Rechargeable Repairs Policy

April 2025

MONITORING, APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
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Version Notes	New Policy to supersede previous Customer Charges policy 2020
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Consultation	Heads of Services: Finance Customer Consultation – Customer Voice Panel Property Care Customer Service Centre Neighbourhood Team Assets Team Income Collection Team
Equality Analysis	An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed 10/03/25
Approved by	
Approval date	
Review Frequency	The Policy will be reviewed every three years or in line with legislative or regulatory changes. Due September 2028

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

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1 Purpose of this Policy

1.1 First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO) seeks to provide excellent services to our customers and maximise value for money. We have a responsibility to ensure that expenditure is targeted at legitimate repairs and services. Where repairs are due as a result of damage, neglect or inaction by customers, former customers or visitors, these will be recharged to the customer or former customer as appropriate.

1.2 The policy applies to all properties owned and managed by FCHO. It sets out what FCHO will recharge for, the circumstances in which this will be done, and how these recharges will be recovered. It applies to all FCHO customers and has the following aims and objectives:

- To set out the circumstances in which FCHO will recharge a customer.
- To ensure that a fair, consistent and transparent approach to recharging customers is implemented.
- To set out the required payment and recovery arrangements.

2 Policy Details

2.1. Rechargeable Repairs and Services

2.1.1. There are a number of circumstances that can occur which will lead FCHO to identify whether recharges are appropriate. Such instances could include:

- Following a report to the Contact Centre.
- Upon attendance at a property to carry out a repair.
- Upon inspection or home visit.
- Following an emergency call out.
- During a pre-termination inspection.

2.1.2. Where it is considered that a repair is as a result of damage, neglect or inaction by customers, former customers or visitors to the property, FCHO will consider recharging the customer or former customer. The decision will be in line with this policy and FCHO's reasonable adjustments policy.

2.1.3. The following will be recharged to customers and can include, but are not limited to:

- Removal of fly tipping.
- Provision of lost or additional fobs for access to properties.
- Lock changes requested due to lost keys.
- Garden clearances if this potentially creates a public health issue or potential nuisance.
- Any damage or works required when a customer ends their tenancy
- Completing repairs that are customers' responsibility, as per the repairs and maintenance policy and voids policy.
- Repairs that are required due to a customer making unauthorised alterations to the property which need rectifying.
- Damage caused by pets or visitors

2.2. Vulnerability

2.2.1. FCHO aims to treat vulnerable customers sympathetically and sensitively, ensuring that the service offered is appropriate and reflective of customer needs and circumstances which can result in any payments being waived, this will be in line with FCHO's Reasonable adjustments policy.

2.2.2. Where it is identified that a recharge will be waived, the case will be considered individually and the reasons recorded, the case will be reviewed by the reasonable adjustments panel. This process will be in line with procedures to write off rent arrears and debts on sundry accounts.

2.2.3. Where vulnerable customers have been identified, we will work with them to understand their individual needs and signpost them to support services

2.3. Payments and Recovery

2.3.1. An invoice will be raised and sent to the customer or former customer for payment. Payment is due within 28 working days. FCHO will agree all reasonable proposed arrangements for repayment by customers.

2.3.2. When an invoice is not paid within 28 working days FCHO will take action to recover the costs in line with standard recovery procedures.

2.4. Right to Appeal

2.4.1. If a customer is unhappy with the decision to recharge they have the right to appeal within 14 working days from the date the invoice was issued. All requests for appeal will be handled through FCHO's complaints process.

2.5. Roles and Responsibilities

2.5.1. **Contact Centre** will order or request any repairs or services. They will determine if a repair or service is rechargeable following a discussion with the customer. They will also administer requests for appeals through the complaints procedure.

2.5.2. **Property Care** are responsible for carrying out all responsive repairs.

2.5.3. **Asset Investment Delivery** are responsible for arranging all planned maintenance works

2.5.4. **Neighbourhood Care** are responsible for the removal of fly tipping. They will also clear gardens of rubbish and undertake maintenance if the works are identified as being rechargeable.

2.5.5. **Income Collection Team** will be responsible for raising invoices. They will contact the customer for any monies outstanding.

2.5.6. **Neighbourhood Services** will work closely with the customer and key stakeholders to address any tenancy management issues that may arise from rechargeable repairs being identified.

2.5.7. **Customer Services** will be responsible for monitoring and reporting performance to FCHO's Executive Management Team.

3 Legislation and other Guidelines

3.1. FCHO is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The relevant consumer standard that is applicable to repairs is the Safety and Quality Standard, which states at paragraph 1.4.1,

"Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible".

3.2. This policy seeks to balance customers' needs and stock maintenance with value for money.

4 Links to FCHO's Corporate Plan

4.1. This Policy links to the area of 'Great Company' and 'Great Homes' and the Strategic risk register.

5 Links to FCHO's Policies and Documents

Access to Services Strategy
Repairs and Maintenance Policy
Voids Policy
Lettings Policy
Rent and Service Charge Setting Policy
Tenancy Policy
Neighbourhood Strategy
Damp and Mould Policy
Compensation Policy
Community Services Strategy
Income Collection Policy
Customer Engagement Strategy
Rent to Buy Policy
Shared Ownership Policy
Leasehold Management Policy
Complaints Policy
Value for Money Strategy
Reasonable Adjustments Policy