



Repairs and Rechargeable Repairs Policy

01 December 2018

Title	Repairs and Rechargeable Repairs Policy
Users of Policy	Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Borough Homes tenants and staff.
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Scheme of Delegation	
Formation of Policy	Portfolio Holder(s) with delegated responsibility for the Financial Management of the Housing Revenue Account
Amendments	Portfolio Holder(s) with delegated responsibility for the Financial Management of the Housing Revenue Account
Monitoring	Client Services Manager
Implementation	Client Services Manager
Approval of requests	Client Services Manager delegated to Director of Property Services, Head of Operations, Head of Housing Management and Head of Asset Management, Colchester Borough Homes.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As a social landlord, Colchester Borough Council (CBC) recognises that meeting residents' expectations of a high standard of service delivery is essential. CBC and its appointed housing management organisation Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) acknowledge that the provision of a value for money repairs service that is both responsive and of the highest technical competence is one of its core priorities. CBC/CBH has prepared this policy after consultation and as a result of a fundamental review of the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy. This policy should be considered in conjunction with the corresponding CBC/CBH Repairs and Maintenance procedures, the Repairs Guide and other policies referred to within this document.

1.1 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Repair - The process of rectifying a component or installation in a Colchester Borough Council/ Homes owned and/or managed property for which it is responsible, when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair.

Maintenance - The upkeep of components or installations in a Colchester Borough Council/Homes owned and/or managed property, for which it is responsible.

Resident - A tenant of a Colchester Borough Council property, including intermediate rent customers. This policy includes *some* services and obligations to leaseholders and shared owners. Where applicable, it is clearly stipulated. This policy does not apply to private

market rent customers.

2.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Aims

- To effectively manage the repairs and maintenance obligations of CBC/CBH, for its residents
- To comply with all relevant government legislative requirements
- To ensure that all residents live in a safe and habitable environment at all times

Objectives

- To run an effective and reliable responsive repairs service
- To continuously improve performance
- To give the highest levels of residents satisfaction
- To provide a service that gives value for money
- To engage openly and responsively with residents about repairs to their home
- To provide technical expertise via CBC/CBHs internal staff and contractors
- To maintain up-to-date information about CBC residents, homes and CBH

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

CBC/CBH is committed to providing a high quality service and all staff and suppliers are trained to work towards this aim. This policy recognises that a successful Repairs and Maintenance Service considers its residents, its resources, its statutory obligations and external affecting factors. As a landlord, CBC have a responsibility to protect the value of its housing stock and to ensure that the service standards and obligations made to its residents, in respect of their homes, are honored. CBC/CBH expect to work together with residents to ensure the high quality of its homes, through the meeting of mutual responsibilities.

4.0 LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Sections 2, 3 and 4
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- HCA – The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012
- 2006 Decent Homes Standard

5.0 STANDARDS

5.1 Service Standards

- Provide a 24hr, 7 day a week service to report emergency repairs
- To attend and complete repairs works to published timescales
- Offer a choice of appointment times

- Carry out a gas safety check where required each year
- Aim to inspect at least 5% of all repairs and any repair subject to a complaint
- Aim to inspect 5% of communal repairs.

5.2 Responsibilities

Tenant responsibilities

Tenants are responsible for all internal decoration and a range of minor repairs together with any damage caused by themselves or their visitors as set out in the Repairs guide

Vulnerable tenants

CBC/ CBH recognises that management discretion is required in the operations of its Policies. If a Tenant is deemed vulnerable, service variations may be authorised. This will only be given if the reported fault has a negative effect on the reported condition. We may also offer extra assistance, such as accompanied visits or arranging an interpreter, or other special arrangements that will meet identified needs and be appropriate for the repair.

Some examples of vulnerable tenants include:

- Disabled people who use a wheelchair or walking frame
- Tenants with an advanced terminal illness
- Tenants who use medical equipment such as ventilators or kidney dialysis machines
- Tenants with mental health problems or learning difficulties
- Tenants whose first language is not English.
- Tenants who are aged 70 plus and not in sheltered accommodation

Accidental damage

Any accidental damage caused by repair work carried out in a Tenants home may be covered by the Tenants home insurance policy. If damage was caused by our staff being negligent, Tenants can apply for compensation to recover their losses by submitting a claim to our Risk Management Section.

Right-to-buy

If a Tenant applies to buy their property repair rights reduce accordingly. They will still have a right to limited repairs until the purchase is completed, or the application withdrawn. Repairs will be restricted to those ensuring that the structure and exterior of the property are safe and secure as well as all installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity and sanitation.

6.0 HEATING AND HOT WATER: PROVISION & SERVICING

CBC/CBH will ensure necessary arrangements are in place to provide:

A reactive repairs service, which includes a 24 hour emergency response for some repairs, in line with our Repairs and Maintenance responsibilities

The annual gas safety inspection programme for individual, communal and commercial gas boilers and appliances for which it is responsible

CBC is committed to meeting its legislative requirements ensuring all of its homes with a gas supply have a valid Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR). CBH will ensure that the Council

discharges their duties and will service all gas appliances and boilers for all of its (The Council's) homes within 12 months of the previous service date. CBC/CBH will seek to ensure that annual safety checks and servicing is undertaken in domestic and commercial properties in accordance with their tenancy agreement or lease, and prior to a new tenancy. Failure to allow access for servicing will result in CBC/CBH following formal procedures to gain access. However, CBC/CBH are not responsible for the gas safety and servicing for leaseholder and shared owner properties, it will work to assist and enable owners to comply with their obligations, where possible.

Failing Safety Checks

CBC/CBH will upgrade boilers and remove any gas fires that fail their annual inspection. Any faulty gas appliance owned by the resident that is discovered to be connected to the system will have a 'defective appliance' label attached and will be disconnected. It is the resident's responsibility to maintain, or remove, their own defective appliances, once advised.

Communal Systems

Where CBC/CBH has the responsibility of the maintenance or servicing of a communal system, it will always make sure it does so in line with published repairs and maintenance service standards. Where third parties such as managing agents have an interest, own or control the systems, CBC/CBH will endeavor to communicate and work closely with them to ensure the service received by residents is satisfactory.

7.0 AIDS & ADAPTATIONS

CBC/CBH commits to facilitating and supporting independent living, by carrying out alterations to meet the special needs of individuals, to enhance their quality of life and where appropriate enable them to remain in their current home.

CBC assists eligible residents to secure aids and adaptations to their homes, by directly funding aids and adaptations work in its own housing stock, and undertaking the work where possible.

Aids are additional equipment installed to assist the usability of and mobility around a resident's home. An adaptation is an alteration to an existing installation in a resident's home that assists the usability of and mobility around a resident's home.

CBH will service and maintain all adaptations and maintain all aids, where supplied by the Council. CBH will also replace these at the end of their economic life, provided they are still demonstrably required.

Please see the [CBC/CBH Aids and Adaptations Policy](#) for more information on how the service is provided.

8.0 PLANNED AND PROGRAMMED MAINTENANCE

Planned maintenance is work carried out on a planned basis to maintain the general condition of property and fittings. This includes cyclical maintenance of the exterior of the building, communal areas, of Decent Homes key building components and the periodic servicing of certain equipment and installation. All planned maintenance work will be carried out in accordance with regulatory standards, relevant legislation, manufacturer's instructions or good trade practice. Full details of this service will be outlined in the [CBC/CBH Asset Management Strategy](#).

Improvements

CBC have a responsibility to repair and maintain and therefore are not obliged to carry out any improvements to their properties, outside of those which are part of planned programmes of work. This includes requests for secondary glazing or sound insulation. Any improvements that CBC/CBH make to individual properties outside of planned works will be done so on an individual case basis. Should residents wish to make improvements to their home at their own cost and management, they must do so in line with the process outlined in the Tenants Right to Improve clauses below(14.0) or in line with their lease or tenancy agreement.

EMPTY PROPERTIES

The Council maintains and lets properties to certain minimum standards of condition, the lettings standard is shown in full in the CBC/CBH Asset Management Strategy

9.0 RESPONSIVE DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

For responsive repairs, our aim is to arrange an appointment during first contact with the resident and complete the repair in one visit. During normal working hours (8:30am to 5:00pm) CBC/CBH operate a Customer Contact Centre, through which all repair requests must be made. We will aim to ensure that all urgent and routine repairs (with the exception of specialist work requiring contact with a third party) will be made by appointment with the resident. Residents may report repairs by any of the following means:

- By telephone on 282514
- Via the CBC/CBH website
- In person at a local CBC/CBH office
- In writing

Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

Provisions for emergency repairs outside of normal working hours can be accessed by the standard responsive repairs telephone number. Calls will be redirected automatically through to CBC/CBH's out of hours service at 5:00pm. Only those repairs categorised as emergencies are dealt with out of office hours. If the reported repair is deemed not to be an emergency, then the resident will be asked to call back during working hours to make an appointment.

9.1 Appointment Times

CBC/CBH offer weekday appointments for the completion of repairs and pre and post inspections. The following options will be given:

Morning - 8am to 1pm

Afternoon - 12pm to 4pm

TYPES OF REPAIRS

9.2 Priority Categories

Timescales for the commencement and completion of works will be arranged within CBC/CBH's approved priority categories listed below. Extra consideration will be given to those residents who are vulnerable, (see page 4).

Emergency Repairs – Attend within 4 hours (2 hours for heating and hot water breakdowns) and make safe and complete within 24 hours, if possible. Any follow up work to be raised as a new job and placed within its appropriate category.

Urgent Repairs - Attend within 3 working days, complete within 5 working days. Routine Repairs - Attend within 5 working days, complete within 20 working days.

Resident requests for appointments beyond these timescales will be accommodated with the exception of emergency repairs.

9.3 Batched Repairs

These will be completed within 4 months of issue to our partners, with the exception of those repairs which are larger, or more complex in nature, that can be scheduled as part of a programme of works. This will reduce administrative and overhead costs for both Colchester Borough Council/Homes and our contractors and adhere to economies of scale. These repairs include:

Batch repairs:

Path renewals

Rebuilding of brick walls

Fence and boundary maintenance

Repairs works requiring consultation with Leaseholders under section 20 of the Landlord and tenant Act 1985 (as amended by the Leasehold Reform Act 2002)

Examples of works to be scheduled as part of a programme:

Roof replacement

Window and door replacement

Kitchen replacement

Bathroom replacement

9.4 Pre-Inspection

Some jobs will require a pre-inspection before the repair appointment can be arranged, to establish the extent of the works. These will be where the scope of the job is not known, or if the diagnosis given by the resident is not detailed enough. Such inspections may be carried out by a surveyor, or a nominated contractor representative. Staff will always advise where this is to be the case. Repairs will then be issued in the appropriate timescales, or programmed into planned or batched works.

9.5 No Access

Where requested, residents must allow for access to repairs. Where access cannot be gained for a standard appointment, CBH will operate an Access procedure

In accordance with the law, CBH shall implement an 'Access Procedure' for situations where we need to carry out urgent work in a property. If a Tenant refuses to comply with a reasonable request for access we will enter the property.

In these cases, we will charge an administration fee to cover our expenses and the associated costs unless the Resident can evidence compelling reasons not to do so. Unaffordability does not constitute a reasonable defense.

9.6 When We Call

Repairs will only be carried out where a responsible adult is present to allow us access. If no responsible adult is present, we will reschedule one further appointment. If there is no responsible adult to allow entry a second time, we will cancel the repair request, unless doing so would result in a health and safety risk. If a repair presents a health and safety risk, and there is no one at the property during the appointment, we may have no option but to force access to the property. This is detailed above

Customer Standards for Repairs

Residents	CBC/CBH
To use and inhabit CBC/CBH homes (internal and communal) and installations	To ensure that CBC/CBH approved operatives work in a clean and tidy manner
To allow access for repair works which CBC/CBH resident homes are responsible	To show ID when attending
To maintain areas of the home for which they are responsible – in accordance with the conditions of the tenancy	To only enter a resident's home where a responsible adult is present, unless there is evidence of a clear risk to any
To ensure that a responsible adult is present for on the work any repair appointment	To only carry out work that is stated specification
To clear repair work area of personal items or valuables prior to a scheduled appointment	To inform residents of what work is to be carried out in their home prior to the work commencing (except in emergencies)
To not obstruct or deny works to their home or is the communal areas	To ensure that operatives work in a way that healthy and safe; protecting themselves and the environment in which they are working
To be responsible for the repair or replacement of items in a property damaged due to neglect, carelessness or deliberate action on the part of a scheduled visit and advise if further visits are the resident household or visitors. To pay any charges for such repairs that are undertaken by CBC/CBH (see Chargeable Repairs 9.8)	To give advice and information on what their internal home has been done at the end of a scheduled visit and advise if further visits are the resident household or visitors. To pay any required

9.7 Customer Satisfaction and Complaints

We want to make sure that we deliver a high quality service every time a repair is reported. However, mistakes do happen and we are equally committed to resolving complaints and problems when we receive them.

We will also conduct customer satisfaction surveys for all non-emergency repairs, the results of the surveys are used to monitor our performance and to review our service.

Our Feedback Policy helps us listen to and respond to the views of people using our services. We provide all tenants with a copy of our complaints procedure at the start of their tenancy.

9.8 Chargeable Repairs

Where wilful damage or neglect of the Council's property by a tenant, their family, or a visitor, results in the Council having to replace or repair items, the tenant will be charged the full cost of the repair. This sum will need to be paid in full before any repairs are undertaken, unless there are exceptional circumstances (affordability is not a reasonable defence against charges for wilful damage). CBH will offer other limited services to tenants on a rechargeable basis, such as gaining entry upon loss of keys.

9.9 Zero Tolerance

CBC/CBH have zero tolerance towards the abuse of any staff or contractors by residents. All customers of CBC/CBH are expected to treat all staff with respect and dignity. This means that they must refrain from behaving in a way that is aggressive, threatening, abusive, or insulting. Nor must they engage in any behaviour, intentional or otherwise, that constitutes

harassment or discrimination. CBC/CBH will take reasonable measures to protect staff from such behaviour where appropriate.

10.0 THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

In accordance with Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994, if a qualifying repair cannot be completed within an agreed timescale, the resident has the right to request our management team to instruct a second contractor to complete the work. Where the second attempt, or second contractor, also fails to complete the work within the agreed time, CBC/CBH will pay compensation to the resident. This statutory requirement applies to tenants with a secured tenancy.

10.1 The Right to Repair does not apply in the following circumstances:

- The resident has told CBC/CBH that they no longer want the qualifying repair carried out
- Where the resident fails to provide details for the contractor to gain access to their home
- Access for an inspection or for the repair to be carried out has not been provided
- Where the contractor needs to order special parts to complete the repair (time scales only)
- Where severe weather conditions prevent the contractor from completing the repair
- Leaseholder properties

10.2 Qualifying Repairs

Repairs that qualify for the terms noted above are those to a resident's home, which do not cost more than £250 and which, if not carried out within a specified period are likely to jeopardise the health, safety, or security of the resident. These are:

	Defect prescribed period (in working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31 October and 1 May	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30 April and 1 November	3
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (where only one in dwelling)	1
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling house)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or hand rail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair treads	3
Door entry-phone not working	7

11.0 REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Some repairs are the responsibility of the tenant and not CBC/CBH; such repairs are defined within the [CBC/CBH Tenant Handbook](#), as well as the respective tenancy agreement or lease. The resident is responsible for the maintenance, repair or replacement of the categories set out in their tenancy agreement. The tenant will also be responsible for the repair, or replacement, of any damaged items in a property. The repair responsibilities and obligations for Leaseholders or Shared Owners are as outlined in their lease.

12.0 FIXED FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS

It is not advisable for residents to lay fixed floor coverings (tiles, hard wood or laminate) in their homes. This is due to the difficulty in removing them to carry out essential works such as under floor pipe work, without damaging the fixed covering. CBC/CBH do not advocate the installation of fixed floor coverings.

13.0 TV AERIALS & SATELLITES

CBC/CBH makes provisions for communal aerial systems on blocks of flats. Many blocks also have communal arrangements for satellite systems. Any resident seeking to install further satellite dishes on the external wall of their flat or street property must contact their local authority Planning Department and obtain written permission.. Some CBC/CBH properties are listed buildings, where this is the case, or the resident wishing to erect an installation is not sure of the listed status, they must contact the authority Planning Department and may need to apply for additional listed building consent.

Where CBC/CBH identifies an unauthorised satellite dish on one of its properties we will contact the resident, who will have to provide a copy of their obtained written permission within 28 days. If this has not been provided then CBC/CBH reserves the right to remove the unauthorised satellite dish.

Where residents have undertaken their own installation of a TV/Radio reception installation and damage has been caused to the fabric of the building due to the quality of installation work, CBC/CBH may rectify this damage and recharge the costs to the resident.

14.0 COMMUNAL AREA REPAIRS

CBC/CBH will manage repairs to shared communal areas to the same timescale and standard as internal repairs. Reports of these repairs will generally be identified during monthly estate inspections by CBC/CBH staff. However, some repairs may become apparent between inspections. For these, we rely on residents of the block to report these directly to CBC/CBH.

Occasionally repairs to such installations may be temporarily remedied and the bulk of the work may be deferred in to a planned programme for cost efficiency. Affected residents will be notified if this is to be the case. For further information please see the [CBC/CBH Asset Management Strategy](#).

Where third parties such as managing agents have responsibility for these repairs, CBC/CBH will endeavor to communicate and work closely with them to ensure the service received by residents is satisfactory.

Tenants Right to Improve

Tenants on secure and flexible tenancies can carry out improvements to their home, but only secure tenants may be compensated for any improvements made.

A statutory 'Right to Compensation' came into effect on 1st April 1994 and the 'Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994' applies to improvements carried out by secure tenants after this date.

All tenants must contact Colchester Borough Homes first to ask for permission to carry out alterations before any works take place. Failure to obtain Colchester Borough Homes or, where appropriate, the Council's permission to carry out works may result in tenants paying for the cost to rectify works, or asked to return the property to its original condition.

Some improvements may also need planning permission or building regulations approval from the Council and the tenant is responsible for obtaining these. Any permission given by the Housing Officer for planned works is not planning or building regulations permission and this may still need to be sought.

Any value that is added to the property as a result of major improvements will be excluded from the price paid if tenants exercise the Right to Buy and buy their home.

If tenants go ahead with works after permission has been refused, they will be breaking the conditions of their Tenancy Agreement which may result in court action.

Secure Tenant's Right to Compensation for Improvements

Tenants with secure (lifetime) tenancies may be able to claim compensation for certain improvements that have been made when the tenancy ends. The right to compensation for improvements applies to improvements if they were started on or after 1 April 1994.

The compensation is calculated to take into account wear, tear and depreciation. Tenants can claim compensation for the cost of materials (but not appliances such as cookers or fridges) and labour costs (but not their own labour). Internal decoration (such as painting or wallpapering) does not qualify for compensation. Compensation cannot be claimed for professional fees (such as architects), or the cost of any relevant planning permission or consent under Building Regulations.

All claims must be made not more than 28 days before or 14 days after a tenancy

15.0 DEFECT PERIOD REPAIRS

For newly built buildings, the repairs and maintenance are managed through the contractors who constructed the building for the first year from the building completion. The terms and conditions of these will be outlined within each building contract. This is known as the defect rectification period. During this time residents should report their repairs via the Customer Contact Centre in the usual way. CBC/CBH will aim to ensure that these repairs are carried out in the appropriate timescales.

Latent defects

These are faults to the property that could not have reasonably have been discovered through inspection before sale or sign up e.g. faults in hidden fabric or cavities of building structure. In such cases CBC/CBH does not take automatic responsibility for rectifying or

improving the defect. These will be managed on a case by case basis.

16.0 ACHIEVING VALUE FOR MONEY

Operating as an efficient and effective business and demonstrating value for money to its customers, with a high level of service, are key strategic objectives for CBC/CBH. CBC/CBH has a range of mechanisms in place to demonstrate and improve this, including:

1. Benchmarking cost and performance data such as average costs per property
2. Market testing of the repairs service against other social and external housing providers
3. Undertaking reviews on processes, services and systems
4. Analysing emergency jobs issued to determine long term remedial or planned works
5. Robust tendering process
6. Statutory consultation process with leaseholders

17.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 and the enhanced requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations – 2018.

Officers will ensure that they comply with **CBC/CBH Data Protection Policy** and that they only involve other agencies and share information with the consent of the resident concerned, unless:

- CBC/CBH is required to by law
- The information is necessary for the protection of children

18.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

CBC/CBH recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own **Equality and Diversity Policy**, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

It has a clear understanding of its resident community, with clear regularly updated service user profiles. The Performance Improvement & Policy Team is responsible for recording, analysing and monitoring information on ethnicity, vulnerability and disability.

19.0 RESIDENT PARTICIPATION & FEEDBACK

Resident involvement plays a key role in developing the future direction of the repairs and maintenance service. CBC/CBH works with a recognised Maintenance Forum and a Leasehold Forum of residents to obtain feedback on the service. Other ad hoc forms of resident consultation are employed as and when required.

20.0 MONITORING & EVALUATION

CBC/CBH will evaluate and measure its performance and benchmark itself against other Social Housing Providers through the use of Performance Indicators.

21.0 HEALTH, SAFETY & THE ENVIRONMENT

Officers will follow CBC/CBH's **Health and Safety Policy** and procedures at all times. CBC/CBH will work closely with the requirement outlined in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System when diagnosing the condition of its homes and communal areas. CBC/CBH staff and contractors when on site will use appropriate personal protective equipment, when necessary. In addition, environmental checks shall be undertaken covering waste and carbon management. As a commitment to health, safety and the environment, CBC/CBH have a number of related policies to assist in the management of its homes and communal areas, such as the **Asbestos Management Policy**.

Associated Policies and procedures

Aids and Adaptations Policy
Asset Management Strategy
Data Protection Policy
Equality & Diversity Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Asbestos Management Policy
Repairs Guide
Mobility Scooter Policy
Boundary Definition Policy
Tenants Alteration Policy
Electrical Testing Policy

Repairs Policy

Appendix 1 – Our Responsibilities

As your landlord, CBC are responsible for:

- All structural work to the building fabric such as brickwork, slates, chimneys and roofs
- Boilers and hot water tanks
- Fixed heating equipment such as fires, radiators, storage heaters and panel heaters
- Electrical fittings such as existing sockets, light switches and electric storage radiators
- All water systems such as pipes and tap washers
- Central heating systems
- All bathroom fittings including toilets, basins, baths and shower appliances fitted by us
- Repairs to cooker appliances supplied by the Council
- Kitchen and bathroom fixtures (toilets, baths, basins, sinks, gas and water pipes)
- Repairs to plaster, skirtings and doors
- Ropes, fasteners, lifts and safety catches on windows
- Various small items such as letterboxes, draught excluders and spy holes if fitted by us
- Stair lighting and maintenance in communal areas
- Carrying out annual central heating servicing and other safety checks, including periodic inspection/testing
- Carrying out yearly smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and detectors checks
- Windows and doors
- External painter work
- Outside lighting which was installed by us
- Paths that are laid by us to reach your front door or that follow your house to the back door if you have one
- Fences supplied by us
- Clothes poles and whirly gigs supplied by us
- Major pest infestations where public health concerns exist, for example major rodent or significant flea infestations.

Some repairs follow different procedures from others. These are explained in the Types of Repair section, beginning on page 7.

Some repairs are classified as ‘qualifying repairs’ and must be carried out within a given time. These are detailed in the Right to Repair section, beginning on page 9.

Your responsibilities

As a tenant, you are responsible for the following repairs:

- All internal decoration, including tiles
- All paving not included in our responsibilities, as mentioned above in Appendix 1
- Attempting to clear plumbing blockages in the first instance

- Bleeding air from radiators, where appropriate
- Blocked waste-traps caused by neglect
- Cleaning of communal stairs and passageways as per local arrangements
- Doorbells that were not installed by us
- Fitting additional locks
- Maintaining fittings or fixtures that you have installed with our consent
- Lock changes due to loss or theft of keys
- Maintenance of fences, gates, driveways and any garden structure including, patio, decking or other decorative surfaces that you have erected/installed with our permission or taken responsibility for at the start of your tenancy
- Regular testing of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and replacing their batteries where required
- Repairing minor cracks and holes in walls and ceilings that can be reasonably filled before decoration
- Replacing or repairing small fixtures and fittings such as coat hooks, stoppers and chains for sinks
- Resetting tripped switches, replacing fuses, fluorescent tubes and light bulbs (unless it is communal stair lighting)
- Television aerials, satellite dishes, internet communication equipment and reception equipment
- Uplifting and re-laying of laminate floors or floor coverings for access required by our tradesperson/s
- Uplifting broken glass (unless caused by vandalism, which has been reported to the police).

If you are in any doubt about how you can carry out any of the tasks mentioned above, please contact us.

Repairs Policy

Appendix 2 – Service Standards

When you report a repair to us:

- We will answer the phone, on average, within twenty five seconds
- We will be polite and helpful on the phone and in your home
- We will take details of your repair request, give you a job number and agree with you an appointment date on which the work will be done or set a target date for either a surveyor or if necessary a partner organization to contact you to make an appointment to inspect or schedule a repair.
- We will offer you convenient appointment times for day-to-day repairs
- We will make every effort to keep all appointments. If there is any delay, we will let you know in advance
- There may be occasions when a surveyor has to call in the first instance. Where this happens you will be given a target date by which time a surveyor should have contacted you to make an appointment to allow an inspection to take place before we begin any work.

Code of Conduct for tradespersons

Our tradespersons and external contractors will:

- Be tidily dressed and wear any designated uniform
- Introduce themselves to you and show proof of identity
- Explain the nature and purpose of the job
- Be polite and courteous
- Respond to your complaints
- Treat your details in confidence
- Behave properly and professionally at all times
- Not smoke, work under the influence of alcohol, use bad language, play radios or cassette players or use your facilities without permission
- Minimise disruption and mess to your home
- Take care of your property and possessions and protect these from dust, paint etc.
- Keep your home secure at all times
- Keep safe all materials and equipment used on site to avoid danger to you and visitors
- Reconnect and test services such as water, gas and electricity at the end of each working day
- Clear any rubbish from inside of tenanted properties at the end of each working day
- Remove any rubbish from the garden of void houses and other areas outside the property
- Comply with health and safety legislation and relevant codes of practice
- Treat you equally, regardless of your ethnic background, disabilities, religious beliefs, age or sexual orientation.