

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Council Housing

Planned Maintenance Policy

Issue date: June 2025
Review date: June 2028



Cheshire West
and Chester

1. Management Information

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| Approval Date: | June 2025 |
| Next Review Date: | June 2028 |
| Policy Owner: | Janet Lawton Head of Council Housing Management Board |
| Responsible Service Area: | Council Housing Management Service |
| Responsible Director: | Director of Economy and Housing |

2. Introduction

This policy details the arrangements for planned maintenance to all Cheshire West and Chester Council homes, and communal areas.

This policy will also assist and support the Council housing aim of:

“We aim to provide affordable homes of the right type and quality to meet the housing needs of those who are unable to meet their own needs in the housing market now and in the future. We will work in partnership to support our tenants to prosper and improve their wellbeing and ensure neighbourhoods and communities are sustainable, safe, and pleasant.”

This policy is closely aligned to the pledges we have made to tenants and leaseholders in the Together with Tenants Charter most notably:

- Your community;
- Quality of your home and;
- Your safety.

This policy also helps us to achieve the six objectives detailed in the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy as follows:

- Ensure homes are fit for purpose
- Ensure homes are safe to live in
- Ensure homes help meet housing needs
- Help contribute to social and environmental wellbeing
- Reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact and finally
- Ensure there is effective financial control overseeing our work.

Finally, this policy also delivers the safe homes, safe communities objectives detailed in the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy.

3. Aim of Policy

This Policy sets out our approach to maintain the condition of the council housing stock within the context of the decent homes standard and other statutory and legislative requirements.

The implementation of this Policy will ensure the delivery of an effective and efficient planned maintenance service that responds to the needs of tenants and leaseholders whilst ensuring investment in the Council's housing stock is realised.

4. Strategic context

This policy helps the Council to meet the following national and local strategic aims.

Social Housing Regulations Act 2023 – Consumer Standards

- Quality and Safety Standard
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Tenancy Standard

[CWAC Borough Plan 2024 – 2028](#) - sets out how the Council will work with all its residents to build a stronger future where the Council and residents all play their part in creating thriving, caring and sustainable communities.

The Borough Plan has six missions as follows:

- Starting well - The best start for the borough's children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.
- Tackling hardship and poverty - More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.
- Resilient people living their best lives - Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.
- Opportunity in a fair local economy - Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy.
- Neighbourhood pride - Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.
- Greener communities - Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

[Together with Tenants Charter | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)
[Tenant Engagement Strategy 2025-30](#)
[Council Housing Asset Management Strategy](#)

5. Definition and legislation

For the purpose of this policy, we have defined planned maintenance by the following:

Planned Work

Each year we will plan and deliver a capital investment programme to ensure council homes are maintained and comply with the Decent Homes Standard. This is a technical standard set by the government to measure the quality of social housing. Minimum standards are set to ensure properties are in reasonable repair, have modern facilities, and provide good levels of thermal comfort for our tenants and leaseholders.

As part of this capital investment programme, we will also undertake improvement works to our neighbourhoods to support our commitment in providing safer and securer communities. This will include internal and external improvement works in low- and high-rise blocks of flats which will involve upgrades to maintain the building's safety, condition, and value.

When talking about planned work, we mean: the renewal of windows, doors, roofing, gutters, kitchens, bathrooms, electrical rewires, gas boiler renewal, energy efficiency, car parking/garage improvements, boundary walls, communal block refurbishments to include redecorating, door entry system and lighting upgrades, and fencing.

Planned Work for Leaseholder Properties

For 'leaseholder' works, in general the Council are responsible for any works within internal or external communal areas (including doors that lead directly to a communal area), any works inside the leasehold property are the responsibility of the leaseholder (including services). The exception to the above may include internal pipework that service all residents living in the block of flats.

Whenever planned works are proposed that affect a leaseholder, the Home Ownership Officer will be notified. They will assess whether the cost of the project exceeds the threshold for a Section 20 consultation. The outcome of this assessment will determine the procurement route, as projects exceeding the threshold typically require procurement through an open or full tender process.

Cyclical Work

Cyclical works refer to regular, routine maintenance tasks performed on a schedule to keep properties in good condition. These tasks are typically carried out annually or every few years and are a proactive approach to preventing issues and extending the lifespan of building components.

This type of work will include statutory and legislative requirements which includes gas servicing, electrical periodic testing, adaptations equipment servicing, lift servicing, legionella control testing and monitoring, fire equipment servicing, and emergency light testing.

Major Repairs

Some works that are reported as repairs may require more significant investment and will need to be dealt as a planned investment. In general, these are complex repairs that require more time and planning to complete, such as structural repairs.

In these cases, the repair details will be considered to be included in the capital investment programme or delivered as major capital works.

Right to Buy Applications

Properties with an outstanding 'right to buy' application, will have an emergency response only - all other works are the responsibility of the tenant whilst the Right to Buy application is live. No planned or cyclical investment work will be completed at a property with an outstanding 'right to buy' application.

6. How the policy will be delivered

We will aim to deliver a planned investment programme that ensures 70% of expenditure is directed towards planned works, while 30% is allocated to responsive or reactive repairs.

To plan future programmes of work, we will utilise the following insight:

- Lifecycle: When elements are due for renewal based on their lifecycle duration.
- Data Analysis: Using information from responsive repairs, void works, and tenant feedback for example tenant satisfaction measures.
- Feedback from internal/external stakeholders: A defect may have been identified on a property and after further investigation the same defect is affecting multiple properties in the same area.
- Ad-hoc projects such as energy efficiency programme.
- Statutory or legislative requirements: Social housing Decent Homes Standard and any safety legislation.
- Stock condition: A stock condition survey is a visual inspection of a home's interior and exterior, focusing on the age and condition of key components like kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors, and the roof. We aim to inspect all council properties on a 5-year rolling programme meaning every year, approximately 20% of all homes will be surveyed.

When planned or cyclical maintenance works are completed, this information will be updated on the relevant ICT software management system which will assist with accurate records and any future management and maintenance works.

Funding

The planned and cyclical maintenance service will be funded from the following sources:

- Annual maintenance budget financed from rental and service charge income (housing revenue account)
- External grants or loan funding, for example for energy efficiency measures or adaptations
- Designated provisions
- Private borrowing when required and with prior approval from the Cabinet

Enabling Tenants Choices

Where practicable, we will provide tenants with an opportunity to make choices for selected finishes, colours and ironmongery. This will apply to:

- Door and worktop finishes of kitchen units,
- Colour of tiles in the bathroom and kitchen,
- Kitchen unit ironmongery,
- Colour/pattern of floor coverings in bathroom and kitchen,
- Style of external doors

Procurement

A range of procurement options will be considered. This will depend on the nature, scope, duration and complexity of the planned maintenance being procured. The methods to be considered include:

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| Direct Award | To issue works/services via direct award the provider is typically a specialist or an existing/recently used company that can complete works or services within a sensitive timescale. |
| Open Tender | A procurement method where any interested business can submit a bid to provide goods or services, without needing prior pre-qualification or shortlisting. |
| Full Tender | A formal bid submitted in response to an invitation to tender or a request for proposal. |
| External framework | A pre-approved agreement between a buying organisation and one or more suppliers, establishing terms and conditions for future purchases of goods, services, or works |

All contractors will be audited to ensure that they have the relevant competencies for the work in line with the Procurement Act 2023.

Instruction of Works

Once works have been identified as required, and the relevant procurement process has been completed, a works order, contract order or programme order will be raised within the relevant ICT software management system and will be issued to the contractor.

Contractors

We will select a contractor, based on ability, experience, and value for money. We will inform the tenant/leaseholder who the contractor is and give a date when the programme of works will begin. Contractors will give tenants/leaseholders at least seven working days' notice before any work will start on their home or within the communal areas.

For certain types of work the appointed contractor will need to undertake a pre-entry survey. This survey will be an opportunity for the contractor to introduce themselves, talk to the tenant/leaseholder about the work, identify any specific requirements, any access arrangements needed to complete the work and to answer any questions.

All on site work will be supervised by the contractor. All operatives on site will adhere to the Contractor Code of Conduct customer service standards – please see appendix 1.

Communication

The tenant/leaseholder will be kept updated about any planned or cyclical works to be undertaken. Letters will be sent to provide information about the work and to introduce the contractor.

For planned works, a Surveyor/Customer Liaison Officer will be appointed by the contractor. The officer will provide information and support to the tenant/leaseholder and be the first point of contact, ensuring their needs are met and issues resolved promptly and efficiently. The tenant/leaseholder will be contacted by the contractor to agree when the work will start and reminder letters 14 and 7 days before this date will be sent.

All appointments will be confirmed and followed up with a confirmation telephone call. If contact cannot be made a voicemail notification, appointment card or additional letter will be sent out to the tenant/leaseholder.

If for any reason the appointment cannot be kept the tenant/leaseholder will be notified as early as possible before the appointment time. In this eventuality the tenant/leaseholder will be offered an apology, an explanation of the reason for the breaking of the appointment and an alternative appointment date agreed.

Access

As a standard, three attempts will be made to arrange an appointment for planned works or cyclical works in a tenant/leaseholder home. We operate a no access procedure for the planned maintenance service which stipulates that a calling card/letter will be left where access is not gained at an appointed time and date.

If access is not gained at the agreed appointment date the card/letter will request the tenant/leaseholder to contact and rearrange a date that is convenient. We will monitor homes where no access occurs to ensure properties do not fall into disrepair.

Tenant Refusal of Work

As part of the tenancy agreement, a tenant is required to provide access to their home to inspect the condition of the property or to carry out repairs and other essential works.

Certain types of works are necessary for health and safety, maintaining the property's wind and watertight condition, or preserving its structural integrity.

To minimise tenant refusal of work, we will work collaboratively with tenants to ensure improvement works are carried out with minimal inconvenience and maximum respect for their home and circumstances.

We will provide reasonable notice before undertaking any work and liaise with the tenant to agree on a convenient date and time of work. We will also provide clear information about the nature of the work and offer any additional support necessary to facilitate access and completion of the work.

In cases where a tenant continues to refuse access without reasonable justification, we will explore all options to resolve this matter. However, where access is essential and all engagement efforts have been exhausted, we may need to consider formal action to fulfil our legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Health and Safety

We are committed to protecting the health and safety of our employees, contractors, tenants, leaseholders and the general public. The planned and cyclical maintenance programme will be delivered in compliance with all relevant health and safety policies, Construction, Design and Management (CDM) Procedures and the client duties set out in the CDM Regulations 2015.

Quality and Control

We will carry out inspections to support the quality delivery of the planned works. We will carry out post completion inspections via home visits, telephone calls and the review of photographs at desktop level. We will also conduct surveys to assess tenant satisfaction.

7. Equity and reasonable adjustment statement

We value diversity and work to create an inclusive environment for customers and staff, where everyone has access to the same opportunities. We welcome our responsibility to comply with equalities legislation and regulatory requirements that relate to equity, diversity and inclusion and aim to do more. Through our activities we aim to remove systemic barriers to equal opportunities and eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within our organisation.

We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with our Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded and kept under active review.

8. Related Documents

Council Housing Asset Management Strategy 2024-2029

9. Equality Analysis

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| Results of EA / Actions taken forward to mitigate any potential negative impacts | Inform that this policy can be provided in alternative formats. Inform about the ongoing equality and diversity training for staff in the delivery of this policy. |
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See appendix 1 for full Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.

10. Consultation and Business Intelligence

The policy was created in consultation with the Council's tenants leaseholders and staff.

11. Monitoring and review

The Council Housing Management Board has responsibility for the monitoring and review of this policy. This policy will be reviewed every three years starting from the date it is approached and adopted.

12. Approval and Review History

The approval route for all policies and procedures is via the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning who has delegated powers for policy approval from the Council's Executive Cabinet.

| Version | Approved by | Date |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Approval V1.3 | Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning | 26/06/2025 |
| Approval V1.4 | Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning | 18/09/2025 |
| Approval V1.5 | Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning | 28/05/2026 |

Document Revision History

| Date amended | Version | Key Changes |
|--------------|---------|--|
| 04/04/2025 | V1 | New policy |
| 05/05/2025 | V1.2 | Revised version following tenants from the CHMB feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide more detail in the introduction and re-word Aim of the Policy• Include definitions of planned maintenance |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in the Planning Work section more detail about stock condition surveys • Simplify the Procurement section from the manual • Include more detail about planned and cyclical work in flatted blocks • Include various sections in the policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding ○ Tenant Choice ○ Instruction of Works ○ Contractor ○ Communication ○ Access ○ Tenant Refusal of Work ○ Health and Safety ○ Quality of Work <p>Review</p> |
| 17/6/2025 | V1.3 | <p>Revised version following wider tenant and leaseholder consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clearer the sentence around flatted blocks within the 'Planned work' section • Review the 'Planned work for leaseholder properties' section and include information about internal pipework that services all residents' homes <p>Inform on data analysed to plan work in the 'Planning for work' section</p> |
| 18/09/2025 | V1.4 | <p>Revised version to take into account the insourcing of the housing management service from ForHousing.</p> |
| 22/05/2026 | V1.5 | <p>Policy revised following insourcing of housing management services, updates to revised service structure and contact information. No substantive changes have been made to the policy.</p> |

Appendix 1 – Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

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| Area of activity or change | Enter Policy Name here |
| IMDF Approval | Enter approving officer |

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| STAGE ONE - SCOPING | Outlines the decision that is being made any why |
| STAGE TWO - RESEARCH | Outlines the collaboration and research that will inform this decision |
| STAGE THREE - FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS | Considers how learnings from research and engagement are being embedded, the potential impact of the decision on different people and how these can best be managed. |

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| STAGE ONE – SCOPING | |
| Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where has the proposed activity or change come from and why is it needed? Why is it important to ForHousing? How will this affect the tenant / customer journey or colleague experience? | What activity or change is being proposed and why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review new policy to ensure it meets the requirements of ForHousing staff, Cheshire West and Chester Council and its tenants and leaseholders Review new policy to ensure that it complies with best practice guidance including Housing Ombudsman Consult with tenants and leaseholders |
| | What benefits are you trying to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy to consider all requirements Policy to be clear about being developed by best practice guidance Policy to be informative, to be clear and in plain English Meet the needs of staff, tenants and leaseholders |
| STAGE TWO – RESEARCH | |
| Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What groups or individuals will you approach to discuss this? How will you ensure that these people are diverse and representative? (See Equity and Diversity table in stage three) Is there any data you can look at to support you? | Who will help develop your thinking so that different experiences and perspectives are included? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with tenants and leaseholders using closed facebook page. Undertake an equality impact assessment to identify any positive and/or negative impacts on protected characteristics. |
| | What research will you do to inform your understanding? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all relevant requirements, including good practice |

| STAGE THREE – FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS | |
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| Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have people told you are some of the key issues? • What good practice is happening in other organisations? • What changes are you planning to make because of the things you've found out? | What have you learnt from your research and engagement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with tenants and leaseholders informed on minor changes to the policy which is recorded in the final document. |
| | How will you embed what you've learnt into your activity or change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make relevant minor changes to the policy • Inform within the document that this can be provided in alternative formats. • Inform about the ongoing equality and diversity training being provided to staff in the delivery of this policy. |

| Equity and Diversity - Not everyone has the same access to opportunities or services, and the things that make us different – such as the characteristics listed below – can affect our experiences and outcomes. Therefore, it is important to consider how different people could be impacted by any activity or change we want to bring about. | |
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| How could the proposed activity or change affect people with these characteristics (positively or negatively)? | |
| Age (Younger or older people) | |
| Caring responsibilities (Parents and those looking after an older or disabled person) | |
| Digital inclusion (People without access to digital platforms or devices) | |
| Educational attainment (People who have experienced barriers to formal education) | |
| Ethnicity, race and nationality (Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers) | |
| Financial inclusion (People experiencing financial barriers or challenges) | |
| Marriage / civil partnership (Legal union between different-sex or same-sex couples) | |
| Mental health (People with a mental disability or ill-health) | |
| Neurodiversity (Such as people with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia) | |
| Physical health (People with a physical disability or ill-health) | |
| Pregnancy and maternity (Someone who is pregnant or has recently given birth) | |
| Religion, faith or belief (All religions and faiths, including people with no religion) | |
| Sex (Men and women) | |
| Gender identity (Including trans and non-binary people) | |
| Sexual orientation (Such as Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people) | |
| Any other characteristic | |

Managing positive and negative effects

Consider points such as:

- Do you need to escalate any issues or seek legal advice?
- Can you see any opportunities to promote or celebrate positive outcomes?
- How will you build monitoring into the implementation of your activity or change and who will you report to?

If potential negative effects have been identified, how will any harm be reduced or avoided?

If potential positive effects have been identified, how can we ensure these are realised?

How and when will the impacts of your activity or change be monitored moving forward?

