

RETHINKING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

*Rewriting
the rules*



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Neighbourhoods**

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THE NEED FOR A NEW AGENDA FOR REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Repairs and maintenance is more than just a service to tenants; it should be part of the core investment in the physical assets of the business. It is not simply an on-demand service to residents but should be an investment in sustaining safe, warm and comfortable homes.





WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

Shining a light onto some uncomfortable truths with the aim of reshaping and redefining the challenges facing repairs and maintenance within the housing sector and how they should be addressed.





WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

Our project aims:

- To use sector led collaborative techniques to explore how best to *radically shrink the cost of repairs & maintenance whilst driving up investment value* delivered in tenants' homes
- To provide an *evidence based examination of good practice in R & M service design and operation* and an objective appraisal of the results and outcomes
- Setting a *new strategic agenda* for the next decade



Traditional repairs delivery models will not match the value and economy thresholds now expected



WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

Our 16 project members:

- Barking & Dagenham, London Borough of
- Fortem
- Gateshead Council and Housing Company
- Halton Housing Trust
- Homes for Haringey
- Housing Leeds
- Mears Group
- Moat Homes
- Northampton Partnership Homes
- North Tyneside Homes
- Nottingham City Homes
- Regenda
- Riverside
- Southwark, London borough of
- Stoke on Trent, City of
- Together Housing Group

CHANGING MARKETS – THE NEW ORDER

How has the business environment been changing outside of our sector?

- **ASOS** now a more valuable business than the 133-year-old high street giant Marks & Spencer
- Online retailer **Amazon** is now worth nearly twice as much as Walmart, after overtaking the American grocery chain in 2015
- The electric carmaker **Tesla** has sped ahead of the 114-year-old Ford Motor Company in April to become the US's most valuable car manufacturer



MARKET CHANGERS

Let's think for a minute about the hallmarks of these players?



MARKET CHANGERS – THEIR HALLMARK



Responsive
Predictive
Pre-emptive

**Forward
thinking**
Innovative
Imaginative



easyJet

Exploit new technology
**Develop new models of
working**

Pioneering
Reinventing
Rethinking

Commercial
**Lower cost business
models**
Customer focussed

THE KEY CHALLENGES IN REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

1. ***Rethinking traditional repairs delivery models, moving away from those*** primarily led by either simple tenant demand for reactive repairs or by the predicted lifecycle of components in the case of planned maintenance as these no longer match the value and economy thresholds now expected
2. ***Rebuilding resident trust and confidence*** in their landlord – demonstrating a commitment and ability to keep tenants safe at all times.
3. ***Making sure that what is spent on repairs is relevant*** and a proper contribution to sustaining the housing assets

Business plans are under huge pressure following the dramatic shifts in the financial tectonic plates that govern the sector.

THE NEED TO MOVE THINGS ON...

The ***Working Together to Rethink Repairs*** group members have concluded that the rigid and prescriptive frameworks and rules articulated in the mid noughties by the Audit Commission and through the Decent Homes programme are now:

- ***Unfocused in their understanding and definition of how to add value to building assets***
- ***Profligate in condemning viable building components to premature renewal***
- ***Contributing to an unsustainable illusion of entitlement around repairs expectations***

However, the same old frameworks and rules are still shaping today's views about what the sector is here to deliver and the design of most repairs business models!

DETERMINING OUR RESPONSE

Q

How do we optimise the value obtained from delivery of repairs and maintenance services and ensure that all investment contributes to business objectives?

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Our sector needs a paradigm shift in its approach to repairs and maintenance which disrupts both the established delivery models and the typically sterile terms of debate, for example, over whether to deliver services in house or whether to outsource provision.

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE MATTERS

There are things we need to challenge and change if the sector is to deliver genuine investment value for tenants through repairs and maintenance.

Through our project we have therefore redefined the genuinely important issues and concepts for a modern repairs service and put forward the following hallmarks of best practice:

OUR HALLMARKS OF THE NEW BEST PRACTICE

- ✓ A genuinely **collaborative approach** - optimising use of resources & collective effort – a clear common purpose
- ✓ Well designed and implemented systems that provide a **clear and common purpose** - an effective alignment to coordinate input between the delivery provider and the client, as well as across the landlord team.
- ✓ A strategic approach to **driving out unnecessary costs and minimising waste** by extending component life where a repair will be effective, adopting a consistent and reliable testing regime prior to component renewal
- ✓ Having a core set of criteria and indicators that focus on **measuring and testing only what is important** and that add value to residents and for the building asset

OUR HALLMARKS OF THE NEW BEST PRACTICE

- ✓ Understanding the drivers of cost and value across repairs and maintenance and harnessing these to improve outcomes and outputs
- ✓ Having an agreement in place with residents for an affordable service offer, based on an explicit partnership with mutual rights and responsibilities to look after homes and neighbourhoods
- ✓ The application of commercial thinking, design and delivery approaches with the aim of protecting investment and generating asset value

WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

The new rules of engagement

1. Repairs and maintenance must be an integral part of asset management, with a set of shared aims, objectives, measurement and monitoring criteria

- A good repairs service is about much more than just turning up on time and fixing on the first visit, whatever the cost
- We must stop the obsession with Decent Homes which too often condemns serviceable components to premature abandonment
- We need a preventive maintenance approach designed to anticipate repairs needs, producing lower levels of reactive demand
- We must test and verify the impact of planned programmes on reactive repairs



WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

The new rules of engagement

2. We must forge a new and productive partnership with tenants and residents based around mutual obligations

- As landlords we must invest in an active, mutual, long term partnership with residents
- Repairs teams must be involved in helping tenants prepare for their tenancy and in providing a proactive tenancy induction programme
- Both landlords and tenants need to embrace a robust approach to rewards and sanctions
- Repairs teams must play their part in helping tenants secure a pathway out of dependency



WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

The new rules of engagement

3. We must deliver on collaborative working with housing management and across the landlord team to deliver stronger, shared outcomes and outputs for residents, the building asset and the housing business

- Get out of our silos and develop a shared understanding and appreciation of how cross-team working can deliver mutual benefits
- See repairs as just one facet of a 'fit for purpose' home, recognising the wider importance of repairs for estate and neighbourhood sustainability
- Repairs and housing teams must work collaboratively together to deliver tenancy sustainment and reduce the incidence and costs of re-housing



WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

The new rules of engagement

4. We must have a resilient and capable repairs and maintenance workforce that has the new skills and experience needed to deliver the new, modern service

- Have in place a resilient blend and hierarchy of skills based around crafts, communication, advice etc.
- Repairs operatives must all be proactive problem solvers, with a flexible 'can-do' approach
- Make use of the repairs visit by the operative to identify and capture any potential property or tenancy concerns



WORKING TOGETHER TO RETHINK REPAIRS

The new rules of engagement

5. We must establish a more commercial approach to housing repairs and maintenance - one where the cost of delivering the service is fully understood and is appropriate and proportionate to the outputs being secured

- Agree and adopt in partnership with our residents a definition of a commercial approach to repairs planning and delivery that addresses the right balance (tension?) between quality/service/cost
- Embrace and adopt a 'whole life' approach to materials selection that considers long term maintenance and repair arrangements
- Make the best use of technology to try and 'disrupt' traditional business practices and invent new, better, cheaper approaches



THE RIVERSIDE EXAMPLE

The *Think Homes* approach

Responsive Preventative Pre-emptive



- MOT, data and customer focus
- A proactive, planned approach
- Re-shapes the landlord/tenant relationship – mutual obligations
- Designed to deliver increased VfM, productivity, customer satisfaction
- An emphasis on evidencing the benefits it has delivered e.g. fewer day to day repairs, increased levels of customer satisfaction
- An example of taking the initiative and gaining control



AND THE CONCLUSION?

The new rules of engagement dictate that we need to step up to the plate, change our mindset and **RETHINK** our approach to repairs to bring about better outcomes for residents, the property asset and organisations.



What do you think?