

# ‘Making a Difference’



## Homes Out West Repairs and Maintenance Strategy 2010-2011

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## **1. Overview**

In developing a repairs and maintenance strategy, Homes Out West is endeavoring to 'make a difference' in all aspects of the management of the organisation's assets. Making a difference to old and previously undesirable housing stock, making a difference to ensure environmental sustainability, making a difference for tenants by engaging and consulting with them, making a difference in the way we work with contractors and finally making a difference in the broader community for social housing.

## **2. Introduction**

Homes Out West is a community housing provider that manages 390 properties, located from Albury across to Wentworth, with the head office located in Deniliquin. These properties are managed under 3 main programs – capital, leasehold and fee for service.

The repairs and maintenance function of Homes Out West is broken down into 3 categories – responsive repairs, planned maintenance and cyclical maintenance. This document sets out how each of these maintenance functions will be effectively applied across the range of locations and programs.

## **3. Objectives**

Homes Out West, as a not for profit community organisation, will continue to focus it's objectives around developing and maintaining a high service level in a sustainable and growing organisation. Specifically, the goals and key performance indicators (KPI's) of Homes Out West in relation to repairs and maintenance are:

### ***a. Goals***

- Focusing on customer needs to achieve high levels of satisfaction.
- Maintaining properties to Homes Out West standards, which are desirable to tenants.

- Ensuring that properties are managed in such a way to retain the highest possible market value.
- Integrating sustainable, low energy solutions into current and future developments.

***b. KPI's***

- 98% of responsive repairs completed within designated time frames.
- 90% customer satisfaction.
- Annual maintenance expenditure within agreed budget.

**4. Homes Out West Property Standards**

Homes Out West will make a difference by maintaining properties to its high standards. The properties will be maintained to a standard not less than the NSW Department of Housing Asset Standards Version 6. This document states the basic provision standards that the property must be able to provide as well as the quality that each of the components must be maintained to. These standards are measured against 3 criteria – safety, functionality, and appearance. A fourth criterion, desirable, has been included as Homes Out West believes it is important that tenants find the design and décor of the property appealing.

***a. Safety***

A Homes Out West property must not pose any safety risks to tenants or employees. Any damage or fault within a property which may pose a safety risk to tenants will be classified according to the Homes Out West Risk Matrix (appendix i), and will be acted on accordingly.

***b. Functionality***

A Homes Out West property must be functional in every aspect of its intended use. Any component that is not functional will be scheduled for repair, with the repair classification dependant on the affect that the failure is having on the premises and the tenant, and any related safety implications.

***c. Appearance***

Homes Out West have an obligation to maintain the appearance of their properties to the level where any significant damage or deterioration is either repaired or replaced. The timing of these repairs are dependant on the extent of the damage, but these repairs will not be classified as emergency or urgent. They will either be routine maintenance, or will be repaired as a part of the properties annual program.

***d. Desirable***

Finally, a Homes Out West property must be presented so that it is aesthetically pleasing, or desirable, to tenants. The need to be economically responsible must be combined with the obligation to provide a property that satisfies the tastes of tenants. This will be achieved through consultation with tenants when repairing or replacing items and broadening the range of options available.

**5. Responsive Maintenance**

Responsive maintenance is any maintenance that is performed that falls outside of the planned maintenance program. This can either be isolated damage or deterioration of a component in the premises ahead of the planned maintenance program. The promptness of responsive repairs depends of the classification the repair falls into. For responsive repairs, clients must follow the correct contact procedures. Homes Out West will make a difference by responding to repairs in an efficient and effective manner.

***a. Priority Classifications***

Emergency - A fault with the property that has moderate to significant safety implications and/or a significant effect on the functionality of the property.

Time Frame - Within 24 hours

Examples

- A burst water service
- A blocked or broken lavatory system
- A serious roof leak

- A gas leak
- A dangerous electrical fault
- Flooding or serious flood damage
- A serious storm damage
- A failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity, hot water supply to the premises
- A failure or breakdown of any essential service on the premises for hot water, cooking, heating or laundering
- Any fault or damage that causes the premises to be unsafe or not secure.

Urgent – A fault with the property that has minor safety implications or a moderate effect on the functionality of the property.

Time Frame – Within 5 days

Examples

- Leaking tap outside
- Light switch broken
- Exhaust fan broken
- Window broken
- Window lock not working
- Hot water not hot enough
- Blocked drain (not toilet)

Routine – A fault with the property that is not causing any safety issues, and is having a minimal impact on the functionality and appearance of the property.

Time Frame – 28 days

Examples

- Broken Fence
- Internal door won't close
- Gutter Leak
- 1 hotplate not working
- Hole in fly screen
- Broken tiles

- Tree removal (in accordance with Council regulations)

Examples of the types of repairs that fall under the different priority classifications and property standard criteria can be found in the Repairs Matrix (appendix ii).

#### ***b. Contact***

As soon as a repair and maintenance issue is discovered, the tenant is to ring the Homes Out West office as soon as possible. The Housing Worker will determine the priority of the repair and contact the tradesperson accordingly. If the cost of the repair is likely to exceed \$300, the repair will be referred to the Asset Officer to manage. The tradesperson will then liaise with the tenant to organise an appropriate time to repair the fault. At the conclusion of the repair the Asset Officer will contact the tenant to ensure that the work was performed satisfactorily.

#### ***c. Out of Hours Service***

If a maintenance issue arises outside office hours (9am – 5pm) and it does not fall into the emergency category, the tenant must wait until the office is next open to report the issue. If it does constitute an emergency, the tenant will contact the tradesperson direct to arrange an immediate repair. The tradesperson will then carry out the repair and bill Homes Out West. The tenant will contact Homes Out West as soon as the office is open to report the repair.

The responsive maintenance flow chart (appendix iii) details how the responsive maintenance system works.

### **6. Planned Maintenance**

As a part of the strategic asset maintenance plan, Homes Out West has a long term maintenance plan for each of its properties. This plan will “make a difference” by ensuring all properties are maintained in such a way to retain tenant satisfaction and property value. This plan will include the initial property condition survey, ongoing inspection reports, and the life cycle structure.

***a. Property Condition Survey***

Upon the acquisition of a property, a property condition survey will be undertaken by an accredited scoper. This survey will assess the condition and life expectancy of all of the life cycle components to generate a long term maintenance plan for the property.

***b. Property Inspections***

Homes Out West will conduct a minimum of two property inspections per year per property. The first will be a regular inspection by the Housing Worker who will inspect the general condition of the property, focusing on any immediate issues that need attention. The second will be a maintenance inspection performed by the Asset Officer, who will focus on comparing the items due for replacement according to the long term maintenance plan and the actual condition of the components. From this inspection the components will either be identified for replacement, or if the component meets the standard, the work will be held over until the next annual maintenance inspection.

Appendix iv, Inspection Schedule, details the types of inspections performed by Homes Out West, their frequency, the inspector, and the purpose.

***c. Life Cycle***

As part of the long term maintenance plan for Homes Out West Properties, the 20 main components of a property will have a generic life cycle attached, indicating when a component is due for replacement. The components and their life expectancies are:

<b><u>Component</u></b>	<b><u>Life Expectancy</u></b>
• Bathroom Renovation	20 Years
• Carpet/Flooring Replacement	10 Years

- Doors – Front and Rear 20 Years
- Doors – Internal 20 Years
- Driveway/Paths 60 Years
- Electrical Works Rewire 50 Years
- Fence replacement 20 Years
- Gutters and Downpipe Replacement 20 Years
- Heater / Air Conditioner Replacement 15 Years
- Hot Water System Replacement 10 Years
- Kitchen Renovation 20 Years
- Laundry / Toilet Renovation 20 Years
- Light Fittings Switches and GPO 20 Years
- Painting - Internal 10 Years
- Painting – External 10 Years
- Plumbing and Sewer Works 20 Years
- Roof Replacements 60 Years
- Stove Replacement 10 Years
- Vinyl Flooring Replacement 10 Years
- Windows and Flyscreens 40 Years

These life expectancies are standard Housing NSW time frames.

The Planned and Responsive Maintenance Flow Chart (appendix v) details how the two types of maintenance systems work together.

## **7. Cyclical Maintenance**

Certain components within a property are on a cyclical maintenance schedule, where they will be inspected and maintained on an annual basis. The only components currently on cyclical maintenance are smoke detectors and pest inspection. These components will be inspected by certified contractors only.

## **8. Contractors**

Ensuring that contractors with appropriate skill and service level are selected for Homes Out West is vital in order to achieve the asset maintenance and customer service goals of the organisation. To “make a difference” for tenants, local contractors with connections to the community being served will be utilised to deliver services wherever possible. Contractors will also be monitored to ensure they make a difference by performing work to a high standard and treat tenants with diligence and respect.

Maintenance contracts shall be awarded through a tender process every two years. Contractors shall only be chosen who have the appropriate licenses for their trade, public liability insurance of \$10 million or greater, workers compensation insurance if the business is an employer, and income protection insurance if they are not an employer. Contractors will also have their references checked to ensure a suitable fit with Homes Out West's requirements. Homes Out West retains the right to void the maintenance contact at any time due to:

- Poor workmanship
- Poor service
- Fraud
- Tenant complaints

Homes Out West aims to develop and maintain a positive working relationship with its contractors to satisfy the goals of both parties.

#### **9. Quality Control**

To ensure the maintenance work being performed meets the standards of Homes Out West, inspections will be performed on completed work by the Asset Officer. All jobs greater than \$3000 will be inspected, as well as 20% of jobs below \$3000. Any work found to be unsatisfactory will be communicated to the tradesperson, with payment being with-held until the work is completed. Any work that is done on a void property will be inspected by the Asset Officer to ensure it is fit for tenancy.

#### **10. Tenant Involvement in Planned Maintenance**

In accordance with Homes Out West's objective of providing desirable housing, tenants will be involved in the updating and replacement of components at the end of their life cycle. Tenants will be provided with a number of colours and styles to choose from to ensure the best fit for their home. For example, a kitchen replacement would see the tenant choose from a range of benchtops, cupboards, sinks and tapware. This range would be limited by price and Homes Out West's standards, but would provide tenants with input onto their environment and a sense of ownership of the properties.

### **11. Tenant Upgrade Allowance**

Homes Out West will “make a difference” by allowing tenants to make supplemented upgrades to their properties. Homes Out West supports tenants who wish to upgrade their property. However any upgrades need to go through an authorisation process to ensure the suitable quality of the work, the suitability of the upgrade, and the reimbursement amount.

Any upgrades need to be performed by a tradesperson with relevant licenses. 3 quotes for the work must be obtained, with Homes Out West reserving the right to select the tradesperson if it desires. The tenant must notify Homes Out West when the upgrade is complete to allow for inspection.

Any reimbursement will be calculated on Homes Out West contributing the depreciated value of the item to be replaced, while the tenant will contribute the rest. Additions will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

The process is fully explained in the Tenant Upgrade Procedure. (to be developed)

### **12. Void Repairs**

Homes Out West aims to fill void properties promptly to minimise rent loss. The void period will be utilised to perform any long term maintenance that is scheduled to be undertaken, as well as any incidental repairs. The Housing Worker will identify and communicate to the Asset Officer any properties when the tenancy is due to end, to ensure this work can be planned and performed efficiently and effectively.

### **13. Sustainability**

Homes Out West is dedicated to improving the sustainability of its properties for the benefit of both the tenants and the organisation. Sustainability improvements come under 4 main categories.

- Water savings, i.e. water tank installation, water efficient appliances and hardware.
- Energy Savings, i.e. solar heating, energy efficient appliances, insulation, passive heating and cooling, etc.
- Building out maintenance, i.e. hard wearing components, etc.
- Tenant education, i.e. tenant newsletters, one on one, etc.

Homes Out West will be “making a difference” by building these sustainability concepts into all stages of the repairs and maintenance process. Specific details can be found in the Sustainability Strategy.

#### **14. Communication and Consultation**

Homes Out West will make a difference by actively encouraging communication and input into its performance and processes from both its tenants and contractors. The forums for feedback are:

- Tenant Reference Group
- Individual meetings for policy changes
- Informal – over the phone, during inspections etc
- Tenant/contractor surveys

Homes Out West aims to use the consultation process to develop procedures and practices that provide safe, secure and functional accommodation, optimise the return on investment for maintenance spend and ensure contractors can perform their work effectively and efficiently.

15. Appendices

i. Risk Matrix

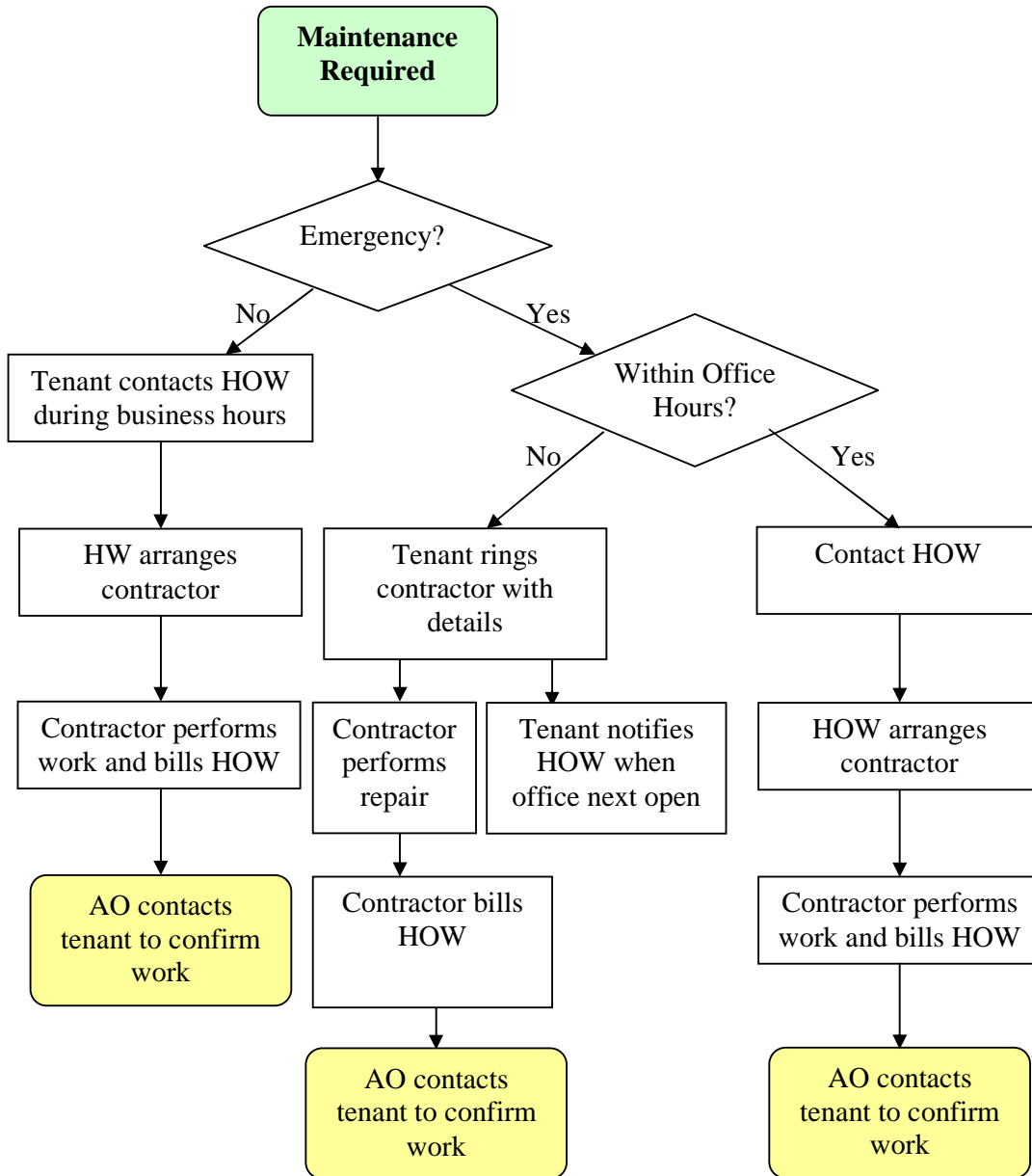
		Frequency				
		Frequent	Probable	Occasional	Remote	Improbable
Severity	Catastrophic	I	I	I	U	R
	Critical	I	I	U	U	R
	Significant	I	U	U	R	A
	Marginal	U	R	R	A	A
	Negligible	R	R	A	A	A

- A** Acceptable - No Further Action Required
- R** Acceptable with Review - Routine Repair
- U** Undesireable - Urgent Repair
- I** Unacceptable - Emergency Repair

ii. Repairs Matrix

	Emergency	Urgent	Routine	Annual
Safety	Gas Leak. Exposed Live Wires.	Smoke Alarm Broken. Moisture in Electrical Point.	Uneven Driveway. Carpet Lifting.	Nil
Function	Burst Water Service. Major Roof Leak.	Light Switch Broken. Window Lock Not Working.	Door Won't Close. Gutter Leak. Broken Tiles.	Vinyl Floor Cracking. Benchtop Cracked.
Appearance	Nil	Nil	Holes in wall. Fence Panel Missing.	Walls Require Painting. Carpet Replacement.

iii. Responsive Maintenance Flow Chart



**iv. Inspection Schedule**

<b>Inspection Type</b>	Outgoing
<b>Frequency</b>	At the conclusion of a tenancy
<b>Inspector</b>	Housing Worker
<b>Purpose</b>	To determine the condition of a property at the end of a tenancy to determine damages payable and repairs required.
<b>Inspection Type</b>	Ingoing
<b>Frequency</b>	At the commencement of a tenancy
<b>Inspector</b>	Housing Worker
<b>Purpose</b>	To determine the agreed condition of a property at the commencement of a tenancy.
<b>Inspection Type</b>	3 Month
<b>Frequency</b>	3 months after the commencement of a tenancy
<b>Inspector</b>	Housing Worker
<b>Purpose</b>	An initial review to ensure the property is being satisfactorily maintained
<b>Inspection Type</b>	Maintenance
<b>Frequency</b>	Annually
<b>Inspector</b>	Asset Officer
<b>Purpose</b>	To review the condition of assets within a property against the Long Term Asset Plan to determine the requirements for upgrade.
<b>Inspection Type</b>	Regular
<b>Frequency</b>	Annually
<b>Inspector</b>	Housing Worker
<b>Purpose</b>	To review the condition of the property, including property care by the tenant, as well as to action any required repairs.
<b>Inspection Type</b>	Post Upgrade
<b>Frequency</b>	At conclusion of upgrade valued at \$3000 or greater
<b>Inspector</b>	Asset Officer
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure that all major works are being completed to Homes Out West standards
<b>Inspection Type</b>	3 Year Scope
<b>Frequency</b>	Every 3 years
<b>Inspector</b>	Qualified Scoper
<b>Purpose</b>	A qualified inspector to asses lifespan of assets.

v. Planned and Responsive Maintenance Flow Chart

