



Introduction

This policy explains how our repairs service works, and sets out our responsibility to keep our customers' homes in good repair.

The policy also describes how we will provide our customers (where we have repair obligations) with a high-quality customer experience and tailor our support to their individual needs. We want customers to feel safe, listened to, and for them to live in good quality homes.

What do we mean by responsive repair?

A responsive repair is day-to-day maintenance work following a request from a customer and can include internal works, external works, or repairs to communal areas. This work maintains our homes to a good standard, until the next set of planned investment works.

So, for example, it might be a repair to a kitchen drawer (responsive) rather than the replacement of a whole kitchen (planned).

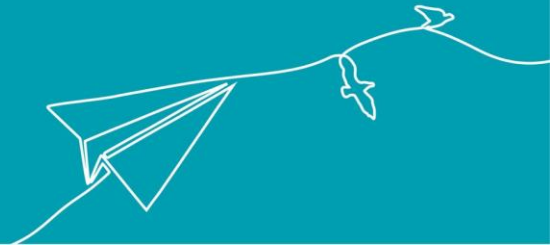
We have responsibility for the majority of repairs we undertake in our rented homes, but our customers also have a responsibility to look after our properties. Tenancy agreements and leases explain to customers who is responsible for which parts of home maintenance. Some customers may have an enhanced service based on their needs, this support will be explained in their agreement and will include how to contact us.

Early identification and reporting of repairs, supports the longevity of our properties and reduces the impact on customers. It is a cost effective way to prevent the impact of building defects.

We will always look to complete a repair rather than a full replacement as these works will usually be included in future planned investment programmes.

Our aims are

- to achieve high standards of customer experience;
- to ensure all customers get a service which is suitable for their needs;



- to make sure all our homes are kept to a high standard and that our customers live in safety, comfort and warmth;
- to be open with customers, and listen to them through customer feedback and involvement;
- to meet the standards set out in our tenancy agreements and leases;
- to provide value for money in the repairs service and for service charges

What is involved?

This policy includes responsive repairs for all our owned or managed homes. The service is delivered using a combination of Great Places colleagues and external contracts for:

- general needs homes;
- supported or specialist housing;
- care and extra care;
- shared ownership (see below);
- leaseholders (as written in the lease);
- emergency accommodation.

For shared ownership and leasehold properties, where the lease says that we have responsibility for the fabric of the building or communal areas, we will work with homeowners to address any repairs, with the costs being met through the service charge for the building.

For leaseholders and shared owners, service provision and response times may vary, depending on the individual terms of their ownership agreement. Similarly, new homes less than 12 months old may have different contracts affecting repair response times.

In line with the guidelines set by the Regulator of Social Housing:

- we will complete repairs and improvements in a way that is safe;
- we will provide value for money;
- we aim to get it right first time;
- we will plan works for the home and communal areas, so that we can be open with our customers;



- we will make our service easy to use and provide a number of different ways to report a repair, make a complaint or get involved;
- our annual report will include information about how we are doing.

Reporting a repair

There are lots of ways customers can report a repair:

- Using our website “Live Chat” during working hours (Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm);
- online via the Customer Portal;
- by email to customerhub@greatplaces.org.uk
- [Facebook Messenger](#) during working hours Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm;
- phone 0300 123 1966 during working hours Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm;
- letter to Great Places Housing Group, 2a Derwent Avenue, Manchester, M21 7QP;
- telling us in person when we visit a home or neighbourhood.

Repairs commitment

We will:

- confirm an appointment with the customer, for a time that is convenient to them and meets their individual needs;
- aim to complete the repair in one visit, or explain why we haven't and what will happen next;
- prioritise urgency based on both the customers' needs and the risk to the property and agree this with the customer;
- if it's an emergency, we will visit to make things safe within 24 hours;
- where possible, text customers to let them know when we are on our way to the repair;
- let customers know once we have completed the repair and allow them to confirm that it is completed to a good standard;
- communicate clearly with customers from reporting to completion.

Emergency repairs, routine repairs and major repairs

We monitor our repairs service performance in three areas:



- Emergency repairs
- Routine repairs and
- Major repairs

Emergency repairs include

- Total loss of water or electricity;
- unsafe electrical fittings but not customers own fittings;
- blocked main sewer drain that is backing up into the property;
- unusable toilet facilities, if there is only one facility in the property or the available toilet is inaccessible;
- insecure doors and windows to the home;
- heating and/or hot water loss for elderly or vulnerable tenants;
- out of service lifts;
- warden alarm or call system not working;
- total loss of gas supply (gas leaks will be dealt with through the gas emergency line and the gas emergency process will be used);
- failure of door entry system for elderly or vulnerable tenants needing daily assistance.

These are examples and not a list of every case.

We will aim to carry out works to make emergencies safe within 24 hours of the customer contact.

Sometimes other repairs and additional appointments may be needed to complete the job. If this is the case we will arrange this with the customer as soon as possible, at a time to suit them. In exceptional circumstances, such as during bad weather, we may need to lengthen the time for emergency repairs. We will tell customers if this is the case.

Routine repairs

The majority of other repairs are classed as routine and will be attended within **20 working days**.

Routine repairs include;

- general joinery repairs internally and externally;



- minor plumbing repairs e.g. dripping taps, leaks to sinks or baths and faulty pipework;
- repairs to kitchen fittings e.g. cupboard doors, drawers, worktops and handles;
- repairs to leaking gutters and downspouts;
- easing of external doors and windows, replacement handles and faulty mechanisms;
- partial loss of electrical power where the fault is inside the home;
- partial loss of water supply where the fault is inside the home or boundary;
- heating and hot water faults or breakdowns;
- blocked sink, bath, toilet or basin that a customer has been unable to unblock themselves;
- damage to stair treads, handrails or banisters;
- insecure doors and windows in communal areas;
- TV aerials.

These are examples and not a list of every case. We will consider the impact of this approach on individual customers' needs and adjust our approach when necessary.

Major repairs

In a small number of cases following the initial routine or emergency repair appointment we may identify that more extensive remedial work is needed to resolve a property related issue. This may include replacing rather than repairing some major components or carrying out significant remedial works potentially including structural works. In these instances a responsive repair becomes a major repair.

We would then arrange an appointment with the customer to do an inspection, agree the full scope of works and update the customer on the estimated timescales and next steps.

Depending on the issue we may need to carry the workout at the earliest opportunity or where possible, include the repair/replacement at a later date, with other scheduled planned investment works. We will tell the customer the timescales involved.

In exceptional circumstances we may need to arrange to move customers to an alternative accommodation to minimise disruption and for their safety.



Appointments

Emergency repairs can be reported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year directly by telephone.

If an emergency repair is reported outside of our normal working hours or during bank holidays this will be registered by our third party out of hours provider who will assign the works to the relevant contractor or inhouse operative.

Where the emergency is related to a major incident, we have a clear escalation process and business continuity plan which will be mobilised in this event.

In an emergency, where there is a Health and Safety issue or there's likely to be considerable damage to the property we may gain access in line with our Access Policy.

If the repair is not an emergency, we will arrange an appointment, at a time that suits the customer and meets their individual needs. We offer full day, morning, or afternoon time slots and can take the school run into account.

We will confirm the customers appointment time by text message, with a further confirmation sent the day before we are due to attend. We will send a final confirmation text message on the day and telephone the customer to let them know we are on our way.

If the customer is not at home when we attend, we will try to reach them by phone and text. We will try other numbers on our records and will only contact a third party if we have permission to speak to someone other than the customer named on the tenancy. If we are still unable to reach the customer, we will leave a card asking them to contact us or the contractor. If we do not hear from them, we will cancel the repair, but continue with the works when we are contacted.

Performance measures and customer voice

Our service will be measured against the timeframes above. We report performance to our Executive team and our Board.

We measure:

- overall customer satisfaction with the service;
- jobs completed within the customer commitments timescales;



- jobs completed, right first time;
- emergency and routine job completion times.

Learning from complaints and feedback

Customers are at the heart of our services. We analyse complaints received, their outcome and proposed changes as part of our reporting and planning process. We share feedback with our service managers to ensure we learn from cases. Our Customer Feedback team produce regular reports shared with Managers, Senior Management, Directors, formally involved customers, and our Executive team and Board.

Reports highlight themes and trends which allow Senior Management to review and identify any systemic issues, serious risks or areas for organisational improvement. Annual reporting to Board includes the Housing Ombudsman's annual Landlord performance report. We tell our customers how they have influenced change to policy and improvements to services by publishing findings from complaints on our website, in customer communications and annually in our Annual Report.

Value for money

As a major expense for the organisation we manage our commitment to providing value for money in a range of ways including;

- comparing cost and performance information;
- reviewing how we run our services and systems;
- looking at past repairs to identify things that happen repeatedly, which informs our future planned works;
- carefully considering our contracts with outside companies.

Further guidance

The repairs policy is linked to a number of other property related policies and guidance. These are detailed below.



Damp, mould and condensation

We understand that damp, mould and condensation could create a potential hazard for our customers and we treat these instances as a priority.

We follow a separate damp, mould and condensation policy and process to make sure we take the correct action and responsive repairs to address damp, mould and condensation, in a timely manner to protect the safety of our customers.

Our approach to damp, mould and condensation may include emergency, routine and/or major repair works and full details of our approach are outlined in the damp, mould and condensation policy.

We provide detailed guidance, advice and support to help customers manage condensation in their homes to avoid damp and mould occurring. We also refer our customers to other organisations for additional support, if we feel this is appropriate and would benefit customers.

Adaptations

We will work with organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets customers' needs and changing circumstances. Major and minor adaptation works will be carried out in line with the our Adaptations Policy

Minor adaptations such as grab rails and banister stair rails will be reported to repairs using our normal channels and managed by the repairs service with no occupational therapy assessment needed.

Details of our approach can be found in our Aids and Adaptations policy.

Decoration of the home

Customers are responsible for decorating inside the property and keeping it in good order. Some repairs may affect the decoration of the home. If this happens the area will be made good following the repair. This does not apply to access panels, hatches, or ducting covered with wallpaper, tiles, carpet, wood, laminate or other finishes. In these circumstances customers will be advised before work is started.



Customers alterations

If a customer wants to make changes or improvements to the property they must get our written permission. We will only say no if we have good reason to do so. If we refuse permission, we will tell you why in writing. If we grant permission, we may ask that the work is done in a certain way, or to a standard, or apply other reasonable conditions. All works must be carried out to our satisfaction.

Insurance

We have property and public liability insurance for properties we are responsible for. In the event of a major incident e.g. a fire or flood, our insurance will cover damage to the structure of the building and resulting repairs. It will not cover damage to contents. Contents insurance is the responsibility of the customer. It is strongly recommended that customers take out suitable cover to protect their personal belongings.

Responsibility of this policy

The Director of Repairs is responsible for this policy. Our in house repairs service will be supported by a number of partners who will help us deliver this policy. These include repairs, specialist repairs, damp proof works, major structural issues and drainage work, and also to provide support in times of increased demand.

Equality and diversity

We are committed to making sure our services are open and clear to everyone. We will support customers to use our services in a way that is tailored to them.

Legal references

We will repair and maintain homes in line with the following legislation:

- tenancy agreements;
- lease agreements;
- the Decent Homes Standard;
- Housing Acts 1988,1996,1998 and 2004;
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985;



- Right to Repair Regulations 1994 (for secure tenants of Local Housing Authorities);
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- The Defective Premises Act 1972;
- Building Regulation;
- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Care Act 2014.

Related Policies, Procedures and Plans

- Repairs Strategy
- Asset Management Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Access Policy Statement
- Allocations Policy
- Procurement Strategy
- Customer Voice Strategy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy
- Service with Respect Policy



Appendix 1 – General needs, repair obligations

Repair Issue	Great Places responsibility	Customers responsibility
EXTERNAL STRUCTURE		
Drains, gutters and external pipes (except where the drains are the responsibility of the water authority, when we will report the defects to that authority)	x	
The roof, covering, tiles, fascias, soffits and gutters.	x	
Outside walls, outside doors, windowsills, window catches, sash and window frames (including painting and decorating outside).	x	
Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues but not including sweeping them except (if necessary) for the annual service by us.	x	
Balconies, walkways, hallways, steps or other means of access, including disabled access which we have provided or for which we have accepted responsibility.	x	
External and internal plaster work where full skim coats are required.	x	
Garages, carports, outbuildings and stores that form part of the home. if they exist at the start of the tenancy or are later erected by us.	x	
Boundary walls, gates and fences, if they exist at the start of the tenancy or are later erected by us.	x	
Pathways, steps and other means of access owned by us.	x	
Maintenance of gardens and landscaped areas where they are provided for exclusive use by one household.		X
Garden timber sheds (Unless noted specifically on the tenancy).		X
Decorative paving, patios and hard landscaping that was fitted at previous tenancy.		X
Storage and placement for collection by the local Authority of all domestic refuse.		X
The erection/removal and making good after the installation of satellite dishes.		X
The repair or replacement of clothes lines, including posts, where they are provided for exclusive use by one household		X
Repair or replacement of refuse bins or bin holders.		X
Taking and recording of utility meter readings e.g. gas, electric, water.		X
Repairs to equipment in common parts.	x	

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INTERNAL STRUCTURE		
Repairing and maintaining any equipment we have provided for heating, hot water and sanitation including basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes.	x	
Electric wiring including sockets, light fittings and switches; but excluding plugs, bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters.	x	
Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central-heating systems (if they are fitted by us) and gas pipes.	x	
Internal door handles.		X
Plug and chains to sink, bath, wash hand basin		X
Curtain battens, hat and coat hooks and rails.		X
Internal cupboards door catches, handles and hinges.		X
Electrical faults arising from the use of faulty appliances.		X
Minor plaster cracks and internal decorations.		X
Any appliance (other than gas flued appliances), structure or installation which was not supplied by us.		X
Electrical plugs (not socket outlets), fuses, flexible gas tubes, light bulbs and external lights customers have fitted.		X
Internal decorations and all soft furnishings provided by our customers including all flooring e.g. carpets, laminated flooring etc. This includes the removal to a recognised tip of all unwanted items. - All white goods e.g. cookers, fridges, washing machines provided by customers.		X
Replacement of door keys (both interior and exterior doors).		X
Replacement of broken or cracked glass if caused by tenant damage (e.g. in an accident).		X
Renewal of fluorescent strip light tubes and starters.		X
Toilet seats.		X
Minimising the cause of airborne condensation.		X
T.V. or radio aerials installed by customers and the repair to damage caused in their erection or removal.		X
Cleansing of sink, baths, wash hand basin and lavatory, basin wash pipes Flexible pipe / hose connections for washing machines;		X
Battery powered door bells and Door security chains installed by customers.		X

Repairs Policy



Policy approval date:	21 st August 2023
Equality impact assessment date:	19 th May 2023
Safeguarding	No implications identified
Policy review date:	August 2026 Yearly light touch review
Lead team:	Director of Repairs and Facilities Management
Level of authorisation required:	Directors
Please record all authorisation meetings, with dates and details	Final approval at Directors 21 st August 2023