

Doc Number: 3-20a	Lead: Manager, Property Services	Last Full Review: March 2025
Tick one of the below for review/changes made: Full review and changes made ☒ (add changes summary to table below) Full review, no changes made ☐ Changes made but no full review ☐ (add changes summary to table below)		Reviewer / Editor: Manager, Property Services Changes Approved By: Director of Housing & Assets Reviewed and edited in-line with the Beacon? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Internal Decoration, Flooring and Window Coverings Policy

Document Change Details

Date	Summary of Changes Made
October 2023	All policies and procedures revert to version 01, as approval process & version control moved to Sharepoint. Version number no longer shown on the document. New front sheet.
March 2025	Change to title of policy. Changes made to grammar/spelling and job titles.

1.0 PURPOSE

To ensure tenants in our properties are aware of their responsibilities for the internal decoration of their accommodation.

To ensure our staff are aware when internal decoration is the responsibility of the tenant and when it is our responsibility.

To ensure internal decoration, flooring and window coverings are maintained to a high standard in our properties.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Details of the tenant's role and responsibility for internal decoration, flooring and window coverings in communal and non-communal areas, along with ours, are included within each tenancy agreement.

We hold full responsibility for all aspects of internal decoration and furnishing within our Registered Care Homes.

Only the costs of communal area decoration are service chargeable and eligible for Housing Benefit. Tenants are responsible for the decoration of their own homes. Southdown has responsibility for undertaking communal area decorations in properties we own or hold a long lease on.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Registered Care services:

The Service Manager is responsible for ensuring internal decoration, flooring and window coverings are maintained to a sufficiently high level. Where there are concerns, the Service Manager will notify the Property Services team.

The Manager, Operations will monitor internal decoration during their regular visits.

Property Services will work alongside the Service Manager and Manager, Operations to ensure internal decoration remains at a high standard throughout our stock.

Supported Living services:

The Housing Officer will liaise with the Service Manager to ensure that all tenants are aware of their responsibilities in relation to internal decorations and to positively address any issues. Service Managers should encourage and support tenants to keep their home in good decorative order.

It is the responsibility of the Service Manager to notify the Housing Officer/Assistant if there are concerns about the upkeep of a client's room/flat. In particular they should notify the Housing Officer/Assistant straight away where there are concerns about hoarding or unsanitary conditions.

The Housing Officer/Assistant will monitor the upkeep of communal areas during their regular visits and annual communal area inspections. Property Services will ensure that scheme requests are assessed in the context of the condition of the premises, tenant needs and staff teams.

Supported Housing:

The Housing team are responsible for discussing internal decorations and the state of flooring and window coverings as part of their routine visits and annual tenant visits. Housing Officers/Assistants will work with tenants where improvements are needed, supporting them to break down the tasks required and signposting them to appropriate external support where applicable.

Support staff (where we have a linked contract) will assist the Housing team by working with the tenant to ensure they have understood and acted on their tenancy obligations. They will inform the Housing Officer/Assistant if they have concerns about the condition of the property.

Property Services team:

Property Services are responsible for monitoring the condition of communal decoration, flooring and window coverings through five yearly stock condition surveys and via communication with the Housing team and Service Managers.

The Property Services team will prioritise scheme requests and improvements, and ensure that the needs of tenants are identified in advance of move in. Thereafter the Property Services team will try to accommodate requests from Service Managers and tenants, subject to budgets/funding arrangements, where the request is considered reasonable.

The Property Services team are responsible for engaging high quality, value for money contractors to carry out internal decorations and to replace flooring and window coverings. This is done via an annual tendering exercise.

DEFINITIONS

Internal decoration: the basic decoration of internal areas of a building. This includes painting or wallpapering of internal walls, painting ceilings and woodwork.

Communal areas: areas of a building available for use by multiple tenants, such as laundry rooms, garden spaces, hallways, stairs, landings, kitchens and bathrooms, where the tenant does not have exclusive use of a self-contained unit.

Flooring and window coverings: This applies to all carpets, vinyl flooring, curtains and blinds.

Private areas: areas of a property where a tenant has exclusive use. For example, the whole property in the case of a self-contained flat but only the bedroom in the case of someone where they share the rest of the property with other tenants.

Tenanted Properties: accommodation units where we have issued a tenancy agreement. This includes our Supported Living and Supported Housing accommodation but **not** Registered Care or Shared Ownership properties.

4.0 POLICY

REGISTERED CARE PROPERTIES

We will maintain the quality of internal decoration, flooring and window coverings in Registered Care Services to a high standard for all parts of the property. We will carry out all internal decoration and replace flooring or window coverings if requested by CQC inspectors.

TENANTED PROPERTIES

We will issue tenancy agreements that make it clear that the tenant is responsible for maintaining the internal decoration of private areas, to a reasonable standard and returning the property to us in a lettable state. We will monitor these tenancy conditions and supportively work with tenants to bring standards back up if they have fallen. We recognise that tenants may struggle to keep on top of general maintenance. We will encourage them to break down the work that is needed into manageable chunks so that each step is achievable.

We will collect a weekly service charge for flooring and window coverings in **private** areas from tenants who have received flooring and window coverings from the start of their tenancy.

We will collect a weekly service charge for flooring, window coverings and internal decoration of **communal** areas from tenants who live in properties where we are responsible for maintaining the communal areas. We will use this income to meet our obligation to provide tenants with properties that have safe, good quality flooring and window coverings throughout and have communal areas decorated to a good standard.

Where we provide a support service to our tenants, support workers will monitor the property condition and provide support and advice to tenants on a regular basis, to help them meet their responsibilities.

Where we have issued a tenancy agreement that states we are responsible for internal decoration of the private areas (a small number issued before 2000), we will redecorate as required and appropriate.

We will not pay for internal decoration of private areas on behalf of tenants and recharge them at a later date. If we assist tenants to arrange contractors to undertake internal decoration, the tenant must enter into an independent arrangement with the contractor.

SHARED OWNERSHIP

We will continue to issue leases on the HOLD Shared Ownership Scheme which state that the Shared Owner is fully responsible for maintaining the quality of internal decoration in their property and they are fully responsible for replacing flooring and window coverings as required. We will ensure Shared Owners fully understand these responsibilities and will monitor the properties on a regular basis.