



# TAI CANOLBARTH CYMRU MID-WALES HOUSING

Yn barod **amdani** **Equal** to the challenge

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIVE REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS

February 2010  
Mid Wales Housing Association

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this code is to give guidance to the trade's people who work for contractors that undertake repairs, maintenance or improvement works for Mid Wales Housing Association. This is not intended to regulate the contractual and legal relationship between Mid Wales Housing Association and its appointed contractors. This is covered under other documentation. It is practical guidance on how staff should behave towards tenants and leaseholders prior to visiting them and when they are in their homes.

## **2. HOW CONTRACTORS SHOULD ARRANGE ACCESS**

- If tenants have asked for an appointment for a repair then the Contractor should contact them at least 24 hours in advance to arrange a convenient time to call.
- Visits should be made at reasonable times except in emergencies. If the tenant has specified they want a morning appointment the contractor should arrive between 8am and 12pm. If they have arranged an afternoon visit the contractor should call between 12pm and 5pm.
- If the work is of a major nature, contractors should give adequate notice to the tenants before commencing work. The amount of notice may be specified by Mid Wales Housing Association. If not specified then contractors should give a minimum of 3 working days notice to the tenant, preferably in writing.
- If contractors make arrangements to visit a tenant, they must endeavour to keep them. More complaints are generated by broken appointments than any other single problem. It can be particularly annoying if someone has taken time off work. If a broken arrangement is unavoidable, please make sure that early contact is made to:
  - Apologise to the tenant
  - Explain the reason for failing to undertake the work
  - Make a new arrangement
  - Pay a £5 compensation fee to the tenant for the missed appointment
- Contractors should be aware that many tenants are elderly or disabled and may take some time to answer the door, so please ring the bell or knock clearly and allow plenty of time for it to be answered. If there is no answer you should complete and leave a calling card.
- Permission should be sought when contractors wish to come into a tenant's property (including gardens). However, if the tenant isn't in and the work to be carried out is a small outside job with easy access, (e.g. a blocked gutter) then the contractor may complete the job and put a note through the door to say the work has been done. If the work is to a communal part of a supported housing scheme the Scheme Manager should be notified on arrival. The scheme manager should also be informed when at the scheme even if working in a tenant's accommodation.

- Contractors should never enter a property unless there is an adult present
- Contractors should always park legally and make sure that access to the tenants' and neighbouring homes are free. If necessary to block access, permission should always be sought first.
- If contractors need access to another property in order to carry out work, permission must first be obtained from residents of that property.
- Contractors must carry and show ID at all times. If a contractor turns up at a tenant's property without ID, he will be expected to collect it immediately and return to do the same job.

### 3. **HOW CONTRACTORS ARE EXPECTED TO BEHAVE**

- Occasionally, trades-people forget that tenants and leaseholders are paying for the work to be done. Tenants may not actually be receiving the invoice, but payment is made through their rent. They are entitled to the same consideration and treatment as any private customer. Leaseholders also have to contribute toward works to common parts or areas.
- Contractors should be polite and courteous at all times. Any remarks or innuendos made on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, religious belief or sexual orientation will not be tolerated. This will not be tolerated by Mid Wales Housing Association and the employer will be contacted and may result in Mid Wales Housing Association terminating the contract.
- Contractors should avoid the following:
  - Smoking in peoples properties
  - Rudeness
  - Excessive noise, including the use of radios, etc
  - Over familiarity
  - Arguments
  - Using bad language – this should be especially be borne in mind when contractors are working with other colleagues on a job
- Contractor's general appearance should be clean and presentable.
- Boots should be wiped clean before entering a property.

### 4. **TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS PROPERTY**

- Furniture and floor coverings should be protected by clean dust sheets as necessary. Whilst contractors will try and assist the elderly or disabled to move large items of furniture to allow access to a repair, tenants are generally expected to do this. If breakable or valuable items are present the contractor should ask the tenant to move them to a safe place.

- Contractors should always obtain permission from the tenant before using facilities such as a toilet or hand-washing. Also an agreement must be reached with the tenant before using their phone water, gas or electricity supply.
- Contractors should always advise the tenant if an accidental breakage has occurred. Please don't leave the tenant to discover what has happened afterwards.
- Damage to plants/trees etc should be avoided as far as possible. If some damage is inevitable, this should be discussed and agreed with the tenant.

## **5. BASIC SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES**

- Any plant or material should not be left in a dangerous or inconvenient position in or around the property, and agreement should be reached with the tenant on the placing of any such items. Any ladders left overnight should be left securely by covering with a scaffold board and tying or chaining together.
- If during the course of works the property is in an unsafe condition, then the contractor must ensure that adequate warning is given. Obviously particular attention needs to be given if young children or disabled/elderly people live in the property. Safe access should be maintained at all times.
- During the course of works the tradesperson is expected to use his own tools and ensure they are safely stored whilst not being used.
- Old material and rubbish should be removed regularly and no rubbish left on the site following completion of the works.
- Toxic materials should be kept safely and not left at the site of work overnight. If there are children at the property contractors should be especially vigilant to the safety risks.
- Should it not be possible to complete the work on the day, the contractor is required to ensure that the property is safe and secure and that loose materials are not left in the house. The property should be left habitable overnight and at weekends.
- If parts are required for a job and these are not readily available, the tenant should be advised that this is the case and given some indication of the time-scale. Obviously it may be necessary to make new access arrangements then or at a later date.

## **6. THE QUALITY OF WORK THAT IS EXPECTED**

- Before leaving the property the contractor should do the following:
  - Ensure that the tenant is satisfied with the quality of work.
  - Tidy up and remove all rubbish from the site.
  - Ensure that the property is secure.

- Always reconnect any electricity, gas and water supplies and check they work before leaving.
- For a variety of reasons peoples home standards vary .It is however necessary for the quality of work to remain high irrespective of the general state of the property.
- Apprentices or trainees should not undertake work unless accompanied or supervised by an experienced or qualified operative.

## **7. IF THE REPAIR TURNS OUT TO BE DIFFERENT THAN EXPECTED**

- Sometimes when on site the job is different than expected, or it may be more sensible to do something else, i.e. replace a pair of taps rather than a repair. Contracts often state how much can be done in this situation. If nothing is stated or you are unsure please contact Asset Management at Mid Wales Housing Association on telephone number 0300 111 3030.
- Tenants often ask for additional works to be carried whilst the contractor is at the property. In this situation the tradesperson is expected to use their common sense. Other similar small works may be undertaken if it does not interfere with the work schedule. If in any doubt, Asset Management should be contacted first. In all other instances the tenant should be advised to make a separate report to Asset Management on 0300 111 3030.

## **8. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF TENANTS**

Although most of this guidance applies to contractors, they would ask in return tenants should give similar courtesy and respect to anyone working in their home and to consider the following.

- Ensure that dogs are locked away when trades-people are on the premises.
- Trades-people should be given a clear, clean area in which to work.
- Tenants should ask for ID, before allowing access.
- Children should be kept at a safe distance especially if dangerous tools are being used.

## **9. SUMMARY TO BE CARRIED BY TRADESPERSON**

Mid Wales Housing Association expects as a condition of the contract that contractors will carry with them at all times a card with the following information on it.

- Contact the tenant before arriving at the property.
- Treat the tenant's home with respect and be polite and courteous at all times.
- Before entering the home introduce yourself and show ID.
- Do not enter the home if there are no adults present.
- Ensure the tenant is satisfied with the work.

- Tidy up and clear away any rubbish.
- Ensure that property is secure.
- Always reconnect any gas, electricity supplies and ensure that they work before leaving.

Asset Management at Mid Wales Housing Association can be contacted on telephone number **0300 111 3030**

**Mid Wales Housing Association wants to do the best it can for its tenants and is always looking for ways to improve the service. If you have any comments or suggestions with regard to the maintenance and repair service please write to the Director of Operations at Mid Wales Housing Association, Ty Canol House, Ffordd Croeswawdy, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1AL.**