath, access way or amenity areas. Extreme care should be taken that drill holes do not go right through and puncture wall insulation and thereby nullify defects liability. |
| Security/burglar alarm      | Full details must be provided of installer/company carrying out the installation. Extreme care should be taken that drill holes do not go right through and puncture wall insulation and thereby nullify defects liability.                                 |

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|                            |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tiled floors               | Subject to 4.2 above. Houses and ground floor flats, except where the property is still under a defects liability period                                              |
| Tiled walls                | Subject o 4.2 above. Except where the property is still under a defects liability period                                                                              |
| External taps              | Internal pipework must be insulated and fitted with a balofix valve to isolate external water supply                                                                  |
| Slabbing                   | Subject to 4.2 above. Slabbing works must have a minimum of 100mm hardcore to support the slabbed area and be free from any trip hazards.                             |
| Fitted wardrobes           | No structural changes allowed and room must be reinstated to original layout if tenancy ends                                                                          |
| Internal doors             | Subject to 4.2 above. Fire doors must be replaced with doors of equal or approved fire rating. Any glazed doors must have regulation safety glass.                    |
| Windows and external doors | Subject to 4.2 above. Specification must be approved by the Trust. Must be like for like. No structural changes to the fabric of the building or canopies over doors. |

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