

1. Introduction.

We are committed to providing well designed, safe, secure, good quality and energy efficient places that residents are proud to call home. As your landlord, we take our statutory and regulatory repair responsibilities seriously. This means our repair service is one of the most important services we provide to you. If you rent your home, this factsheet sets out our responsibilities and your responsibilities in maintaining your home.

The following factsheets support the delivery of our repair service:

- Leaseholder information (if you have bought a share of your home, this includes our and your repair and maintenance responsibilities).
- Ending your tenancy.
- Safety in communal areas.
- Damp and mould.
- Gas safety, electrical safety, water safety, asbestos safety.
- Aids and adaptations.
- Complaints and compliments.

2. Our statutory and regulatory repair responsibilities.

We have responsibilities to complete certain repairs under:

- Section 11 of the **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985**, in summary to keep in repair:
 - the structure and exterior of the dwelling-house (including drains, gutters, and external pipes)
 - and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for the supply of water, gas, and electricity and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths, and sanitary conveniences, but not other fixtures, fittings, and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas, or electricity)
 - and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for space heating and heating water.

We must also follow the:

- Terms of your **tenancy contract**.
- **Decent Homes Standard**. This sets the minimum 'decency' standard of homes regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018**. This requires our homes to be safe, healthy, and free from things that could cause serious harm. This uses the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to assess against the twenty-nine hazards in rented homes, introduced under the Housing Act 2004.
- **Equality Act 2010**. This includes the rights of disabled tenants to reasonable adjustments.

We are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, and we must comply with the **Safety and Quality Standard**. This sets out a series of outcomes and expectations in delivering our repairs service and in maintaining our homes and communal areas.

3. Our repair responsibilities.

We are responsible for:

- The structure of your home and communal areas. This includes the roof, walls, windows, gutters, drains, floors, ceilings, plasterwork, doors, and locks.
- Your installations, including your kitchen and bathroom (including your sinks, shower, toilet), heating, electrics, electrical wiring, gas pipes, water pipes, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarm (if your home has a fixed combustion appliance), fire doors and door entry systems.
- Communal areas (please refer to our 'safety in communal areas' fact sheet).

4. Our safety responsibilities.

We must complete statutory safety checks to your home. This includes:

- Electrical wiring.
- Gas appliances (if applicable).
- Water hygiene (if your water is from a communal supply).
- Your front door (if it opens into an internal communal area).
- Asbestos containing materials (where applicable).

5. Your responsibilities.

Whilst we maintain the structure and installations of your home, there are occasions when you are responsible for the repair or replacement. The frequent repairs that are your responsibility, during and at the end of your tenancy, include:

- Replacing anything you, or a visitor to your home, breaks due to misuse or neglect, or any damage caused by you, your visitors, your appliances, or equipment.
- Replacing or requesting additional keys and door entry fobs.
- Changing batteries to smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms (if applicable).
- Decoration and tidiness (we will make good and decorate any area where we have completed a repair and this results in damage to existing decoration, or an obvious and significant contrast between the repaired area and existing decoration).
- Cleaning/de-scaling of taps and shower heads.
- Programming of heating and hot water time clocks.
- Conducting alterations to any installation or to the structure of your home. Please contact us before completing any work.

Plumbing

- Replacing plug and chains on basin and sinks.
- Unblocking waste pipes from toilets, bath, basin sinks, shower traps (unless building system fault).
- Replacing or adjusting toilet seats.
- Replacing shower curtains, shower heads and hoses.

Electrical

- Replacing electrical plugs and fuses.
- Resetting of circuit breakers.
- Replacement of light bulbs and florescent tubes.
- Installation and testing of your own electrical appliances by a qualified electrician.
- Tv aerials (except if maintained as part of a communal system).

If you need extra help, for example on health grounds or you are experiencing domestic abuse, we will offer you support to meet the conditions of your tenancy contract. We will make this assessment based on your needs at the point of your request, including whether there is anyone else who might assist you, and whether there are any immediate risks to your health or safety. This may include an extension to the scope of repairs which we complete.

Access to your home to complete repairs

You must allow access at all reasonable times to enable us, and our contractors, to maintain your home and complete our health and safety responsibilities. We will normally give you at least 24 hours' notice of our request to access your home. We cannot enter your home without your permission. There are exceptions if we require access in an emergency, such as in response to a water leak with the potential to cause serious harm to your home or a neighbouring home. If you refuse to allow us access, we will obtain a court order to enter your home and complete the work.

Reporting a repair

You can report a repair by:

- Emailing us at repairs@lacehousing.org
- Contacting a member of our housing and support team, if you live at Olsen Court 1-38, Brick Kiln Place or Worth Court.
- Telephoning our property maintenance team weekdays on 01522 514444, between 9am and 1pm.

Please provide the following details when you report a repair:

- Your full name, address and contact details.
- Full details of the repair, including precise location.
- Any times we/our contractor should avoid when planning to complete the repair.

If your repair is an emergency, please telephone 01522 514444 and speak to a member of our team. This is important as we do not monitor emails constantly during the day, or at all after 4.30pm and at weekends.

7. How long will it take to complete the repair?

We assess each repair request and award it one of the following priorities:

Emergency - respond within 4 hours. Priority will be to make safe and/or secure, with any resulting follow up work completed within published timescales.

Urgent - to complete within five working days.

Routine - within twenty-one working days.

Please note working days are Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays.

We always prioritise emergency repairs that pose a risk to your health and safety or cause instant damage to your home.

8. Examples of emergency repairs.

These include:

- Total loss of power.
- Major leaks from pipes or roof.
- Serious structural damage.
- Dangerous electrical fittings or installations.
- Total loss of water supply, burst pipe or tap that will not turn off or on.
- Blocked/overflowing or leaking foul drain soil stack or toilet.
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.
- Total loss of space/water heating.
- Any serious security issue, such as front door does not lock or shut, windows jammed open.
- Problems with equipment installed as part of an adaptation to enable independent living.
- Failure of a warden alarm/call system (if provided by us and subject to the Service Level Agreement in place with the nominated contractor).
- Faulty carbon monoxide detectors or smoke detectors.

If we attend an emergency repair and we find it your responsibility to repair, it will be subject to a minimum charge of £55.00 (inclusive of travel) for the first hour with hourly labour rates applied thereafter. Depending on the nature of the work, we may complete a temporary repair under this response priority and complete the repair under the corresponding response times.

9. Examples of urgent repairs.

These include:

- Partial loss of power (e.g. light, socket).
- Partial loss of water supply or toilet not flushing.
- Partial loss of space/water heating.
- Severe, visible mould on internal plastered surfaces, such as ceilings or walls.
- Loose/detached/damaged stairs, banister, or handrail.
- Minor plumbing leaks or blocked sinks and basins that you cannot clear after your interventions.
- Failure of the entry phone handset.

- Failure of the communal tv aerial.

If you have a medical need that means you will be at risk of harm because of the fault we will tailor a response time with you.

10. Examples of routine repairs.

These include:

- Faulty extractor fan.
- Dripping tap.
- Dripping overflow.
- Leaking rainwater pipe.
- Blocked gutters.
- Visible mould on internal plastered surfaces, such as ceilings or walls.
- Faulty shared tv aerial.
- Adjustment of internal/external doors.
- Window frames, handles, hinges (except if identified for planned replacement).
- Repairs to kitchen units; worktops, taps.
- Repairs to damaged plasterwork.

11. Aids and adaptations.

If needed, we can provide support to see if you are eligible for any housing adaptations to enable you to continue to live in your home. This may involve completing minor adaptations to your home. For more extensive adaptations we will help you with an application to your local authority. We will always try to approve any Disabled Facility Grant requests made to us, but if we are unable to do so, we will explain why and support you with any rehousing application. Please see our separate 'Aids and Adaptations' factsheet.

12. Contractor Code of Conduct.

We expect our property maintenance team and our contractors to work in a courteous and professional manner by:

- Explaining the nature of the work to you and making convenient access arrangements to complete the work.
- Notifying you of any changes to these access arrangements.
- Forewarning you of any disconnection of services, minimising the time disconnected and making appropriate alternative arrangements.
- Ensuring we take care when working in your home and communal areas to ensure your safety (e.g. tools lying around, trip hazards).
- Using appropriate measures such as dustsheets to contain dirt, clear up any mess resulting from the works and refrain from using radios or any of your facilities without your permission.
- Keeping your home and possessions secure.
- Restricting activity to normal working hours (except in an emergency).

13. Examples of where the cost of a repair is your responsibility.

13.1 Request for us to complete a repair that is your responsibility.

We have provided examples of these in section 5 above. If you request assistance with a repair that is your responsibility, we will consider the capacity and skills of our property maintenance team. Where we can assist, we will provide an estimated cost. If you agree to use our repair service, we will invoice you for the total cost once the work is complete.

13.2 Replacing or repairing any Lace fixture, fitting or fabric component due to misuse, damage, or neglect, whether accidental or on purpose.

Please contact us in the unfortunate event this occurs to your home or a communal area of your scheme. We can provide a quotation to complete remedial works. We may have completed the work before notifying you that we consider it to be your responsibility to remedy. In these circumstances we will write and explain why we consider the repair to be your responsibility and raise an invoice for payment. When we write to you, we will explain your right to appeal if you disagree with our decision.

13.3 Removing and restoring alterations you have made to your home.

If you apply for permission to complete alterations to your home, we will write and confirm our approval, including any conditions attached to our permission. This may include our right to complete remedial works if the alteration does not meet our quality, or health and safety standards. It is normally a condition to return your home to its original condition when your tenancy ends, and our permission letter will confirm where this is the case.

13.4 Works required at the end of your tenancy.

When you leave your property, we expect you to return it in a good condition and in accordance with our Empty Homes Management Policy and Property Standard. We will write to you if we find a rechargeable repair. In doing so, we will also provide you with a copy of our Recharge Appeal Form.

13.5 Missed appointments.

If we make an appointment with you to complete a repair and we are unable to achieve access, we will invoice you for our time unless you notify us in advance of your unavailability.

13.6 Removal of items stored in communal areas.

We will remove any unauthorised items found in communal areas. We will store these for a maximum of 14 days, after which time we will dispose of them. If we know who the item(s) belong to, we will charge the person for the cost we incur associated to its removal and disposal.

14. Approximate recharge costs.

Please note that costs are a guideline only and may vary depending on the extent of work required.

- Hourly rate £20 (charged in 30-minute blocks, with a minimum £10 (30 minute) charge). This includes time sourcing materials or other time taken to plan the work.
- The cost of materials.
- Plus 20% VAT.
- Administration fee £15.
- Any costs for supply of materials.
- Any costs for external contractor work.

15. Continuous improvement.

15.1 Assessing the quality of our repair service.

If you report a repair, we will contact you once the repair is complete to check your satisfaction with the quality of our repairs service and the time taken to complete the repair. Similarly to how the NHS seek feedback on appointments we send a text message survey to your mobile phone. We appreciate your feedback and review all responses.

15.2 Making a service request or making a complaint.

We centrally record and monitor all service requests and complaints made about our services and we use this information to consider how we can improve the services we provide to all our residents. A service request is the first occasion where you remind us that we have not provided a service or fixed the report that you have previously made to us, and this is causing you dissatisfaction. An example could be if you contact us to advise our repair contractor did not visit as arranged.

If you make a complaint and we do not agree to investigate your complaint, or we extend the time taken to respond to your complaint, or you are unhappy with our final letter of response, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to review our decision. Please refer to our separate complaint factsheet for details.