

Planned Maintenance - Special Projects

Overview

This policy outlines how we will manage the range of special projects that are carried out from time-to time within our annual planned maintenance program.

Scope

This policy applies to all owned, managed and leased properties by St George Community Housing. We carry out maintenance on all properties except for leasehold properties (where the owners managing agent has responsibility). We will apply this policy to inform recommendations to strata or property managers of leasehold properties.

Policy statement

We plan and budget for special items in our 10 year and annual asset maintenance plans in collaboration with Customers and Communities and Finance as part of the budget management process. The volume and value of planned work for the current year is outlined in the Annual Asset Management Plan. This work includes:

- *Works (that are not urgent – covered through reactive maintenance) that fall short of the SGCH SASH (Safe and Sustainable Homes) standard – these works are given priority in our annual Planned Maintenance Planning works programme.*
- *Fire legislation compliance works not covered by annual Essential Fire Safety Management (EFSM) inspections and recommendations by our appointed external specialists.*
- *Any emerging structural matters that can be prevented by early intervention*
- *Upgrades to core infrastructure*
- *Security upgrades*
- *Hazardous material management*
- *Gutter cleaning (all except single storey house including common areas)*
- *Alterations*

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- *Pest control (common areas only)*
 - *Fences*
 - *Non-dedicated roads, pathways and driveways – especially trip hazards and potholes*
 - *Trees – Grouped as a project where there is no immediate safety risk (trees that are safety or immediate risk to an asset will be treated as a responsive repair)*

Special Projects

Core Infrastructure upgrade

We replace or upgrade all utilities within the property boundary, including lifts in multi-storey buildings, Building Essential Services (BES) relating to fire, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and/or building structure systems to ensure that our properties meet our Safe and Sustainable Homes (SASH) standard at all times. We plan for these upgrades on a life-cycle basis and include estimates of the planned works in our 10 Year and Annual Asset Plans.

Security upgrades

Cameras

We may install security cameras if we believe that it will help with customer safety and building security or to reduce illegal activity or unacceptable behaviour at our properties. The relevant Asset and Tenancy Managers are jointly responsible for determining if security cameras are appropriate on a case-by-case basis. A business case will then be prepared pending delegation limits for approval.

We will inform our tenants when we are going to install security cameras at their property, and we will install signage at our properties where we have security cameras installed.

We will make sure that we meet our duties under privacy laws and Local Planning Policies. Access to security camera footage will be restricted to staff who have a business need and records of access to footage will be maintained.

Most of our security cameras will be activated when there is movement. Digital recordings will be available for a 4 week rolling timeframe to allow review of reported incidents. Recordings from security cameras will only be accessed by our authorised employees as needed.

We will only provide footage to external parties as permitted by privacy or other relevant laws. This may include providing footage to an enforcement body for enforcement related activities (as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*). The Privacy

Officer will be responsible for making decisions about releasing footage from our security cameras.

Tenants may request approval to install security cameras under our [Alterations policy](#).

Other security features

We will install intercoms, door locks, security gates, fencing and signs. The relevant Asset Manager and Tenancy Manager are jointly responsible for determining the level and extent that these security features are appropriate for the property.

Non-dedicated roads, pathways and driveways

We undertake maintenance or repair works to these features where those works are not provided by a local council or LAHC. We will engage a specialist contractor for these works as needed – mainly trip hazards and potholes.

Hazardous materials management

We repair, replace or make good building elements as required to meet legislative and/or LAHC requirements. This includes actions required to be undertaken for lead paint, asbestos and other hazardous materials.

If tenants become aware that these substances have been disturbed, they contact our maintenance helpline so that we can arrange for any risk to be managed. For more information, refer to our Asbestos Management Policy.

Gutter cleaning

We clean gutters on attached dwellings or multi storey residential buildings.

For freestanding properties including houses, townhouses and villas, tenants are responsible for making sure that their gutters are cleaned. If a tenant is elderly or has a disability, we will arrange and pay for the gutters to be cleaned. At no time do we expect a tenant to climb on a roof.

Alterations

Our tenants may request modifications and or additions to a property that are non-disability related. Refer to our Alterations policy for more information.

Pest control

As a landlord, we are responsible for:

- *Fumigation of vacant properties*
- *Fumigation for household pests within six months of the tenancy starting*
- *Fumigation to common areas*

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- *Treatment to prevent bird and possum access*

The Asset Team is responsible for determining the need for pest control activities on a case by case basis.

We have limited the annual termite inspection program (through external specialists) to those properties deemed at highest risk as the cost of the entire portfolio program was significantly greater than the annual rectification expenditure.

Fences

All properties that we manage have dividing fences that meet the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Asset Performance Standards for safety, function and appearance. If a fence does not meet these requirements, we will arrange repair or replacement of the fence.

If the owner of a neighbouring property requests to replace a fence that divides a property that we manage, they will be required to submit a written request which includes the following information:

- *The addresses of both properties and proof of property ownership in the form of a rates notice.*
- *Evidence that the existing fence is not of an adequate standard (for example, to maintain sufficient privacy or security, or the fence needs replacing).*
- *The boundary line where the proposed fencing work will be carried out.*
- *The type, length and height of the proposed fence.*
- *The cost of the proposed fencing work, including at least two quotes for the proposed work.*

If the owner of a neighbouring property wants to install a fence which is better than the standard required, we will only pay half of the cost of the standard fence type in accordance with the *Dividing Fence Act 1991* (NSW).

When assessing or initiating requests to replace dividing fences, we will meet our responsibilities under the *Dividing Fences Act 1991* (NSW), *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* (NSW), *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW), *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* (NSW), Local Environmental Plan of the relevant Council and LAHC's Dividing Fences Policy (where relevant).

Trees

Most properties we manage have trees of varying scale either within the curtilage or adjacent. Whether they are considered significant depends on the local government area where the property is located.

Trees that are not considered significant which are likely to damage our property will be pruned or removed.

If significant tree is located on our property and is likely to damage our property, we will obtain consent from council to prune or remove the tree.

If a significant tree is located on a neighbouring property or council land, and is likely to damage our property, we will notify the owner of the land and obtain consent to prune or remove the tree. This may include obtaining consent from council (as required)

Where the property is owned by LAHC, we may apply to LAHC for an authorisation letter granting approval to lodge with council a tree pruning and removal application on behalf of LAHC.

In cases where the trees are likely to cause injury or damage and the owner of the land will not provide consent, we will comply with the requirements of the *Trees (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act 2006*.

All pruning or tree removal costs are to be paid by the party who is commissioning the work.

Audit

This work sits under the general PMP category for which our over-riding policy is that all such work is audited by an Asset Officer, Contracts Officer, Quality Officer or Project Coordinator through a site visit or desk top audit to confirm acceptability and to ensure the correct work has been carried out to the requested standard

All works undertaken by SGCH through this policy constitute works of a reasonably significant scale and complexity – with the majority being classed as safety and compliance - either rectification or prevention,

This works requires a detailed and often specialist scoping and methodology for implementation.

At that point once the audit is completed – the contractor is requested to invoice for the works (unless the program is significant warranting interim monthly progress payments based on the auditing officer being satisfied with the quantum of the program being undertaken from month to month).

Relevant laws, regulations or standards

- [Residential Tenancies Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(Disability Discrimination Act\)](#)

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- [Community Housing Provider \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2012 \(NSW\) \(CHP Act\)](#)
 - [National Regulatory System for Community Housing \(NRSCH\)](#)
 - [National Construction Code \(NCC\)](#)
 - [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Control Act 1999 \(Cth\) \(EPBC Act\)](#)
 - [Heritage Act 1977 \(Heritage Act\)](#)
 - [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 \(NSW\) \(EPA Act\)](#)
 - [Swimming Pools Act 1992 \(NSW\) \(Swimming Pools Act\)](#)
 - [Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 \(NSW\) \(Strata Schemes Act\)](#)
 - [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\) \(WHS Act\)](#)
 - [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 \(NSW\) \(WHS Regulations\)](#)
 - [Dividing Fences Act 1991 \(NSW\)](#)
 - [Housing Act 2001 \(NSW\)](#)
 - [Home Building Act 1989 \(NSW\)](#)
 - [Trees \(Disputes Between Neighbours\) Act 2006](#)

Policy Information

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