



ARDENGLLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

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DECORATION POLICY

Date Presented to: Housing Services Sub Committee	13/12/11	Date passed by: Housing Services Sub Committee	13/12/11
Date of next Scheduled Review	13/12/14	Designated Review Body to Provide Recommendations	HSSC
Policy Complies With	Performance Standard		AS 1.5 & 2.2

Decoration Policy

Ardenglen Housing Association can provide this procedure on request, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Ardenglen is a community based housing association operating in Castlemilk, which is in the south East of Glasgow. At the time of writing we own approximately 950 properties. Of these, 541 are rehabilitated tenemental stock, while the remaining are new build houses, cottage flats and tenements.
- 1.2 The Association understands that internal decoration is the responsibility of our tenants as is clearly stated within the tenancy agreement. There are, however, certain circumstances when we will make a contribution towards the cost of improving decoration in order to ensure our stock generates demand. It is our belief that satisfaction with the property will assist with tenancy sustainment
- 1.3 Our allowance levels are not set to meet the full costs incurred, but do intend to allow tenants an element of choice in their decoration
- 1.4 We will consider the award of an allowance at each change of tenancy or as a result of planned or reactive maintenance where damage to decoration is incurred

SECTION 2

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To adhere to good practice and to the Housing Regulator Activity Standard AS1. 5 and AS2.2, which state that: -

“We monitor demand for our houses and maximise the use of available housing keeping empty properties and spaces in our shared accommodation to a minimum. We make sure our properties are of an appropriate lettable standard.”

“We follow sound stock management strategies to ensure our houses are in demand, maintained, modernised and adapted as people’s needs changed”
- 2.2 To reduce the rate of refusals to offers of housing and therefore minimise void relet times
- 2.3 To lay down clear guidelines for dealing with damage to decoration caused by the associations maintenance contractors
- 2.4 To provide staff with procedures for assessing the qualification of decoration allowance.
- 2.5 To comply with the Association’s Equal Opportunities Policy

SECTION 3

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Section 27 and schedule 4 states that landlords must carry out any necessary repair work within a reasonable timescale and make good any damage caused by carrying out the work
- 3.2 Section 5.12 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement states that;
- “If we cause damage to the house or property in connection with repairs or improvements or entry we will reinstate the damage or compensate you for your losses. This does not apply to any installation belonging to you, including flooring, which has to be lifted or moved to gain access to carry out any inspection or repair.”**
- 3.3 Section 2.2 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement states that;
- “The tenant must take reasonable care to prevent damage to the decoration of the property”**
- 3.4 Section 5.15 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement states that;
- “The tenant is responsible for taking reasonable care of the house. This responsibility includes carrying out minor repairs and internal decoration”**

SECTION 4

QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

A. Change of tenancy

- 4.1 The Association will consider awarding a decoration allowance at each new letting of a property. Tenancy changes by transfer of tenancy, succession, assignation or mutual exchange will not qualify for any allowance
- 4.2 The initial assessment of decoration standard is carried out at the tenancy termination inspection visit by Housing Services Staff. It is not for staff to judge the personal taste of an individual's decoration, but merely to gauge that it is clean, intact and meeting the Associations standards (see 4.4)
- 4.3 If the standard is not acceptable, the tenant will be advised in writing of the reasons for this decision being taken along with any remedial action required, prior to keys being returned as per the tenancy agreement. Failure to make

good may result in costs being recovered under the Association's Rechargeable Repair Policy

- 4.4 A full room by room assessment of the decoration will be carried out when keys are returned to the office. Housing staff will adhere to the following guidelines when establishing whether or not to award payment. Payment will be made on a room by room basis when;
- The wall paper is considerably torn
 - Artex or other wall covering is damaged
 - Walls or woodwork have graffiti on them
 - Redecoration is required to remove odour
 - Walls or woodwork are badly marked or smoke stained
 - Woodwork is badly chipped or peeling (other than wear and tear)
 - Walls or woodwork are painted a strong colour that is not easily covered up
 - Discretionary poor standard as assessed by the inspecting officer
- 4.5 In the case of internal transfers, decoration allowances should only be awarded where the property being vacated is left in an acceptable standard. If it is not a reasonable standard, the applicant may be suspended from receiving offers of housing as per the Associations Allocation Policy
- 4.6 The Association will decide how much decoration allowance is to be awarded before any viewings take place. Prospective tenants will be told how much decoration allowance they would be entitled to at their viewing.
- 4.7 Where a property has been assessed as qualifying for an allowance, new tenants will receive this at the point at which they sign their new tenancy agreement.
- 4.8 The Association may, on occasion, decide to carry out decoration to rooms that have been identified as qualifying for allowance. This will be done with the approval of the Housing Services Manager in the following circumstances;
- Where the prospective tenant has a disability or medical condition that prevents them from undertaking the decoration and there is no adult member of the household or family member who could reasonably be expected to carry out decoration on behalf of the tenant
 - The void standard is deemed to be so poor that it is unsuitable for viewing
- 4.9 Where the Association undertakes decoration the standard will be to emulsion walls (applying lining paper where required), and white glossing of woodwork

B. Planned Maintenance Programme

- 4.10 The Association will pay compensation for damage to decoration as a result of planned maintenance improvements such as kitchen, bathroom, window or central heating renewal etc
- 4.11 The Association will provide a redecoration allowance only and will not undertake any form of decoration following planned maintenance contracts
- 4.13 The Association will not provide compensation for damage to wooden or laminate flooring which requires to be lifted to allow repair works to proceed. Damage to carpets will be assessed on a case by case basis and may involve the Associations insurers where the damage is as a result of negligence.
- 4.14 An allowance for flooring may be considered only in circumstances where the existing floor covering was supplied by the Association and is unable to be reused after works are complete

C. Reactive Repairs

- 4.13 A decoration allowance will be payable where a tenant's decoration is damaged as a direct consequence of carrying out a reactive repair.
- 4.14 Once the repair work has been completed and the Association has been informed of any damage to the decoration, an inspection will take place to assess decoration allowance entitlement. The inspecting officer will have the authority to authorise the allowance on a case by case basis
- 4.15 No allowance will be paid after an incident for which a tenant should have had home contents insurance for e.g. damage to decoration following a flood

SECTION 5

ALLOWANCES

A. Change of tenancy allowances

- 5.1 For properties deemed as qualifying for a decoration allowances, this will be paid by a voucher system.
- 5.2 The voucher will entitle the incoming tenant to a "paint pack" which includes enough materials and accessories to carry out painting of all walls, ceilings and woodwork of rooms identified for an allowance.
- 5.3 If the "paint pack" option is not suitable, then vouchers may be issued to the equivalent value
- 5.4 The voucher will expire if it is not reclaimed by 6 months from issue. The Association will have discretion to reissue if requested by the tenant

Allowance entitlement	
One bedroom accommodation (maximum allowance)	£113
Two bedroom accommodation (maximum allowance)	£131
Three bedroom accommodation (maximum allowance)	£164
Four bedroom accommodation (maximum allowance)	£197
Livingroom	£60
Hall & staircase	£60
Bedroom	£45
Hall	£45
Kitchen	£40
Bathroom	£40
Toilet	£40

B. Planned maintenance and reactive repair allowances

- 5.4 Damage to decoration as a result of major repairs contract will be paid based on the following allowances;

Livingroom	£79
Kitchen	£45
Bathroom	£50
Bedroom	£49
Hall	£47
Hall & Staircase	£78
Toilet	£77
Maximum Allowance	£180

Full Central Heating Renewal (incorporating radiator replacement)

1apt	£160
2apt	£180
3apt	£200
4apt	£220

Removal of gas fire and hearth £50

- 5.5 Compensation for planned maintenance and reactive repairs will comprise of decoration vouchers for half of the amount and a cheque payment for the other half.

- 5.6 The cheque payment will be made to “pay cash” or can be made by BACS transfer.
- 5.7 In the event of outstanding rent arrears or rechargeable repairs, the association will make appropriate deductions from the cheque proportion of the allowance. There will be no such deductions from the voucher entitlement.

SECTION 6

DISPUTES, TRAINING AND REVIEW

- 6.1 Any tenant who wishes to complain about the way in which they have been dealt with under the terms of this policy or who wishes to appeal against a particular decision should first contact their Housing Officer. If they are dissatisfied after that they should consult the Associations Complaints Policy which is available on request
- 6.2 Housing Services staff dealing with assessing decoration entitlement will be empowered with clear responsibilities and will receive appropriate training and support
- 6.3 The policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least on a 3 yearly cycle. The review will take account of legislative changes, new policy guidance, best practice advice and the views of users.

-- END OF POLICY --