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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Major Repairs and Miscellaneous Works (MRMW) schemes are part of the Corporation's ADP heading of Works to RSLs' Stock (WTRSLs). This heading also includes Rehabilitation Works Only schemes, Re-improvement schemes and Adaptations.
- 1.2 In deciding whether work is classed as a Major Repairs scheme or Re-improvement/ Works Only Rehabilitation, MRMW projects must not lead to any rent increase; SHG is payable at up to 100% of eligible costs to ensure this neutral effect. Any excessive or non-qualifying costs must be absorbed by the RSL. Where rents are to increase the scheme must be classed as 'Works Only Rehabilitation' or 'Re-improvement'
- 1.3 Major repairs are works, excluding improvements, to a dwelling owned by an RSL that are necessary to ensure the continued habitability of the dwelling, and are:
- major works which have become necessary since the original development or rehabilitation work was completed, including those works required by subsequent legislation;
 - replacement of, or major works on, those components of a dwelling which have come to the end of their useful lives.
- 1.4 REPAIR-3 describes the standard processing route. A simplified 'streamline' route is described in REPAIR-4, which is particularly useful for Adaptations schemes, but can be used for other Major Repairs schemes. These sections are subject to revision.

2 MRMW SCHEMES - KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- 2.1 MRMW schemes have these key characteristics:
- **Fixed Grant** - SHG is payable on up to 100% of eligible costs. Cost control is ensured by establishing these costs prior to Practical Completion. Any contributions from the RSL's reserves must be identified as 'discount on grant';
 - **Cost Overruns** - Cost overruns will not qualify for SHG if the scheme has been processed under the streamline route. Where the RSL seeks grant on a cost overrun at Final Cost stage, the application will be subject to detailed scrutiny to determine the reasonableness of any such claim. The cost overrun limit will be 120% of total qualifying scheme cost approved at confirmation of grant. Grant on the approved additional cost is limited to 85% of the first 10% above the original

approved costs, and 60% of the next 10% above the original approved costs.

Example 1

Confirmation of grant approved cost of £30,000 increased to £34,000 at final cost. Therefore all £34,000 is within the 120% limit of the total cost qualify for grant. The total grant payable is:

100% GC		£30,000
85% of 10% of GC figure (85% x £3000)	£2,550	
60% of (£34,000- £30,000-£3,000) £1,000	<u>£600</u>	
		<u>£3,150</u>
		£33,150
The RSL must fund the balance (£34,000-£33,150)		£850
		£34,000

Example 2

Confirmation of grant approved cost of £30,000 increased to £37,000 at final cost. Therefore only £36,000 will qualify (i.e. 120 % of £30,000). The total grant payable is:

100% GC		£30,000
85% of (10% of £30,000 = £3,000)	£2,550	
60% of (£36,000-£30,000 -£3,000) £3,000	<u>£1,800</u>	
		<u>£4,350</u>
		£34,350
The RSL must fund (£37,000 -£34,350)		<u>£2,650</u>
		£37,000

- **On-Costs** - one on-cost percentage is applied to all scheme types,
- **Tranche Payments** - two tranche payments of SHG will normally be paid, at Start On Site (80%) and the balance at Practical Completion, unless a streamline adaptation which will have a single Grant payment made at Practical Completion stage. Limited facilities to release part tranches are available in exceptional circumstances. *See REPAIR-4 paragraph 3.2 (January 2006)*
- **Technical Scrutiny** - technical scrutiny by the Corporation will involve an assessment of eligibility according to the criteria; that the breakdown into qualifying and non-qualifying costs (if any) is correctly based; that cost estimates are realistic and reasonable; and that the scheme represents value for money. Depending on the degree of scrutiny at Bid stage the Corporation may require supporting documents to be submitted.

3 PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR MAJOR REPAIRS SHG

3.1 These include:

- all rental properties, except those listed at paragraph 4 below, funded under:
 - ⇒ the pre-1988 Act procedures, and
 - ⇒ 1988 and 1996 Act SNMA/SHMG procedures;
- all property funded under the pre-1988 Act Supported Housing procedures which are eligible for SNMA/SHMG and which were funded by ADP HAG.

4 PROPERTIES INELIGIBLE FOR MAJOR REPAIRS SHG

4.1 The following types of properties are not eligible for Major Repairs SHG, although in some circumstances Adaptations funding may be available (*see 4.2*):

- Temporary Social Housing schemes;
- any property transferred from a public sector body to an RSL on or after 1 April 1989;
- properties produced i.e. acquisition and construction/rehabilitation, out of the following internal RSL funds:
 - ⇒ Disposal Proceeds Fund
 - ⇒ Recycled Capital Grant Fund;
- All pilot mixed funding projects approved in 1987/88 and 1988/89 including Challenge, Job Movers and Homeless Families schemes;
- Properties funded under the Tariff, Non-Tariff, and Cash Programme procedures, except supported housing schemes which also received an SNMA/SHMG approval under the special needs funding/supported housing arrangements introduced in April 1991 and 1995;
- All Low Cost Home Ownership properties, including all variations of shared ownership, leasehold schemes for the elderly, and incentive schemes such as, RTA, SHB, and Homebuy, and the now-obsolete VPG and Tenants' Incentive Scheme.

4.2 The following properties are ineligible for grant **for adaptations**:

- LSVT properties transferred to an RSL after 31 March 1996 including Estate Renewal Challenge Fund properties;

- Temporary Social Housing and other non-permanent housing;
 - All low cost home ownership properties.
- 4.3 LSVT stock transferred to an RSL before 31 March 1996 remain eligible, in principle, for adaptations SHG funding provided the application meets other requirements and no other locally agreed restrictions apply.

5 ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 All RSLs that own and/or manage stock must develop and implement an Asset Management Strategy. This is a fundamental requirement in order to ensure business viability and risk management. The Asset Management Strategy links many aspects of an RSL's operations, and must be fully integrated into the RSL's Business Plan.
- 5.2 Asset Management is a requirement of the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Code which states "Housing Associations must operate viable businesses" (1.1) and "business planning [must be] informed by asset management information, which is reviewed regularly" (1.1b). Section 3 of the Regulatory Code sets out Regulatory requirements in relation to RSLs' stock.
- 5.3 RSLs should have regard to the following guidance on Asset Management:
- *Understanding our Assets A self assessment framework for Boards of Housing Associations:* The Housing Corporation July 2003
 - *Managing the Assets An introductory guide to asset management for housing associations:* The National Housing Federation July 2003
 - *Housing investment appraisal* the National Housing Federation July 2004.

Demand

- 5.4 RSLs' Asset Management Strategies should assess the need for investment in their existing stock to maintain future viability and should take this into account in determining their capacity to invest in new development.
- 5.5 They should incorporate assessment of future demand for their stock in forecasting future viability and determining what investment is needed in the existing stock.

Stock Condition Data

- 5.2 An essential component of the Asset Management Strategy is data on stock condition. Stock Condition Surveys should be undertaken periodically at intervals in accordance with good practice, and determined by the age and property type profile of the RSL's stock.

- 5.3 *Understanding our Assets and Managing the Assets* (see 5.3 above) include information about good practice in carrying out stock condition surveys. RSLs should also have regard to:
- *Collecting, Managing and Using Housing Stock Information A Good Practice Guide*, DETR 2000
- 5.4 RSLs should pay particular regard to the following aspects of stock condition data:
- Ensure that stock condition data is updated from day to day and planned maintenance activities.
 - Ensure that stock condition data informs planned and programmed maintenance programmes, and that proper provision is made for these in the RSL's Business Plan.
 - For properties which are not in programmes to bring homes up to the Decent Home Standard because current tenants do not at present want work to be carried out, ensure that proper provision is made in the Business plan to bring these homes up to the standard in the future.
 - Design stock condition surveys to collect property data for as many purposes as possible to maximise value for money in carrying them out (see below)
 - RSLs attention is drawn to guidance on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) contained in DCLG guidance on stock condition surveys (*Collecting, Managing and Using Housing Stock Information A Good Practice Guide*, DETR 2000 vol. 2 p 22 and Annex G p 105). Key messages about how RSLs should respond to the HHSRS are also included on the Housing Corporation's website.

Repairs and Maintenance

- 5.5 RSLs will use data from Stock Condition Surveys to inform planned and programmed maintenance (5.4).
- 5.6 In managing their responsive repair services, RSLs must take account of the requirement to report against Performance Indicators in the annual Regulatory and Statistical Return (www.rsrsurvey.co). Performance Indicators are currently under review, however until the autumn of 2007 RSLs are required to report on the number of emergency and routine repairs completed within target. RSLs should refer to Section Q of the RSR form and to the Guidance Notes to determine what records they need to maintain.

Stock Condition Standards

- 5.7 In preparing the Asset Management Strategy and in commissioning the stock condition survey, RSLs should take account of stock condition standards and reporting requirements. As well as responsive maintenance Performance Indicators (above), these include the average SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure, and energy performance rating) Performance Indicator, the Decent Home Standard, and the forthcoming Energy Performance of Buildings

Directive, which will require RSLs (together with all property owners) to supply certificates of energy performance for all properties on the point of sale of letting.

- 5.8 RSLs should consider undertaking energy surveys of their stock, in order to facilitate reporting on energy performance and to identify potential for implementing measures to improve the energy performance of their stock and reduce fuel poverty.
- 5.16 The RSL should monitor results during the course of the survey to ensure that there is consistency between surveyors in their assessment of defects. Sample comparative analyses of surveyors' work should be carried out as an integral part of all surveys. Where divergence in assessments is identified, remedial measures such as joint surveys must be implemented. In large scale surveys, regular joint survey should be undertaken.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This chapter defines the types of work that the Corporation would normally qualify for SHG, and those works that do not normally qualify. It is not possible to give a definitive list of works that qualify for SHG, and the RSL must consult their local office of the Corporation where there is doubt as to the eligibility of the proposed scheme for SHG funding. An example of where the same work may and may not qualify could be replacement of kitchen floor units. As a stand-alone replacement these are considered to be a maintenance item. However where they have to be replaced as a consequence of a failed damp proof course, the cost could qualify for Major Repairs SHG depending upon whether they could be re-used. *See paragraph 3.12 below.*

2 NON-QUALIFYING COSTS

- 2.1 This list of non-qualifying costs cannot be considered exhaustive and RSLs are advised to seek the guidance of the Corporation on items about which there is any doubt before expenditure is incurred. The term non-qualifying cost relates to any capital costs of a scheme which do not qualify for SHG because:

- they arise from inadmissible items (see 2.2 below);
- they exceed the level of costs accepted for SHG (see 2.3 below);

Inadmissible items

- 2.2 These are works considered to be:

- re-improvements;
- day to day or cyclical maintenance;
- directly attributable to neglect or inefficiency on the part of the RSL.

Cost Overruns

- 2.3 Chapter REPAIR-1 explains that there is a limit on the SHG that is payable on any costs overruns. Any costs that cannot be funded by SHG must be funded by the RSL.

Major Repairs Provision

- 2.4 Certain properties are ineligible for Major Repairs SHG, and are defined in chapter REPAIR-1. The RSL is expected to create its own major repairs provision for these properties.

3 MAJOR REPAIRS

- 3.1 Major Repairs projects are works to eligible properties which are essential for the property to remain habitable, as defined in chapter REPAIR-1. In extreme cases a local authority may serve a statutory notice on the RSL requiring the works to be done.
- 3.2 In certain circumstances a contract may include various categories of work, such as maintenance work, major repairs work, energy conservation work and an adaptation for a person with physical disabilities. The Corporation will consider favourably applications from the RSL for such combined schemes where it is practicable and cost effective for the works to be carried out at the same time.
- 3.3 In some instances tenants will need to be temporarily re-housed to enable repairs to be carried out. The necessity to vacate properties can indicate the urgency or priority of the works.
- 3.4 Major repairs works can be:
- major works arising from structural or environmental deterioration; or
 - replacement or repairs to services or features; or
 - works arising from legislative changes occurring after completion of the original development or rehabilitation work.
- 3.5 Works considered to be re-improvements, day to day or cyclical maintenance or directly attributable to neglect and inefficiency are not eligible for Major Repairs SHG. However the re-improvement works may qualify for SHG under the Works to Existing RSL Stock heading, e.g. kitchens, bathrooms replacements, fencing and external works to improve security.

Standards

- 3.6 As a matter of general principle, the works carried out in a Major Repairs scheme must bring those parts or elements of the property which have been subject to replacement or substantial reconstruction up to the current design and construction standard, as prescribed in the Quality section of the Corporation's Scheme Development Standards.

Main structural works

- 3.7 These are defined as works essential to safeguard the basic functions of stability and weather resistance in the main structural elements of a dwelling i.e. in floors, walls and roofs. Examples of Major Repairs Works falling within this category include:
- underpinning and reconstruction of foundations;

- rebuilding load-bearing walls including retaining walls;
- Damp Proof Course (DPC) works and associated reduction of external ground levels;
- treatment of wet or dry rot or insect attack;
- tanking or lining to prevent moisture penetration;
- lining and insulation in cases of severe condensation;
- replacing roof/floor timbers, roof decks and covering;
- re-pointing, re-rendering and re-cladding external load-bearing walls.

Secondary elements

- 3.8 Extensive works to secondary elements of the structural envelope of a dwelling such as stairs, non-load-bearing walls, balconies, windows and external doors, chimneys, parapets and gutters, but excluding internal doors, fittings, finishes and equipment. These works must be essential to preserve weather resistance of the fabric or security of the tenants or their possessions. Major Repairs works falling within this category will involve complete replacement or substantial reconstruction of the property.

Site works

- 3.9 Site works around the dwelling or dwellings that are essential to the safety, security and protection of the tenants. Examples of works in this category include:
- replacement or reconstruction of unstable boundary walls, fences and retaining walls;
 - replacement or reconstruction of steps, paving, hardstandings, unadopted footpaths and roads damaged by subsidence or collapse;
 - removal of trees affected by disease or storm;
 - demolition of unsafe out-buildings including garages.

Service installations

- 3.10 These are works to building services that have reached the end of their useful life such that the basic amenities of sanitation, health and safety in a dwelling could be seriously impaired. Works in this category comprise renewal of installations including:

- gas, water and electricity supplies;
- drainage above and below ground;
- heating and ventilation (in cases of severe condensation renewal or provision of heating, ventilation, dehumidification and insulation in accordance with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Digest 297 will be eligible);
- lifts;
- fire alarm, warden call, security and emergency lighting systems;
- external windows and doors replacement;
- certain types of external works e.g. resurfacing roads and paved areas.

Investigation and prevention

- 3.11 Works required to investigate, report, expose and prepare for any of the above categories of Major Repairs works can be approved by the Corporation. This category of works also includes preventive treatments to areas under threat as a result of defects undergoing Major Repairs.

Consequential and other works

- 3.12 Works required consequential upon Major Repairs Works in the above categories. This includes works of reinstatement or making good to finishes and fittings (including decorations, internal doors and equipment) unavoidably damaged to an extent that has significant adverse effect on its function or longevity in the course of, or in connection with, Major Repairs works.

Health and safety

- 3.13 From time to time suspected health hazards arise from particular materials used in building. In addition, changing circumstances may lead to measures being required to address personal safety concerns of tenants within the building. Proposals appropriate to dealing with such cases as Major Repairs can only be assessed on their merits, RSLs should consult their Corporation office's Investment Officer in the first instance.

Damages not covered by insurance

- 3.14 In exceptionally inclement weather conditions, such as flood or storm, buildings can suffer unusual damage. Where such risks are uninsurable the local office of the Corporation will give consideration to using Major Repairs funds in cases requiring extensive renewal.

- 3.15 In some circumstances substantial repairs will be necessary because of extensive vandalism or damage or neglect by tenants. Where the costs of such works are not recoverable through insurance or charges to the tenant they can be considered by the Corporation for Major Repairs funding. In such cases the Corporation will need to be satisfied that the RSL has taken all reasonable steps to secure the property and/or to recover any costs.

4 EMERGENCY MAJOR REPAIRS

- 4.1 Emergency Major Repairs are works carried out as a matter of the utmost urgency, such as on receipt of a Dangerous Structure Notice from a local authority or health authority. As with other Major Repairs, RSLs are expected to explore all aspects of liability. Emergency work must be strictly limited to what is immediately necessary, and where possible, permanent reinstatement must be carried out as a separate project.
- 4.2 Where possible, the Corporation will actively assist with emergencies by giving in principle, oral approval, prior to approval of the project.

5 MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

- 5.1 Miscellaneous Works are minor works to RSL properties, usually to meet statutory requirements, address health hazards or to adapt dwellings for the physically handicapped. The following are examples of the types of works eligible for SHG funding.

Adaptations to dwellings for people with physical disabilities

- 5.2 As good social landlords the Corporation would expect RSLs to consider the need for adaptations. However, there is no statutory responsibility for the Corporation to fund adaptations, nor for RSLs to provide them for their tenants. The statutory responsibility for funding adaptations is the duty of the welfare authority (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and the 1996 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act).
- 5.3 Adaptations can cover the cost of making structural adaptations to dwellings owned by the RSL to meet the specific needs of disabled tenants. Temporary Social Housing dwellings are not owned by the RSL and are consequently not eligible for adaptations funding.
- 5.4 Adaptations are eligible for SHG funding where they meet priority needs as identified in the relevant Regional Housing Strategy and Corporation's Regional Housing Programme. There is no longer a minimum cost limit.

- 5.5 Adaptation works are eligible for SHG if they are 'structural' adaptations to existing dwellings necessary to make them more suitable for people with physical disabilities.

Use of SHG Fund for Adaptations

- 5.6 The following table lists the categories of stock eligible in principle for SHG:

CATEGORIES OF STOCK ELIGIBLE IN PRINCIPLE FOR SHG FOR ADAPTATIONS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE	
Category of original financing of the provision of rented stock	In principle can RSLs spend its SHG on adaptations to that stock?
Provided entirely with own resources or private finance at any time, provided it is let at social housing rents.	Yes
Provided with pre-HAG public subsidy before 1974 Act.	Yes
Provided with 1985 Act HAG.	Yes
Provided for supported housing with 1988 Act HAG.	Yes
Transferred from a local authority as part of an LSVT between 1 April 1989 and 31 March 1996 inclusive.	Yes
Provided for supported housing with 1996 Act SHG or SHMG.	Yes
Provided for supported housing out of the Disposal Proceeds Fund.	Yes
Provided for supported housing out of the Recycled Capital Grant Fund.	Yes
Provided for supported housing out of the Rent Surplus Fund Reinvestment Fund.	Yes
Provided with 1985 Act HAG but on fixed percentage terms such as challenge funding with no continuing public commitment to repair.	Yes
Provided for general needs with 1988 Act HAG.	Yes
Provided for general needs with 1996 Act SHG.	Yes
Provided for general needs out of the Disposal Proceeds Fund.	Yes
Provided for general needs out of the Recycled Capital Grant Fund.	Yes
Provided for general needs out of the Rent Surplus Fund Reinvestment Fund.	Yes
Provided with non-HAG public subsidy from 1 April 1989, provided it is let at social housing rents.	Yes
Transferred from a local authority or other public sector body after 31 March 1996. Refer to circular F2 - 24/95.	No
Transferred from a local authority or other public sector body before 1 April 1996.	Yes
Any short life or temporary social housing, regardless of	No

how financed.	
Any shared ownership, regardless of how financed.	No

- 5.7 Former BES schemes that have been purchased by RSLs are treated as RSL owned stock and are therefore eligible for Adaptations funding. Any scheme managed by an RSL on behalf of a BES company is not eligible for SHG Adaptations funding.
- 5.8 SHG for Adaptations will not be paid on housing stock transferred from a public sector landlord to a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) landlord, or another RSL, that received the stock transfer after 31 March 1996. The RSL will be expected to fund this work from its own resources. *See GENERAL-3 paragraph 6*
- 5.9 LSVT landlords that received stock transfers prior to 31 March 1996 will continue to be eligible in principle to receive SHG funding for Adaptations.

Aids and adaptations that are not eligible for SHG

- 5.10 Listed below are examples of portable aids and equipment that are considered to be the responsibility of the Social Services Authority or the Health Authority and will not be eligible for Grant. These are movable items which do not require fixing to the building:
- **Approaches to dwelling entrances:** portable or re-usable ramps, for example of timber or metal.
 - **Electrical and heating services:** electrical heating or ventilation controls; induction loop for people who are hard of hearing; telephone installations; portable heaters; portable lamps and/or dimmer switches for visually impaired people.
 - **Hoists and vertical circulation:** portable manual or electric hoists.
 - **Kitchens:** tap turners; special kitchen utensils or portable cooking equipment.
 - **Bathrooms and WC:** portable WC seat raiser; portable or re-usable support rails or support frames.

Adaptations that are eligible for SHG

- 5.11 The list below is not exhaustive, but gives a number of examples of items that when provided for a disabled person, are admissible for Grant. These are items that because they are fixed to or become part of the structure of a dwelling, may be regarded as 'structural'.

Approaches to entrance doors:

- fixed ramp in place of steps;
- modification of steps, for example to widen treads or incorporate half-steps;
- handrails or balustrading to ramps or steps (also in other parts of the dwelling where necessary);
- doorcall and entryphone system.

Acoustic insulation: acoustic insulation, for example in households where there is an exceptionally noisy and disruptive child.

Bathrooms and WC:

- shower unit in place of, or to supplement bath;
- shower cubicle;
- special bath;
- special WC fixture;
- suitable washbasin;
- bidet;
- raising of WC fixture;
- sluice sink;
- fixed bath hoist;
- support rails to walls by bath or WC, or other fixed support;
- platform at head of bath.

Doors and windows:

- widening or rehang of doors to permit wheelchair manoeuvre;
- substitution of sliding or bi-fold doors for side-hung doors;
- suitable ironmongery, for example lever in place of knob handles, pull handles and rails to doors or kicking plates;
- protective edging to door frames and hanging stiles;
- remote control window openers;
- conversion of window to french window where no other wheelchair access to the garden is available;
- alteration to windows to give satisfactory sight-lines for people in wheelchairs;
- larger windows for visually impaired people.

Electrical and heating services:

- re-fixing of socket outlets at a convenient level;
- additional socket outlets;
- rocker light switches;
- alarm call;
- loud bell for people who are hard of hearing;
- relocation of pre-payment meters;
- relocation of thermostat, or heating controls;
- relocation of main switches for gas or electricity;
- central heating, or supplementary radiators to existing installation;

- fixed heating appliance (gas or electric) in place of open fire or other solid fuel appliance;
- fluorescent lights in kitchen, bathroom and working area for visually impaired people;
- warning system for people who are hard of hearing, e.g. flashing lights;
- provision of power supply for electric hoists suspended from ceiling track.

Entrance halls:

- letter cages;
- delivery shelf;
- relocation of clothes hanging rails (also in bedrooms).

Garaging and external facilities:

- widening of garden paths;
- carport and/or undercover access to the dwelling if practicable;
- remote control garage door opener to existing garage used by disabled driver;
- enclosed area for electric wheelchairs with recharging facilities.

General Alterations: extensions or alterations to provide bathroom, WC or bedroom etc., with level or suitably ramped access.

Kitchens:

- alterations to provide fixed storage units, worktops and sink units at convenient levels;
- built-in cooker for use by disabled person;
- waste disposal unit to sink.

Provision for lifting aids: reinforcement of ceilings and provision of track for personal hoist.

Staircases and vertical circulation:

- additional handrail to staircase;
- gate at head or foot of stairs;
- stairlift installed over staircase, for standing or seated use, or with platform for wheelchair;
- vertical homelift or hoist.

Storage: storage provision for wheelchair.

Water Services:

- substitution of lever for screwdown taps;
- re-fixing of taps at convenient level;
- remote control valves for taps;
- thermostatic control shower;
- relocation of control valve for mains water supply.

Asbestos works

- 5.12 SHG can be paid to cover the cost of the treatment of hazards arising from asbestos in building materials.
- 5.13 The Corporation will base its appraisal of the proposed works costs upon the guidelines established below. This will enable schemes to be submitted and evaluated under a common set of criteria.
- 5.14 The list below contains information on asbestos used in the manufacture of domestic consumer products such as kitchen appliances and heating equipment. The guidance makes a number of key points which must be satisfied:
- Dangers from asbestos in buildings are likely to arise only when asbestos is damaged, either accidentally or during maintenance or repair;
 - In general, undisturbed materials in good condition present little risk but once the presence of asbestos material has been determined it is important to distinguish the type of asbestos and the potential for fibre release;
 - Asbestos materials which are sound, undamaged and not releasing dust must be undisturbed. A system of management must be introduced involving regular inspection and labelling;
 - Frequently the most appropriate action will be to leave the material in place and to seal or encapsulate it;
 - When it is not possible to seal an asbestos material effectively and it is likely to release dust, the RSL must seriously consider removing it completely;
 - It will generally be more cost effective to undertake work on asbestos as part of a programme of general refurbishment or maintenance than to undertake such work separately. Any programme of work on asbestos must therefore take account of other planned work and factors such as the availability of suitable contractors and temporary re-accommodation of tenants whilst work is being carried out. It is important that there must be adequate liaison with tenants;
 - Asbestos removal must be performed only by licensed contractors. Demolition involving any form of asbestos is subject to relevant health and safety legislation. Asbestos waste is classified as a controlled waste to be disposed of only at licensed sites.

Energy conservation works

- 5.15 Energy Conservation Works eligible for SHG comprise loft insulation, insulation of hot and cold water systems and draught proofing. In addition to these primary measures, supplementary work which is consequent upon the insulation and draught-proofing work, and work which is specially required in order to maximise the effectiveness of Energy Conservation Works, may also be included.
- 5.16 Projects that consist solely of Energy Conservation Works must only be submitted in respect of properties that have no existing insulation. However, upgrading of current standards of existing insulation may be carried out as part of a Rehabilitation, Re-improvements or Miscellaneous Works project if it is cost effective to do so.
- 5.17 The following categories of Energy Conservation Works are eligible for SHG:

Primary measures

- **Roof insulation:** the provision of roof insulation not exceeding 100mm in thickness except where the dwelling is electrically heated and in the opinion of the RSL a greater thickness is necessary;
- **Cold water system insulation:** the lagging of cold water storage tanks and exposed water pipes within roof spaces;
- **Hot water system insulation:** the provision of an 80mm jacket conforming to the standard specified in BS 5615:1978 for the hot water cylinder, or if there is sufficient space for such a jacket, the insulation of the hot water cylinder by other means allowing no greater rate of thermal transmission; and the lagging of the hot water supply from the hot water cylinder or tank to the kitchen tap and if necessary to other taps where this can be done in a straightforward way;
- **Fixing of draught-stripping to doors and windows;**

Supplementary measures

- **Lofts:** where necessary the provision or enlargement and the insulation and draught-proofing of a hatch allowing access to the loft and the sealing of gaps around pipes and wires entering the lost space from below;
- **Roof space ventilation:** the carrying out of works to ensure adequate ventilation at eaves, the installation of ridge ventilators where necessary, and the provision of mesh screens to prevent the entry of birds;

- **Unused fireplace:** the blocking of disused flues at fireplace level with a small vent to keep the flue dry;
- **Air bricks:** where appropriate to prevent excessive ventilation, the closing off of air bricks in walls;
- **Door ironmongery:** where necessary to overcome any increased friction caused by draught-stripping, the provision of additional or stronger handles or latches;

Repair works

In some cases the effectiveness of the Energy Conservation measures referred to above may be dependent upon the carrying out of repair works, e.g. re-hanging or replacement of doors so that they can be effectively draught-stripped or replacement of panes of glass damaged during the works. Only very limited repair work of this nature which is directly associated with the Energy Conservation measures may be included in Energy Conservation projects.

Fire authority works

- 5.18 These are works recommended by the relevant Fire Authority to upgrade existing fire precautionary measures, or install new services as defined by the Fire Authority. The RSL should follow the professional advice of the Fire Authority, although the RSL is not strictly obliged in statute to do so.

Lead in drinking water

- 5.19 Grant can be paid to cover the costs of replacing existing, or installing new pipe work due to the presence of lead in drinking water. DCLG Circular 22/82 contains precise technical details on the background to this item. In certain circumstances, the only solution to this problem will be to carry out replacement works of varying degrees. In many cases, attendant health risks with lead will be of paramount importance. Eligible works include the replacement, installation or re-routing of pipework.

Radon

- 5.20 Radon is a natural radioactive gas that results from the decay of small amounts of uranium present in soils and rocks. Where the gas seeps out of the ground into the open air there is little or no danger, but where it escapes from underlying soil into dwellings a build up of Radon could become a health hazard. Radon has no taste, smell or colour. Special equipment is needed for detection. Radon is prevalent in granite areas; parts of Devon and Cornwall are particularly prone to Radon. Other specific parts of the country may also be affected.

- 5.21 Prolonged exposure to high levels of Radon can be injurious to health. Evidence suggests that there is risk, particularly for smokers, of developing lung cancer by inhaling particles of the gas although it may be many years before the disease becomes apparent.
- 5.22 For detailed information prior to any action RSLs are advised to read the booklet 'The Householder's Guide to Radon' obtainable from the DCLG. Where a case of Radon seepage into a dwelling is suspected RSLs must follow the advice given in 'The Householder's Guide to Radon' and seek guidance from the NRPB. The NRPB advises the Government on matters of radiation protection and has carried out various surveys in order to monitor levels of Radon. Indications are that the vast majority of homes in the United Kingdom do not have significant Radon levels.
- 5.23 To determine whether properties may be susceptible to Radon, the RSL can contact the Radon Survey, National Radiological Protection Board, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon OX11 0RQ Tel: 0800 614 529.
- 5.24 Various recommended methods of preventative treatment for both new and existing properties are outlined in the above mentioned booklet 'The Householder's Guide to Radon'. This guidance suggests that until further guidance is available measures to avoid high levels of Radon need to be taken in Cornwall and certain parts of Devon. The particular measures, and the areas in which they should be undertaken, are illustrated in the notes and drawings attached to the guidance which is available from building control bodies in Devon and Cornwall.
- 5.25 Further advice can also be found in the publication 'Radon Sumps: a BRE guide to Radon remedial measures in existing dwellings' obtainable from the BRE book shop, 6AA Building Research Establishment, Garston, Watford WD25 9XX, telephone 01923 664000 or visit their website at www.brebookshop.com.
- 5.26 The cost of remedial works to existing dwellings contaminated by Radon will be eligible for SHG subject to the RSL obtaining a survey report from the NRPB indicating that the remedial works are necessary. Only survey reports from the NRPB will be considered for eligibility purposes. Where the NRPB consider that a Radon survey of an existing dwelling is unwarranted, SHG will not be available.

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