

Asset maintenance

Overview

This policy outlines how we will manage maintenance of our properties.

Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned, managed and leased by St George Community Housing and its subsidiaries (**we, our and us**). We carry out maintenance on all properties except for leasehold properties.

Purpose

We undertake maintenance of our properties to:

- Ensure all our tenants live in properties that are safe, clean and liveable, as defined in Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Asset Performance Standards
- Maximise the useful life of our properties
- Ensure our maintenance decisions align with the Strategic Portfolio Planning and Programming
- Ensure maintenance on our properties is efficient, affordable, reliable, timely and to a good standard
- Meet our legal and regulatory duties as set out in Short Term Lease (STL) and Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) Agreements, regulatory framework and Community Housing Assistance Agreements (CHAA).

Our maintenance framework

This policy sits within our Asset Management Framework, which outlines our process for strategic asset planning, including 10-year plans and annual asset plans. We have a 10 Year Plan and Annual Plan for our overall portfolio and a separate 10-year plan and annual plan for 20 year lease and Northern Region (SHMT contract requirement). We also have policies and procedures that cover all our asset management activities.

Our approach to maintenance

We:

- Base our planning and investment on agreed measures and rules around asset condition and portfolio need
- Optimise our investment in maintenance across the whole portfolio to maximise the value for money achieved from this expenditure
- Formulate our maintenance program in collaboration with Finance as part of the annual budget management process
- Consult widely with stakeholders, including tenants and LAHC, in developing asset plans
- Look for opportunities to achieve broader social outcomes for tenants such as training or employment in the delivery of property services where it can be done cost effectively
- Work collaboratively with LAHC to deliver on Government priorities, and
- Work closely with stakeholders and other housing providers, particularly community housing providers in adjacent regions, and develop an efficiency in joint plans where appropriate.

We take a common approach across all properties in planning and delivering maintenance.

Internal maintenance

For maintenance inside properties, the general principle is that we will undertake work where it is most needed. Priority is derived from regular inspections of the properties with an emphasis on those Below Maintained Standard (BMS) or categorised as high priority. In practical terms, this means we:

- Use data from assessment of the properties to develop an annual plan and allocate our budget
- Obtain concurrent agreement and incorporate recommendations from LAHC
- Create work scopes for properties below maintained standard and high priority component items
- Review work scopes and prioritise to meet budget allowing a contingency
- Issue work scopes and monitor the completion of the work
- Assist with responsive repairs as required, whilst aiming to minimise responsive maintenance by optimising our planned maintenance.

We use we use the Property Assessment Survey (PAS) method developed by LAHC (see PAS procedure) for assessing property condition and maintenance priority.

- External maintenance

For external works on buildings and cyclical maintenance, we:

- Assess the need for planned works based on whole buildings (not piecemeal work by component)
- Manage each building to a life cycle and factor replacement of essential items into plans (e.g. safety and emergency) based on condition surveys rather than replacement to a pre-set cycle (5/10/15/20 years)
- Manage common areas on a cycle of work—we have identified the regular maintenance requirements and have factored these into our plans (yearly or as required, such as essential services, lawns and grounds)
- Maintain quality by having a Quality/Audit Officer to review work scopes and reports to confirm that the required work has been undertaken and delivered to LAHC Asset standards
- Manage structural repairs and fire engineered compliances.
- Only replace items when they fail or are very close to failure to maximise their useful life.

The policies and process for each element in the process are articulated separately.

General asset management

Common Area Management

This applies to common areas we manage. Where common areas are still managed by Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) or a Strata Manager, responsibility for maintenance remains with DCJ or the Strata Manager.

The common area management responsibilities encompass components such as:

- Building exterior
- Building entrance and lobby
- Stairs, walkways, passages, lifts
- Common carpark
- Common gardens and lawns
- Essential Fire Safety Services maintenance

Keys to properties

We will only keep keys for common areas and vacant properties.

Common Area keys are stored in Hurstville Head Office (for Northern Region LAHC owned properties keys will be stored in St Leonards Office) and they are recorded in OneHousing. For high rise apartment buildings, we will install a security coded lock box on site which will contain Common Area keys to be used in case of emergency.

Vacant property keys will be stored on site in a contractor's security lock box.

Tenant charges

We may charge tenants for repairing damage to a property or other costs which are the tenant's responsibility e.g. a locksmith to let the tenant into their property if they are locked out or replacing lost keys.

If the tenant is responsible for repairing damages or other costs and we arrange the repairs or services, we will charge tenants for the costs. These are known as Tenant Charges. More information can be found in our Tenant Charges policy.

Relevant laws, regulations or standards

- [Residential Tenancies Act 2010 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Community Housing Provider \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2012 \(NSW\)](#)
- [National Regulatory System for Community Housing \(NRSCH\)](#)
- [National Construction Code \(NCC\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Control Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Heritage Act 1977](#)
- [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Swimming Pools Act 1992 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Dividing Fences Act 1991 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Housing Act 2001 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Home Building Act 1989 \(NSW\)](#)

Policy Information

Version:	2
Approved:	September 2021
Amended:	September 2021
Reviewed:	September 2021
Review frequency:	24 months
Responsible team/position:	Group Executive, Homes