

# Planned and Preventative Maintenance

As a housing provider, you'll be well aware of the many challenges that diverse housing portfolios present. Both planned preventative and reactive maintenance requirements carry significant costs. New-build projects, life-cycle and whole-life costings are becoming increasingly important. Not only from a monetary perspective, but from the point of view of sustainability.

Robust and thorough maintenance regimes are essential, and should be reviewed and complied with to ensure that vulnerabilities are not created with the risk of potential losses. Maintenance systems should ensure all aspects of the building stock are protected from external works such as surface water drainage and sustainable drainage systems to internal plumbing systems and electrical installations.

It is also essential that maintenance systems, checks and remedial activities are recorded accurately to demonstrate that appropriate measures are in place. This is particularly important for statutory legislative requirements – to ensure that the system is properly implemented and in working order to validate maintenance regimes.

**As an example, maintenance records should be detailed for:**

- **Component descriptions**
- **Maintenance requirements and frequency**
- **Necessary works identified/required**
- **Dangerous defects and urgent remedial actions**
- **Date of planned maintenance works**
- **Details of operative/company completing the works**
- **Satisfactory completion and sign-off**

For both planned preventative maintenance and reactive maintenance requirements, the obligations on organisations are significant.

They require extensive knowledge around all aspects of building stock, tenants' needs, budgetary requirements and associated resources.

Building-condition surveys and estate inspections are key to developing well-informed maintenance programmes, and it is essential that key elements are addressed to reduce property and casualty-related incidents and claims.

Factors to take into account include:

- Inspection of condition and adequacy of perimeter walls, gates and fencing
- Inspection of external hard landscaping; this should include street furniture, play areas, paving/surfacing, parking areas and pathways
- Check the provision and condition of external gullies and drains around the building perimeter and within any hard landscaping areas – including roadways – to ensure they are free from debris and in good condition
- Visual inspection of roofs: look for evidence of ponding, surface deterioration, storm/weather-related damage, fatigued tiles, blocked drainage outlets, damaged or missing flashings
- External building fabric: cracking to masonry, damaged or perished pointing, loose external cladding – including render
- External building features: canopies, raised walkways, external steps and balconies, etc. Consider the suitability of guarding, protection from falling and handrail provision on a risk-based approach
- External windows and doors: check for condition in terms of weather resistance, safe operation, appropriate hardware and locking devices, including emergency-exit hardware
- Internal building fabric: floor finishes in communal areas, ceiling linings, voids above suspended ceilings, stair treads, nosings, handrails, guarding, protection from falling, etc.
- General building security: communal entrance doors, screens, security hardware, etc.
- Access-control systems to main entrances and individual dwellings; the location and operation of any CCTV provision; the resilience and effectiveness of such systems
- Lighting provision to external areas: pathways, car parks, building perimeters, entrances and communal areas, etc. – taking into account general tenant safety, emergency lighting provision and security aspects

- Assess fire safety provision: fire safety systems, fire alarms, smoke ventilation/extraction, emergency lighting, appropriate hardware and fire exit doors – including their safety and operation
  - Means of escape provision: condition and operation of internal fire doors, self-closing mechanisms, smoke seals, fire-stopping around service penetrations and above suspended ceilings, etc.
  - Asbestos management: audits, monitoring the management plan, assessing condition and protection measures, etc.
  - Building services: hot and cold water provision, communal and self-contained heating systems, ventilation systems, protection of ducting routes, electrical and gas supplies throughout the premises, etc.
  - Fixed-wiring inspection and testing: ensure routine inspections link into the scheduled maintenance programmes
  - Inspection of lightning protection systems and assessment of condition, completeness and overall adequacy and maintenance
  - Roof and void access arrangements: are fixed ladders in good condition and subject to inspections? Consider also external fire escape stairs for condition, ease of use, lighting, guarding, etc.
  - Lift inspections and servicing: ensure that findings of the inspections are incorporated into maintenance plans; and that measures such as guarding and protection from falling are addressed
  - Consider energy performance measures and practices to ensure that new systems, materials, technologies and associated procedures become a part of the maintenance regime; also take into account emerging life-cycle issues
- It should be noted that the above list is not exhaustive and both statutory legislation and requirements must be met and adhered to where applicable.



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