

Review of Planned Maintenance

June 2016 – December 2016

Prepared by:

The Scrutiny Team

Introduction and Objectives

Planned Maintenance refurbishment and replacement operations (kitchens, bathrooms, fuel switch, boiler and electrical upgrades) have substantially changed since the decision was made not to renew outside contracts and to have these carried out by Silcoa in-house.

The intention of this review was to examine the current (and some possibly untried) processes and procedures and to make recommendations for improvement if and where applicable. It is understood that during the period of this review, many of our observations and recommendations have been pre-empted by the continual and on-going process of revision and reorganisation required on a day-to-day basis.

History.

At the inception of Silcoa, it was intended to bring planned maintenance works in-house in 2015 as part of the business plan. This was deferred to 2016 due to management changes. Systems of work including health & safety assessments, procedures, operative recruitment and training were put in place with the contracts manager during February and March of this year. The first planned maintenance installations began in March/April.

Review Process

The scrutiny team undertook the following actions:-

- 1.** The scrutiny team explored the written policies, local offers, procedures and processes that influenced and described Planned Maintenance refurbishment, replacement and upgrade of Selwood properties. **(APPENDIX A)**
- 2.** The scrutiny team reviewed and examined information and advice concerning planned maintenance and its effects given or publicised to the tenants. **(APPENDIX B)**
- 3.** A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to identify positives and negatives in comparison with other housing providers, local and national. **(APPENDIX C)**
- 4.** Members of the scrutiny team shadowed the Customer Liaison Officer, Kitchen Planner and Contracts Manager during their normal working day, dealing with the installation of new kitchens. **(APPENDIX D)**
- 5.** Both a written and telephone survey was made of customers who had had kitchens and bathrooms replaced since March this year. **(APPENDIX E)**

(It is noted that resulting mention of outstanding problems were noted and passed to the involvement team and have since been entered to the QL system for action).

Findings

- 1. The scrutiny team explored the written policies, local offers, procedures and processes used by Planned Maintenance to meet legal obligations and to maintain a good standard of repair of Selwood properties.**

All of the criteria contained in the Decent Homes Act are met and the minimums required usually exceeded by Silcoa/Selwood.

New procedures have been written to apply to installations carried out in-house. As this is a new venture, these are being monitored, updated and revised on a day-to-day basis to cover all eventualities.

A new Planned Maintenance policy has been formulated but not, as yet, published.

- 2. The scrutiny team reviewed and examined advice and information concerning planned maintenance that is given to tenants or publicised on the website.**

Although the written pamphlets are in the process of being reviewed and updated, we were provided with copies.

The new leaflets are very comprehensive and clear and sent to the tenant once a start date has been agreed. These form the basis for tenants to make choices on the style, colour and format of their new kitchen/bathroom and provide an outline of the works to be carried out and a provisional timescale.

The website has not yet been updated.

- 3. A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to identify positives and negatives in comparison with other housing providers, local and national.**

The difficulty in obtaining relevant and comprehensive information online, with regard to other housing providers in order to supply robust figures has prompted consideration of new methods by which the scrutiny team can obtain information for use in future reviews. However, 10 housing

SCRUTINY TEAM

providers with varying levels of information were used to produce a report.

The outcome of this exercise was that overall, much the same facilities are offered by Housing Associations and Councils although it was not possible to adequately investigate post installation monitoring. This is considered to be of primary importance to both the tenant – to ensure that the quality of product and installation is satisfactory and to Silcoa/Selwood to monitor the satisfaction rating of the tenant and possible problem ‘trends’.

4. Members of the scrutiny team shadowed the Customer Liaison Officer, Kitchen Planner and Contracts Manager during their normal working day, dealing with the installation of new kitchens.

Installations usually cover a particular street or area so that the travelling and movement of staff and delivery of product is kept to a minimum. This enables the installation team to move between properties quickly and responsively.

The information and advice offered to the tenant were excellent and any problems that the tenant might experience were duly noted. Practical aspects of the installation were discussed and assistance offered.

5. Both a written and telephone survey was made of customers who had had kitchens and bathrooms replaced since March this year.

It was noted that the responses received related to installations completed to the end of September this year. Considerable revisions of process, monitoring, staffing changes and areas of responsibility have been made in the interim period and should be taken into consideration.

The overall findings were that the quality of the finished product (kitchens and bathrooms) was excellent but that the installation process was lacking in cohesion, coordination and any reliable timescale.

SCRUTINY TEAM

RECOMMENDATIONS – in order of priority

- 1. Investigate areas where the actual process of installation is not following written procedures with particular emphasis on the carrying out of each step in a logical manner. This should include the timing and coordination of operatives working on and completing differing jobs within the installation i.e. painters, electricians and plumbers, kitchen fitters.**
- 2. Ensure that 'snagging' visits are carried out and documented after completion of installation.**
- 3. Extend the time for which planned maintenance are responsible for problems arising from the installation to 2 months after completion (currently one month) This should allow for recognition of any trends developing which might not register if responsibility is passed to responsive repairs after one month.**
- 4. A follow-up 'mini-review' be undertaken by the scrutiny team in 12 months to gage the effects and revisions that have occurred due to changes in systems of work that have been adopted in the past 3 months. This will allow adequate time for these revisions to become 'bedded in' and for the majority of teething problems to be resolved. It will then be possible to properly measure progress and performance.**
- 5. Examine the possibility of providing a moveable and secure storage facility for the tenant, where there is little or no storage space within the property.**
- 6. The new planned maintenance policy and information leaflets to be published in written form and on the website, at the earliest opportunity.**



SCRUTINY TEAM

- 7. Restrictions on installation due to a tenant's situation (i.e. rent arrears) be examined, agreed and the result published.**
- 8. Examine the provision of lighting fixtures to ensure ease of use and suitability.**