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Repairs: Changing policy to improve housing conditions

Getting Repairs Done Seminar

14 June 2007



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Private Housing Conditions

- Poor maintenance is a common problem
- Carrying out all private sector repairs would cost £5 billion
- Disrepair most evident in older properties, flats and private rented sector
- Difficult for private tenants to enforce landlords' repairing obligations



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Housing Improvement Task Force

151 recommendations including

- LA powers to deal with private housing
- Assistance for improvement, repair, adaptation
- Tolerable Standard
- Single Survey/PIP
- Repairing Standard for PRS/rights of tenants



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Repairing Standard Criteria

- Combines repairing obligations in Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, parts of Schedule 4 of 2001 Act and new elements, most of which are currently contractual.



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Repairing Standard Criteria

- Wind and water tight and reasonably fit for human habitation
- Structure and exterior in reasonable repair and proper working order. Where house forms part of premises, includes parts that owner is responsible for maintaining, solely or communally, but Repairing Standard only applies if anything tenant is entitled to use is adversely affected



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Repairing Standard Criteria

- Installations for supply of water, gas and electricity and sanitation, space heating and heating water in reasonable repair and working order
- Fixtures, fittings and appliances in reasonable repair and proper working order
- Furnishings capable of being used safely for purpose for which designed
- Satisfactory provision for detecting and giving warning of fires.



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Repairing Standard

Applies to any tenancy of a house (including tied accommodation) which is not

- a Scottish secure tenancy or short SST
- a section 121 tenancy
- a tenancy of a house included in an agricultural lease and occupied by the tenant of that lease
- a tenancy of a house on a croft or a holding to which the Small Landholders (Scotland) Acts 1886 to 1931 applies.



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Enforcement

- Tenants' right to enforce through Private Rented Housing Panel Power
- Local authority can carry out work that landlord can not or will not do



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Guidance and Publicity

- Leaflet and poster
- Guidance for local authorities and stakeholders on enforcing the Repairing Standard
- Statutory guidance on detecting and warning of fire and informing tenants