

LiveWest Planned & Cyclical Service Standard for Customers

Introduction

This Service Standard explains how we plan and carry out Planned and Cyclical Maintenance and Retrofit Improvement projects and keep our customer promise to look after our customers' homes. It includes the main principles, standards and goals that guide our work. The introduction of this Service Standard is to improve the quality of our homes and increase customer satisfaction.

Service hours

Our service hours are Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 5.00pm.

We also operate an out of hours service for emergency repairs. We will make it easy for our customers to report repairs, both through our Customer Services team and through our customer portal.

When organising planned and cyclical works, we will offer an appointment slot to suit them, fitting one of the categories below:

- All day
- AM
- PM
- Avoid school run
- Timed appointments for joint visits

We will prioritise appointments by recognising the following (in no order):

- The health and safety of customers, LiveWest colleagues or members of the public
- The urgency of the work or nature of the homes affected
- The vulnerability of the customer
- The availability of the customer
- Whether or not extensive damage to the home is likely

When will planned and cyclical maintenance work be completed?

Works that do not need planning permission or require consultation under Section 20 with Leaseholders:

- Customers will receive an initial letter outlining the works intended
- Survey scheduled approximately one month after initial letter
- Works commence approximately 12 weeks after the survey

Works that require planning permission or consultation under Section 20 with Leaseholders:

- Customers will receive an initial letter outlining the works intended and S20/planning notice
- Planning drawings appointment approximately one month after initial letter
- Planning process is approximately 14-16 weeks, Stage 1 start 30-day consultation
- Procurement 4-8 weeks
- Section 20 Stage 2 consultation 30 days
- Works commence approximately 12 weeks following completion of S20 process

Where scaffolding is required, project timescales may extend by 2-4 weeks. These estimates are approximate and depend on the specific type of work planned in your home. Some types of work may be completed more quickly than others. A Delivery Manager or Project Manager will be more specific once initial communication has started.

Service Standard - Contents

- **Service aims and objectives**
- **Planned maintenance**
- **Cyclical maintenance**
- **Retrofit improvement projects**
- **Major repairs**
- **Responsive repairs**
- **Managed repairs and minor projects**
- **Stock condition**
- **Procurement**
- **Customer communication and engagement**
- **Access requirements**
- **Before the works**
- **During the works**
- **After the works**
- **Post completion review**
- **Quality Assurance**
- **Volunteering**
- **Equality, diversity, and inclusion**
- **Environmental**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Complaints**
- **How to contact us about planned and cyclical works**
- **Implementation and review**

Service Aims and Objectives

We aim to:

- Keep accurate data on our homes
- Promote a strong culture of safety and compliance
- Deliver high quality and timely investment for our homes
- Ensure all homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Maintain a strategic view of how our homes are performing
- Support efforts to reduce carbon emissions

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure each home meets the Decent Homes Standard
- Survey and inspect homes regularly but as a minimum every 5 years
- Contact customers in advance of planned major works in their homes or communal areas
- Consult with customers about available options or choices, where appropriate

We are a customer focused organisation with a key strategic objective to meet the needs of our customers. We aim to provide high quality homes in sustainable communities and offer an effective, efficient, and responsive service.

Our Planned and Cyclical Maintenance standard is designed to support and implement this key corporate objective. The following principles and objectives guide our Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Programme:

- Ensure our maintenance services meets the needs of our homes and customers
- Provide homes that are safe, warm, and affordable
- Meet legal and statutory obligations for the repair and safety of our homes
- Extend the useful life of our homes
- Deliver an efficient, and effective maintenance service
- Continually improve the quality of our homes and maintenance services
- Protect the assets of LiveWest through our maintenance activities
- Make sound financial decisions around investment to ensure lifetime maintenance of our homes
- Ensure our Asset Investment Strategy provides clarity around our Planned and Cyclical maintenance functions

Definitions

Planned Maintenance

Planned maintenance involves structured planning of replacement components in our homes. We consider the expected life of each component, and the replacement costs. This information helps us to determine the long-term investment needs for our homes and informs our Business Plan. It also forms the basis of our Planned Maintenance Delivery plans/programmes.

Planned maintenance involves work identified through our Asset Management System.

Typical works include the replacement of:

- Bathrooms
- External doors
- Kitchens
- Roofing
- Windows
- Electrical heating systems
- Boilers
- Door entry systems
- Fire prevention remedial works
- External works
- Energy efficiency work

Cyclical Maintenance

Cyclical maintenance involves the scheduled servicing of buildings and their components to prevent the gradual deterioration. This type of maintenance is preventative, predictable, and can be planned to maintain the integrity and safety of our buildings and customers.

Examples include:

- External and internal redecorations
- Pre-paint repairs to render and timber windows
- Servicing automated doors and gates
- Servicing lifts
- Servicing boilers (gas, oil, and solid fuel)
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detector checks
- Legionella and water hygiene checks
- Surveys for asbestos containing materials
- Play equipment inspections
- Servicing septic tanks and pumping stations

Retrofit Improvement Projects

Retrofit improvement projects involve upgrading and enhancing existing homes to make them more energy efficient. These projects aim to improve the overall performance and comfort by updating older systems and materials. They also contribute to environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and using resources efficiently.

Examples include:

- Adding or upgrading insulation, such as loft or cavity wall insulation
- Window replacements
- Installing energy efficient heating systems like heat pump or high efficiency boilers
- Installing solar panels
- Installing or upgrading ventilation systems

We conduct these activities to:

- Improve the energy efficiency and affordability of our homes
- Comply with new or existing legislation
- Ensure homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Adhere to our property standards

LiveWest prioritises the provision of safe, secure, and environmentally sustainable homes.

By investing in our existing homes and working with stakeholders and customers, we aim to make a positive, lasting impact on the environment and the lives of our customers.

Major Repairs

Major repairs are works required to return a property to an acceptable standard following considerable damage such as roof repairs, fire, or flooding.

This standard should be read in conjunction with the repairs service standard and following documents:

- Procurement
- Contract management
- Quality control
- Quotes and tenders
- CDM regulations

Responsive Repairs

Emergency and routine repair whose attendance cannot wait until the next cycle of planned and maintenance activity without presenting a threat to the safety, health or security of the customer, the integrity of the building or LiveWest repair obligations. Repairs such as these day-to day repairs are usually reported by customers or arise during re-let are mostly reactive.

Responsive repairs do not fall within the scope of this service

Managed repairs and minor works

From time to time, mainly because of our responsive repairs' activity, we will identify more complex repairs or minor works to individual homes, such as building components which have not reached the end of their theoretical life but have failed on a one-off basis. For example:

- Boilers, windows, roofs
- Structural works
- External works, such as fencing and boundary walls
- Remedial works following fire risk assessments
- Major damp and mould issues

Works identified as managed repairs, or minor projects are works that will not be able to be completed on a first attendance. This may be due to needing to undertake measurements or specifications, order materials, and engage contractors, amongst other things. These will take more than one day to complete.

We will agree specific completion targets for these types of major work, typically this is within 90 days. We will agree this timescale with affected customers. If we, or our contractors, need to make individual home visits, we will agree appointments with our customers.

Managed repairs and minor projects do not fall within the scope of this service.

Home Condition Information

Our Planned investment programme is based on the following information:

- Building surveys, such as a stock condition survey
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- System data (Asset register)

This information is collected and maintained on the LiveWest Asset Management System.

Stock condition surveys take place, as a minimum, every 5 years. As part of this survey we also review the life cycles of components in the homes and costs to replace.

Procurement

We will follow a transparent procurement strategy to ensure we get best value along with a quality, customer focused service.

Our approach to procurement will include the following key features:

- Clear contractual and working arrangements
- Balancing quality with cost
- Continuous improvement by reducing costs without sacrificing quality, using benchmarking, and performance monitoring
- Ensuring contractors focus on reducing waste, using resources efficiently, and minimising environmental impact

Before the works

Customer Communication and Engagement

Our focus is our customers, whose homes receive our planned and cyclical maintenance.

Effective communication throughout the entire process ensures that customers feel valued and informed, leading to higher satisfaction and better relationships between customers and LiveWest.

Letting customers know about the planned work helps them understand what will be done, when it will start, and how long it will take. This reduces uncertainty and helps ease any concerns they may have.

Notifying customers in advance gives them time to prepare for any temporary inconvenience, such as noise or restricted access to certain areas of their home. This helps them plan and reduces disruption to their daily routine. It also lets us understand their concerns and preferences, allowing us to better meet their needs.

We will send a letter detailing the following:

- Outline of the works intended
- Indication of the amount of time the works will take
- Point of contact
- Contractor appointed (where appropriate) and their contact details

Customers will be given any other initial information they need about the work, such as a 'choices sheet for selecting colours or finishes. A fact sheet may also be available to answer most of the frequent questions customers may have. Customers will also be informed that if the work involves disturbing existing decoration, such as walls or ceilings, the contract will include making the surfaces suitable for the customers own redecoration.

We will make sure all customers receive effective and relevant communication and information about their project. We will try to minimise disruption to customers while complying with both legislation and good practices.

If the work involves homeowners, we will make sure to include all estimated costs.

To finalise detailed arrangements before work starts in a home, we will carry out a pre-start visit to:

- Confirm that the customer understands how the work will be conducted and what, if any preparations they will need to make before the contractor's team arrive, such as moving or covering furniture and furnishings, lifting, or protecting flooring, etc,
- Discuss and provide advice on any issues or problems, e.g. depending on the time of year, or if there are elderly or young children or anyone on specific medication, particularly if it will be necessary to leave the house for a time.
- Record the condition of relevant furnishings and fittings before work starts in case there is a need to assess whether any damage has been caused because of the work.

Access to your home

We want to make sure your home is safe, comfortable, and up to standard. To help us carry out planned works and improvement programmes, we need your cooperation in allowing access to your home.

Before we start work (Validation/Survey)

- We will make two attempts to contact you and arrange access for any necessary surveys or checks:
- If the work involves Decent Homes standards or energy efficiency upgrades, a housing officer will make a third attempt.
- If we are still unable to gain access after these attempts, your home may be removed from the programme and you may not receive the improvement to your home, unless the work directly affects Decent Homes or retrofit requirements.

Carrying out the work

- Once we are ready to carry out planned or retrofit works, we will again make two attempts to gain access.
- If access is still not granted, a housing officer will make a final attempt since materials may have already been ordered or manufactured for your home.
- If we can't access your home after these three attempts, your home may be removed from the programme.

Why this is important

When we are unable to access homes, it can cause delays to the programme and affect our ability to complete work for other customers. By following these steps, we can make sure that homes are improved efficiently and fairly. If your home is removed from the programme due to no access, we may replace it with another home to keep the work on track.

We really appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain high-quality homes and deliver important improvements. If you have any questions or need to rearrange an appointment, please contact us as soon as possible.

During the works

During the work we will stay in contact with customers as needed, answering any questions, providing relevant advice, and making sure the works run smoothly for them. If there are complex or schedule related issues, they will be directed to the designated point of contact, who will respond directly to the customer.

We will regularly inspect the work on site and monitor progress, collaborating closely with the contractor. Customers will be kept updated on progress and any changes to the schedule, helping to maintain trust and transparency. If customers have any questions or concerns during the work, timely communication will allow us to address them quickly, making the process soother.

Keeping customers informed about safety measures and areas they should avoid during the work will help ensure their safety and comfort.

The way we work in our homes

Our trade colleagues and contractors can spend lots of time in our customers' homes, so it is important we create a great impression and conduct the work professionally. When representing LiveWest, we must act in line with our values, behaviours, policies, and goals. If a customer tells a colleague or contractor, they do not want to allow them access to their home, the colleague or contractor will contact their LiveWest manager as soon as possible to enable alternative arrangements to be made.

Please refer to **the way we work in our homes** for more information on the expectations of our contractors and inhouse teams whilst working in our customers homes.

We will ask customers to

- Make sure they keep their appointments or, if they need to change it, to let us know well in advance.
- Be considerate and respectful to LiveWest colleagues and contractors.
- Not to smoke whilst our colleagues or contractors are working in the home.
- Clear work areas before any work starts.
- Give our colleagues and contractors access to the work area.
- Keep any children and pets away whilst work is being conducted.
- Make sure there is an adult present throughout the duration of the work.

Vulnerability

Our Customer Promise sets out the standard and level of service that all customers can expect. Some customers may need us to do things differently or provide additional support or services due to a disability, communication need or vulnerability.

We record the support needs of our customers and will use this information when planning work, contacting customers and working in a customer's home.

We will:

- Ask customers what support or adjustments need, recognising that this will vary depending on the nature of the work being undertaken
- Provide the support or adjustment requested in all cases where it is practical and reasonable to do so, in accordance with the Equalities Act, Our Vulnerability Policy and our Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
- Ensure that colleagues at all levels understand the scope of the service, our standards and repairing responsibilities.
- Ensure a consistent approach to dealing with vulnerable customers with our contractors so that they can sensibly and sensitively prioritise work.

What matters to customers?

As the work nears completion, we will ask for the customers feedback to check they are happy with the results. We will also inform the customer that once works are complete, they may receive a satisfaction survey to provide feedback on the recent work done in their home and their levels of satisfaction.

Customer feedback helps us monitor our service, identify any areas for improvement, and amend our performance to better meet the needs of our customers.

After the works

A final inspection will be conducted to make sure all work is completed and meets our quality standards. During this inspection, we will identify and ensure any minor issues or defects are fixed.

We will review the works completed in their home with the customer, making sure they know how to use any newly installed equipment and have received the relevant manuals or user guides.

We will update our Asset Management System with details of the recent work and share future servicing needs, such as for boiler or electrical heating replacements, with the relevant departments to include them in the cyclical maintenance programmes.

Quality Assurance

We undertake quality checks of our service delivery and act on findings that do not meet our service standards. Colleagues are required to have the relevant training, skills, and knowledge to undertake the work. We value customer feedback on our service delivery, and review and act on it to continually improve our service.

Volunteering

We are keen to contribute and work within our communities and offer volunteering opportunities to our colleagues.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We are committed to being fair and inclusive and embracing the diversity of all our customers, colleagues, and stakeholders. We aim to be an inclusive employer, listening and responding to the views of everyone. We will work together as one team to deliver great service which focus on the needs of our customers.

There are more details in the LiveWest Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

Environmental

We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our activities and creating a clean and sustainable future for our customers, colleagues, and families. We target investment decisions in existing homes to improve energy efficiency, to reduce our carbon footprint and to improve living costs for customers.

To find out more about how we are Creating Greener Futures Together at LiveWest, visit our Sustainability page.

Safeguarding

We provide services in an environment which safeguards the welfare of at-risk individuals and groups. We are committed to working collaboratively in a multi-agency manner and delivering good practice to protect individuals from harm, abuse, and neglect.

All LiveWest colleagues receive full safeguarding training to promote awareness and instruction on how to report any concerns.

Complaints

We welcome complaints, compliments, and comments as an opportunity to listen to what our customers say and improve our services.

How to contact us about planned and cyclical works

If you have any questions about planned and cyclical works, please contact the customer service team on 0300 123 8080.

Please contact us if you need any part of this information in Braille, on audio tape or explained in a different language.

Implementation and review

The Head of Asset Investment Delivery is responsible for ensuring that this standard is followed by all appropriate staff and that it is reviewed at least every three years.