

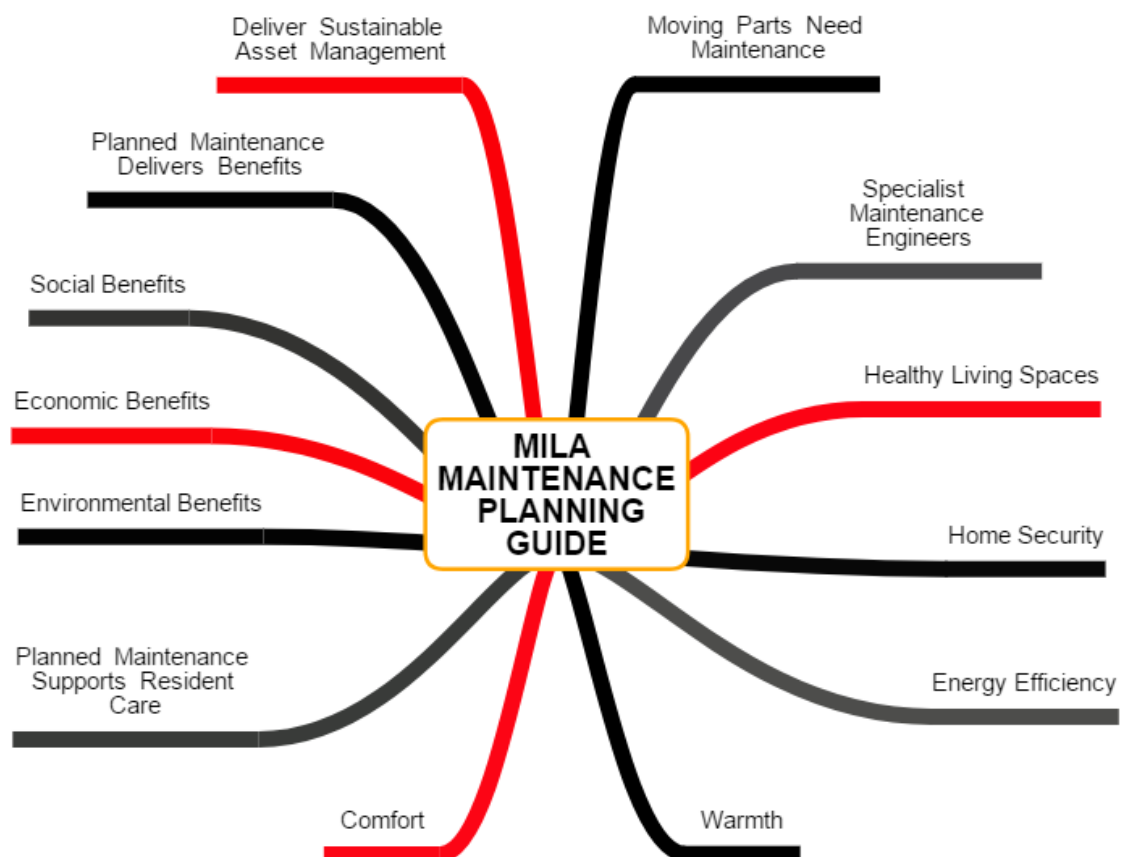


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Window & Door Maintenance

SUSTAINABLE ASSET MANAGEMENT

THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF PLANNING
MAINTENANCE TO WINDOWS AND DOORS IN SOCIAL HOUSING PROPERTIES



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INTRODUCTION

Windows and doors are such an important part of people's lives that we barely notice them at all until something goes wrong.

However, windows and doors play a major part in whether a resident feels comfortable and secure in their home, and have the best performing products to deliver them the lowest domestic fuel bills.

We all recognise that the majority of windows and doors installed into social housing properties have been sold – historically at least – as no maintenance, or at best low maintenance.

By and large PVCu, Aluminium, and high quality Timber framing materials are low maintenance – but the working components which make up the complete window or door are not. This includes gaskets and seals, hinges, locking mechanisms and handles.

Like all products in life, anything which has working or moving parts needs maintenance to ensure that they continue to perform as they should.

With the right information, the right planning, and the right skills to carry out the maintenance this can be done in a way which delivers not only economic benefits but social and environmental ones too.

SUSTAINABLE ASSET MANAGEMENT WHEN IT COMES TO WINDOWS AND DOORS IS READILY ACHIEVABLE



THE SOCIAL BENEFITS OF PLANNED MAINTENANCE

COMFORT, WARMTH AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Houses traditionally lose a significant amount of heat through their windows – in cases where the windows are performing poorly due to failure of components this can be very noticeable and can lead not only to unnecessary cost for the resident, but also discomfort.

Residents don't want to sit in a draughty room where their only recourse to combat cold is to turn the heating up.

Ultimately windows can be upgraded to be even more efficient with the installation of the latest specifications of sealed units which deliver enhanced thermal performance and reduced energy bills, but the first step is to ensure that all gaskets and locking mechanisms are performing as they are designed to do.

Improving the energy efficiency rating of the windows will help residents with their fuel bills. This is important as landlords look to assist residents with their living costs to ensure they can continue to pay rents and enjoy a sustainable standard of living.

To guarantee resident comfort windows should always be maintained to ensure they are operating to the same standards as the day they were first installed.

Further down the line, improving the energy efficiency rating of the windows will help residents with their fuel bills. This is important as landlords look to assist residents with their living costs to ensure they can continue to pay rents and enjoy a sustainable standard of living.

HEALTHY LIVING SPACES


As recognised by Building Regulations Part F, poor ventilation is one of the most common causes of damp and other airborne bacteria which can affect the well-being of a resident.

Buildings need to "breathe" and rely on constant air circulation to maintain air quality. Anything that impedes the flow of air through a house prevents moisture from escaping or evaporating and leads to damp.

The majority of windows which have been installed into social housing properties in recent years have ventilators as a part of the specification, but if not cleaned and maintained they will not work as they should do.

Similarly, most windows are fitted with a night vent facility, but if hardware – particularly hinges and locking mechanisms are not maintained, then these too may no longer work as they are supposed to do, denying residents the opportunity to create airflow through their home.

Correctly functioning windows contribute positively to addressing the issue caused by lack of airflow circulation and help to reduce damp and the spread of other bacteria which can pose a hazard to human health.



HOME SECURITY

Poorly performing windows and doors can leave a house vulnerable to break-ins. In the UK, two-thirds of burglars gain entry through a door and one third get in through a window.

Most Housing Associations and Local Authorities started installing SBD (Secured by Design) products many years ago, and this had an immediate and positive impact on reducing the amount of intrusions through windows and doors.

It is important to maintain the operational integrity of these products however to ensure they continue to provide the levels of security expected of them by residents.

Regular maintenance will help to ensure all working parts are operating as they should, and will help to maintain the peace of mind of the residents into whose homes they are installed.



THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF PLANNED MAINTENANCE

The economic advantages to running a planned maintenance schedule are obvious – having maintenance engineers make multiple calls whilst in an area, and/or having them look at all the windows and doors in a property in one visit all makes financial sense when compared to having emergency or responsive call outs.

Housing Associations and Local Authorities who undertake planned maintenance will point to the control they have over their maintenance budgets rather than having to ‘respond’ all the time to one off calls and emergency call outs to maintain a single item.

As referenced earlier, there are also economic benefits to the resident, with properly performing windows and doors helping them to keep heating bills to a minimum. In turn this helps landlords to collect their rents more consistently and to support their residents in the battle against fuel poverty.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF PLANNED MAINTENANCE

Housing is responsible for a quarter of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. As large housing stock owners, social landlords are challenged by this to reduce the carbon emissions from their properties.

Ensuring windows and doors are properly maintained and operating to their optimum performance is a positive step in terms of environmental management of your housing stock.

Ensuring that windows and doors are properly maintained with efficiently functioning seals and gaskets, hinges and locking mechanisms is a major step forward. But the biggest environmental benefit comes from upgrading the sealed units installed into the windows in their properties as a part of a planned maintenance cycle.

This has the multiple impacts of reducing the amount of CO2 emissions escaping through the windows, reducing the amount of fuel used to heat the building, and reduces the cost of heating for the resident.

Maintaining windows regularly also ensures that they retain their asset value, and if maintained they can remain operational for many more years than originally budgeted.

Generally speaking the framing materials of windows and doors will not need replacing, meaning that windows which are maintained or undergo refurbishment ensures that framing does not need to go into landfill and that Carbon Footprints can be reduced by new windows not having to be produced.

SUMMARY

In summary - windows and doors aren't just building features. They are essential elements to retaining the heat and warmth in a home, the physical well-being of a resident, their security, and a contributing factor to their financial well-being.

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR?

This guide has been written for asset managers working for councils and housing associations who have responsibility for maintaining windows and doors in social housing. It may also be of interest to managers working for large landlords within the private sector. Our aim is to help you control your maintenance budget within tight financial limits and reduce costs where possible, while maintaining an excellent level of service for your residents.

You can find out more about our business, Mila Maintenance, in the final section of this eBook. In the meantime, if you have any questions while reading this guide, please give us a call on 0808 100 8881.

THE MILA MAINTENANCE APPROACH



At Mila Maintenance we aim to break the mould of the traditional approach to window and door maintenance by encouraging a proactive cycle of maintenance for your assets.

For you, this gives better value for money and greater efficiency than a reactive or responsive repairs strategy.

It also leads to greater resident satisfaction and an increase in the social well-being of your community.

In this section we outline our alternative approach to long-term window and door maintenance. The long-term approach is always to sustain the existing windows and doors, by regular maintenance, to ensure they last and are problem-free.

This approach has been proven to maintain units in near-perfect condition, even in housing stocks where the windows and doors have been depreciated as a part of the life-cycle of the building.

There are several principles that underpin our approach:

- Regular maintenance increases asset value by extending the lifecycle of windows and doors. This reduces asset depreciation rates.
- A regularly maintained stock profile demonstrates competence and makes it easier to secure development funds from lenders.

- Windows and doors are a different proposition to other household assets and should therefore be treated separately to general facilities management.
- It is more cost-effective for you, and less disruptive to your residents, to refurbish and renew existing doors and windows whenever possible, rather than replacing them. This also reduces waste and delivers an environmental benefit.

Maintenance should not only be reactive, i.e. maintenance in response to a reported fault, but should be carried out at regular intervals throughout the lifecycle of your assets.

Regular Planned Maintenance is essential if you are looking to get the full cost-benefit from your assets over time.

WHY YOU SHOULD SEPARATE WINDOWS & DOORS FROM GENERAL MAINTENANCE

It is tempting to assign all of your maintenance to a general or in-house contractor, including windows and doors. On the surface, it makes sense to only deal with one supplier, as this keeps it simple.

We know from experience that there are over 300 specifications of window and door hardware in the UK social housing market, borne out of a relentless sales drive over many years by the companies who specialised in their production.

Unfortunately, most of those specifications are now redundant and replacement parts are very much obsolete. That is where the skills of a specialist contractor come to the fore. We know when we visit a resident's home we will be able to identify the parts that were fitted originally, and that we will be able to source and procure suitable 'fit for purpose' replacements.

We also know that we will be able to reinstall them correctly and offer a new guarantee back to the client that extends the life of their asset, and that there is a controlled record keeping system to update the specification of the hardware which has been replaced.

SPECIALIST ENGINEERS

Our engineers are window and door specialists, we have expert knowledge of the hardware and are more likely to make a correct diagnosis first time.

Modern windows and doors are complex units with a number of parts that can go wrong, it is easy therefore for a non-specialist to make an error in diagnosis, resulting in unnecessary expenses for the wrong parts, repeat visits to a resident's home, and ultimately parts fitted to windows which will not work over the longer term.

Our engineers keep a wide stock of common parts in their vans. Combined with their accurate diagnostic ability and technical expertise, this results in a high first-time fix rate which is more cost effective for you, and more acceptable to residents.



HOW TO PLAN WINDOW & DOOR MAINTENANCE

If regular window and door maintenance is the most cost-effective option, is there a formula for how maintenance should be planned?

How Often? The short answer is 'as often as necessary', but the precise schedule will depend on the lifecycle of your assets. For instance, new windows will not need to be expected and maintained as regularly as older windows. There is also seasonal variation. Many common faults occur over the winter as a result of damp, or at the height of summer due to expansion and contraction due to heat. Some maintenance schedules may therefore include routine checks at the beginning and at the end of winter.

By Whom? Maintenance and checks should be carried out by a qualified windows and doors engineer, such as the team employed by Mila Maintenance.

What type of work? The type of work will vary depending on what is necessary. However, as part of regular maintenance we create a Survey To Maintain Report that highlights window and door issues and diagnoses the solutions that can be applied to solve them.

THE BENEFITS OF PLANNED MAINTENANCE

As we have explained in the previous section, our approach at Mila Maintenance is to separate out windows and doors from general maintenance and focus on a regular schedule of planned maintenance. The result is a quantifiable reduction in the lifetime maintenance cost of windows and doors per unit, leading to reduced repair budgets for social housing providers.

In social housing asset management there are three main markers of success: benefit to residents, the value of assets and the impact on the development and growth of your organisation.

By all three criteria, planned maintenance for windows and doors is proven to be the most cost-effective repair and servicing model. Here's how:

FOR RESIDENTS:

How happy your residents are is measured by customer satisfaction surveys. Residents are rightly concerned about the condition of their windows and doors, for the reasons we have mentioned in previous sections. When regular, planned maintenance is implemented, our clients report figures in the high 90's in terms of customer satisfaction figures.

To put this in context, according to the House mark VFM Repairs Report, the North of England Housing Association's resident satisfaction level is around 83%, which is more than 10% less than Mila Maintenance's recent customer's resident satisfaction responses.

FOR ASSET VALUE

Depreciation over time is the biggest factor when assessing asset value. For our customers, a planned maintenance service regime has been shown to drastically reduce depreciation rates, to the point where there is almost no loss of asset value over the lifetime of the installed products.

Not only does planned maintenance offset many common issues and extend the lifetime of an asset, but it also gives an in-depth knowledge of your stock condition. This is powerful information to have, and allows you to tie in your asset management strategy with the growth goals of your business.

FOR FINANCIAL PLANNING

For Housing Associations and Local Authorities, a portfolio of well-maintained assets demonstrates competent management and a commitment to best value. It therefore gives an organisation a better chance of successfully securing business loans and development grants, thus contributing to the growth of your organisation.

A CHANGE IN CULTURE

Over the past few years there has been a definitive shift from the passive to the proactive approach in asset management. The fundamental principle of asset management is to intervene at strategic points in an asset's normal life with optimised repair and maintenance activities, in order to maintain the performance of an asset and extend its life.

Proactive asset management therefore provides a holistic view of what your organisation owns (or leases), where it is, what state it is in, and when it will next be maintained or replaced. The benefits of adopting this approach will be felt throughout your organisation.

FIND OUT MORE

Having read this eBook, you may now be interested in finding out more about the Mila Maintenance approach to preventative window and door maintenance, and the services we can provide for your organisation. While there are a number of other providers on the market, we believe our unique service philosophy, highly qualified team and competitive prices give us the edge on our competitors and make us ideal maintenance partners.

We would therefore like to conclude by providing a bit of background information about our company, why we feel we are qualified to issue a guide such as this, and what you can do if you want to take this further.

ABOUT MILA MAINTENANCE

At Mila Maintenance we are a team of highly qualified door and window maintenance engineers specialising in social housing. We have been in business for nearly 30 years and in this time have carried out over 1.1 million repairs.

Our experience of social housing makes us the ideal maintenance partner for housing associations, Local Authorities and other Social Landlords. We have a passionate commitment to the well-being of our clients and their residents, placing the welfare of residents at the forefront of everything we do. We carry out our repairs, refurbishments and replacements to the highest possible quality, and with a minimum of disruption.

We are also committed to the industry we work in. Over the years we have developed a reputation for professionalism and value that has made us an authority in the industry. We use this position to advocate for change, best practices and innovative service throughout the industry, and regularly comment on issues affecting the industry.

Technology in the window and door industry is constantly changing. We place ourselves at the forefront of this trend by adapting new technologies to the needs of social housing. An example of this is our innovative window regeneration service for High Rise residences, which creates a more secure and user-friendly window for apartment residents.

You can read our latest news and blog posts by visiting our website here:
www.milamaintenance.co.uk/in-the-press

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

We aim to build up relationships of trust and respect with our clients and are transparent about our performance. We like our results to speak for themselves, and so publish our performance based on four important KPIs on our website. You can view them here:
<http://www.milamaintenance.co.uk/kpis/>

At the time of writing, this is how we measured up:

- 1,122,028 repairs
- 98.19% of jobs completed on time
- 98.31% of jobs fixed first time
- 96.4% customer satisfaction rate

We believe that a company is only as good as its customers believe it to be, so don't take our word for this. Click on the link below to view feedback and testimonials from some of our clients and their residents. All ratings on this page are provided by The Independent Ratings Company.

www.milamaintenance.co.uk/resident-client-feedback



CONTACT US

To speak with one of our service advisers, please contact us by any of the following means:

Visit our website: www.milamaintenance.co.uk

Request a quote: sales@milamaintenance.co.uk Make an enquiry or request a call back:
www.milamaintenance.co.uk/contact-us

Chat to an advisor: 0808 100 8881

Follow us on Twitter: @milamaintenance

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