



Major Works Agreement

An agreement between

South Lakeland District Council,
South Lakes Housing
South Lakeland Tenants And
our chosen Construction Partners

2007



MAJOR WORKS AGREEMENT

Signed on behalf of South Lakes Housing

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Signed on behalf of South Lakeland District Council

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Signed on behalf of South Lakeland Tenants

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Signed on behalf of South Lakeland Leaseholders

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Signed on behalf of Bramall Construction Ltd

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MAJOR WORKS AGREEMENT

Introduction

This agreement sets out how tenants will be involved in all Major Work Programmes and is a commitment to an efficient and effective working partnership between tenants, residents, leaseholders, South Lakes Housing (SLH), South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) and our chosen construction partners.

The agreement will allow and encourage everyone involved to bring their knowledge and expertise to decision-making and promote and encourage full participation by tenants and leaseholders in all aspects of Major Works.

1. The aim of our Major Improvement Programme

We are required to ensure that all our properties meet the Government's 'decent' standard by 2010 and our aim is to have achieved this by 2009.

Our stock condition survey has identified that around 36% of properties do not currently meet the Decent Homes standard.

Having achieved two star status following Government inspection, South Lakes Housing received £21m to bring the Council Housing Stock up to a decent standard. This funding together with the annual Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) funding means we will receive £26m over 4 years.

2. The Major Works Agreement

The Major Works Agreement will run alongside the District Wide Tenant Participation Agreement and the Decent Homes Programme Communication Plan. It is intended to ensure that all tenants and leaseholders, where relevant, will be involved in the decision making process and will be able to influence how SLH deliver major refurbishment work. As a result tenants and leaseholders should receive the highest quality services and products whilst suffering as little disruption and inconvenience as possible.

For ease of reference, where the word 'tenant' is used in the remainder of this document it can be assumed that this includes leaseholders except where referring to internal works.

3. Background of the Agreement

In 2005, SLH, as an agent for SLDC, started a formal contract with Bramall Construction to refurbish the Council's housing stock. This contract will not follow traditional methods for procurement (buying in services and products) but will be a

partnership consistent with the main recommendations and principles of Sir John Egan in his report 'Rethinking Construction'.

The method that we used to choose our construction partner should ensure that all tenants and leaseholders receive the highest-quality service available and that we will meet the Government's requirement to provide 'decent homes'.

As part of this process, we have already, in consultation with tenants, set targets designed to achieve the highest level of performance and service.

4. Reviewing the compact

We will continually monitor and review this agreement alongside the District-wide Agreement to ensure that it continues to reflect our priorities.

5. Tenant Participation in South Lakeland – our current position

The District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement sets out our commitment to tenant participation.

It lists ways that tenants and leaseholders can become involved with the decision-making process at the level they choose.

The current ways include:

- Resident's Associations
- Focus groups
- Attending open events
- Membership of Groups and Committees
- Membership of Tenants Committee
- Membership of South Lakes Housing Board
- Leaseholder club
- Street and Village Voices

Communication and consultation

We are committed to involving tenants and the community when making decisions on housing issues. We believe that tenants are crucial stakeholders and their input is essential to the continual improvement of housing conditions and communities. We also recognise that the communication process goes beyond consultation in decision making, and also extends to keeping tenants fully informed on how and when those decisions will affect them.

1. Purpose of the Agreement

This agreement aims to ensure that the following is achieved:

- Improve and increase tenant involvement in the decision-making process, especially on how we deliver major refurbishment work.
- Improve and increase greater community involvement and awareness of the improvement programme, and the opportunities for personal development and community regeneration as a result.
- Clearly set out the targets and standards our construction partners need to achieve, in particular the key indicators that we can measure performance against.
- Inform tenants how they can give us feedback before, during and after the work has been done and ensure we use tenant feedback to continually improve our service.
- Provide a clear complaints procedure to each tenant receiving improvement work.
- Ensure all construction partners use the same approach so that all tenants receive the same quality of service. All construction partners will be expected to:
- Provide a clear and complete summary of the work in each tenant's home including :
 - how the work will be managed;
 - how tenants will be kept up to date with the work;
 - details of what products tenants can choose to have in their home;
 - what type of work will be carried out and the final quality of product that tenants can expect;
 - the start date and estimated timescales of work;
 - emergency contact numbers;
 - how much disruption tenants are likely to experience;
 - how tenants can help the contractor (whilst in their home) to reduce disruption and make sure that the work is carried out in the safest and most efficient way. For example; lifting laminate flooring, moving white goods etc.

2. Who we will consult and keep up to date

We will consult:

- Tenants
- Residents
- Leaseholders
- Service users
- Elected members
- Board members
- Staff
- Representative tenant's organisations including (but not limited to) Tenants Committee, Tenants and Residents Associations,
- Community stakeholders
- Parish councils

3. How we will consult and keep people up to date?

The way we carry out refurbishment work and the materials and specifications we use are the result of ongoing and intensive tenant consultation. This has allowed us to get an overview of tenants' needs and opinions.

For the purposes of carrying out any major improvement work, we will identify and cater for individual tenant's needs, and in particular any special needs, and allow tenants to choose materials and specifications (within agreed limits).

At the same time we recognise that, to minimise disruption, we need to keep tenants fully informed along every step of the improvement process.

We will consult tenants and keep them up to date by doing the following:

1. Prior to the work commencing, we will :
 - send a letter explaining the extent of the work and that the exact work will be dependant on a detailed survey (this may involve not carrying out the work or carrying out extra work);
 - provide the name of the contractor who will be carrying out the work, including contact numbers;
 - give details of an open day/roadshow (including a contact number if tenants have difficulty getting around and need transport to and from the open day/roadshow).
2. We will hold an open day/roadshow. This will be based locally so as many people as possible can attend. If tenants have difficulty getting around we can arrange transport or we can visit tenants at home. The open day will provide information on what type of work will be carried out and allow tenants to meet representatives from our construction partner. Tenants will also be able to ask us any questions. We will provide displays and samples of products and items that tenants will have a choice of.
3. Our construction partner will write to tenants to make an appointment to visit their property prior to the work commencing. Our construction partner will provide tenants with a named Liaison Officer together with details of:
 - the start and end dates for the work;
 - what the work will involve;
 - who to contact in an emergency;
 - details of their uniform and ID ; and
 - their contact phone numbers.
4. Tenants will be given a satisfaction questionnaire to fill in after the work has finished. This will let us know how happy they were with :
 - the information they were provided with before the work started;
 - how the work was carried out and the service they received
 - the quality of the finished product.

The questionnaire will allow us to target any areas of the service that may require improvement. It will ask for any comments and suggestions and if we feel tenants are not properly satisfied we will undertake a follow up visit to discuss and put right any issues. All comments and issues will be passed to our construction partner and we will ask for a written response as to action taken.

5. We will publish information in regular tenants' newsletters and provide updates at Area Panels
6. We will consult tenants if they may be affected by any proposed change to policies or procedures. We will carry out district-wide consultation to make sure we keep tenants fully informed of the modernisation programmes that will be affecting their home. We will consult and inform groups who are difficult to reach for example, older people, younger people, black and ethnic-minority groups, and groups with special needs. We will arrange meetings with focus groups, discussion groups and tenants and residents associations (our construction partner will also take part if necessary).
7. We will give feedback on monthly performance reviews and end-of-phase reviews using the most appropriate way of communication.
8. We will offer tenants training in audit procedures and have regular tenant audits of pre-entry surveys and handovers.
9. We will make employment and training opportunities available to local people.

Improvement work

As part of our commitment to tenants and residents, we will do everything possible to make sure that our construction partners have extensive knowledge and experience in carrying out this type of work. We will work with all our partners to deliver the highest possible standards in the most economical way.

Construction partners

At the end of an in-depth 12 month selection process, the successful contractor chosen to work with SLH and SLDC were Bramall Construction.

We will review this contract in April 2007. As part of this review we will take account of :

- how our construction partner has performed;
- how happy tenants are with the work carried out so far;
- changing costs; and
- whether other possible construction partners have now become available

The review will be a formal process to identify 'what went well' and 'what could have been done better' so that we can form an agenda for 'what to do differently' during the period 2007 to 2009.

The work

Most of the major improvement work carried out will be aimed at achieving the Government's decency standard.

Depending on the results of the stock condition surveys, tenanted properties will probably receive one or more of the following main types of work:

- A new kitchen;
- A new bathroom;
- New central heating;
- Electrical rewiring/upgrades;
- New windows;
- A new roof (including soffit and fascia);
- Re-rendering

We will also carry out other work such as replacing doors, environmental improvements, and other 'decency plus' items, for example showers. We will carry out necessary work to 'non-traditional' properties where identified and we will consult leaseholders in line with legislation. Leaseholders will only be offered external works where required.

Decoration allowance

When the work is finished we will provide tenants with a decoration allowance in accordance with our normal policy.

Tenants' choice

We are committed to involving tenants in a choice of all component replacement parts. We recognise that tenants have different needs, tastes and preferences. By increasing choice, wherever possible, we aim to create desirable homes and sustainable communities.

As part of any major improvement work, tenants will be able to make choices in a number of the elements:

Kitchen

Tenants will be able to choose from the following materials:

- A new kitchen - a choice of six packages to include doors, worktops, floor coverings and wall tiles
- Two choices of wall paper to be painted white or any other colour provided by the tenant
- A choice of four tap fittings
- A choice of two cupboard door handles

Kitchens will be designed wherever possible in consultation with the tenant to meet their individual needs and requirements with respect to the number and size of existing 'white' goods.

Bathroom

A new bathroom - the bathroom suites will be white, but tenants can choose from three bath panels and matching toilet seats and have the option of an over bath shower.

Heating

New gas central heating – the new boilers will be located in the existing boiler position where possible, and if tenants have an existing open fire, the fireplace will be retained and any back boiler decommissioned.

Electrics

New electrical rewiring – existing socket positions will be retained and any additional sockets as an optional upgrade will be positioned in consultation with the tenant.

Doors

New external doors – we will fit composite self-finished high security doors and frames. Tenants will have a choice of three styles of front door with a further choice of three wood stain finishes and four colours.

Estate Improvements

Estate improvements - we will consult tenants and develop a community action plan. This will allow us to fully involve all our partners within the local community.

Welfare

We recognise that the improvement work will cause disruption to tenants and will involve many officers and trades people going into their home. With the exception of essential electrical or gas safety works tenants will be given the option of refusing the works if they feel that they will be unable to cope with the disruption. This could be a difficult time especially if tenants are elderly or ill. As a result, we will make sure that anyone going into tenant's homes has clear identification and has received customer care guidelines.

Identification

Tenants will be able to identify members of the workforce in the following ways:

- Contractor vehicles will have logos which are clearly identifiable to tenants.
- The contractor workforce will wear high-visual fluorescent waistcoats with the company name on them.
- Each member of the contractor workforce will wear an identification badge (with their name and photo on it) at all times. SLH officers will also wear an identification badge.

Contact numbers

Tenants are advised to ask for proof of identification before letting anyone into their home. They will be given contact numbers if they need to confirm the identification of any visitor to their home.

Special needs

Any special needs of tenants will be identified before the work starts and taken in to account during the work. Respite facilities will be provided for tenants who will find it difficult to remain in their property during the day whilst the work is carried out and who do not have relatives or friends who they can stay with. This will be tailored to meet individual needs and may involve transporting tenants to sheltered schemes in their area where there will be facilities available and if necessary meals can be provided. Help with packing will also be available for elderly tenants or those with special needs.

Health and safety

We will ensure that any risk to tenants during improvement works is kept to a minimum by identifying and getting rid of possible risks at the design stage and taking care to avoid damage or harm during the construction phase. The site staff of our construction partner will work with our officers to ensure that tenants are kept safe, warm and comfortable while the work is being carried out and that they are disturbed as little as possible.

The contractor as part of their commitment to health and safety will be constantly monitoring the work sites to make sure that they have taken all necessary safety precautions and that all safety measures are in place.

The contractor, where appropriate, will also visit schools to tell children about the dangers on construction sites.

The contractor will ensure that facilities in tenants' homes, including water, heating, lighting and power are always available overnight. If the kitchen is being replaced a temporary hook-up will be provided that includes all the basic kitchen functions and at least one base unit.

If gas appliances are not safe tenants will be advised and the appliances disconnected. If electrical appliances are found to cause the electrical circuits to trip out after rewiring has been carried out, tenants will be informed and advised to have the defective appliance repaired or to get a new one.

To protect tenants and all staff, a Health and Safety Monitoring Group will be set up to discuss and monitor any health and safety issues.

Key performance indicators (KPI's)

As part of our drive for excellence, we will constantly measure our performance and our construction partner's performance against certain standards. These are known as key performance indicators. The KPI's cover the main aims of the project and set targets for us to achieve. We aim to constantly increase these targets over time to avoid complacency, and work towards 100% success.

KPI's

We will use a simple system to monitor performance against the following:

Cost/Time

- Cost - actual spending against planned spending (we will make sure that what we spend is in line with what we planned to spend).
- Time - progress against the work programme (we will make sure that the progress of the work is on schedule in line with the programme).
- Time- we will measure the average time in property against the benchmark at time of handover

Tenant Satisfaction

- Tenant satisfaction - we will make sure that tenants are pleased with the services and products we provide.
- Defects - we will make sure that the work is good quality and that we have to put right very few items of unsatisfactory work. We will measure defects at point of handover and during the 3 month period after handover.

Community Development

- Community & Economic benefit – we will measure training opportunities and use of local labour supported by the works

Monitoring and reporting KPI performance

We and our construction partners will constantly monitor all KPI's. We will discuss progress at monthly meetings and take action if we believe progress is not satisfactory. Quarterly reports will be made to SLDC, SLH Board and Tenants Committee. Reports will also be published in regular Tenants' newsletters.

Community development

We aim to make sure that the community benefits as much as possible from our Major Works Programmes. We believe it goes well beyond providing decent housing, to creating sustainable communities.

Under the construction partnership, we are contributing to community development by:

- employing, training and developing people from within the region;
- training and developing all staff employed by our construction partners;
- using local labour as much as possible;
- using local subcontractors as much as possible;
- using local suppliers as much as possible;
- involving young people as much as possible through school visits;
- developing a Community Action Plan and making Estate Improvements.

The Environment

We aim to manage all of our operations in an environmentally responsible way. We will meet environmental laws and regulations in addition to developing other initiatives as follows:

- consider how to recycle materials when they are no longer useful
- use recycled materials wherever possible
- use sustainable resources wherever possible
- reduce noise, disturbance, and the emission of pollution as much as possible
- use energy, water and materials as efficiently as possible
- use environmentally-friendly products and services
- adopt a whole life cost approach to procurement
- controlling the supply chain and subcontractors to make sure everyone involved shares our commitment and that of our partners.

Complaints

We recognise that there need to be strong and effective procedures in place to deal with any complaints. We will use our complaints procedure to deal with complaints within ten working days. If the complaint relates to health and safety issues, or is affecting tenants comfort, we will aim to visit and resolve within 24 hours. Each contractor will make sure that they advise tenants about their own complaints procedure, in writing, before the work starts and we will monitor number of complaints and time taken to resolve.

Related Documents

A Leaseholder Guide to Decent Homes
District Wide Tenant Participation Agreement
Decent Homes Programme Communication Plan
Sheltered Housing Agreement
Relevant Local Agreement