

Repairs Policy

Our Vision

Building better lives through social care and housing in local communities.

Our Mission

We co-design and deliver services that offer innovative social care solutions and support people to thrive.

Our Values

We are
caring and
compassionate



We are
inclusive
and **trusted**



We focus on
excellence
and
innovation



We work in
partnership
and are
one-team



439 Caledonian Road
London N7 4BG
T: 0333 010 4600

lookahead.org.uk

 **Look Ahead**
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING

Supporting Procedures, Documents and Guidance

[Condensation, Damp & Mould You Tube Video](#)

[Repair Priorities and Descriptions](#)

[Local Services Satisfaction Survey Procedure](#)

[Managing Agent Satisfaction Survey Procedure](#)

[No Access Procedure](#)

[Repair Responsibilities](#)

Copies of these documents can be supplied on request

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We want our customers to feel safe where they live and proud of their homes. We also have a legal duty to ensure that our customers' homes are maintained to a decent standard. To achieve this, we aim to provide customers with an easily accessible, efficient and effective repairs and maintenance service. This policy sets out how we provide a customer focussed repairs service to fulfil our statutory obligations and to maintain our properties to a safe and fit standard.
- 1.2 This policy applies to buildings that we own and manage and buildings owned by another landlord in which we deliver services to customers. It also applies to:
- Repairs to buildings and individual customer accommodation
 - Communal or shared areas – internal and external
 - Replacement items and general maintenance of white goods, where applicable
 - Repair and replacement of furniture, where applicable
 - Gas and electrical safety checks
 - Our approach to the management of risks posed by damp and mould to our stock
- 1.3 The standard of accommodation that we aim to provide is set out in our Living Standards Policy and Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.4 This policy applies to our Property Services Team, operational support staff, volunteers, contractors and customers.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 An **emergency repair** is a repair that causes a serious health and safety issue. This can include things like no hot water, no electricity, an uncontrollable water leak or a security issue. We will respond to an emergency repair within 4 hours. Our priority will always be to make the situation safe as quickly as possible.
- 2.2 A repair is classed as an **urgent repair** if it causes inconvenience but is not a health and safety risk. For example, an urgent repair can include things like a slow

leak, an isolated, minor electrical issue or a cracked or broken window. We aim to fix an urgent repair within 5 working days of it being reported to us.

- 2.3 A repair is classed as a **routine repair** where it does not pose any risk and is generally caused by general wear and tear. An example of a routine repair would be a broken kitchen cupboard door. We aim to respond to routine repairs within 20 working days.
- 2.4 A repair is classed as **Out of Hours** where it potentially causes a serious health and safety issue and occurs outside of the Customer Contact Centre hours of operation (9am to 5pm, Monday – Friday). We will respond to an Out of Hours call out overnight. As with an emergency repair, our priority will be to make the situation safe as quickly as possible.
- 2.5 The term **customer** is used throughout this policy to describe an individual that holds an occupancy agreement with Look Ahead.
- 2.6 The term **communal area** is used to describe any area – internal or external – that is shared by a customer with other customers, staff or visitors. For example, a shared kitchen, lounge or garden area.
- 2.7 Our **unsupported stock** is buildings that are owned and managed by us but where any support is provided by another organisation, for example under the Rough Sleeper Initiative.
- 2.8 The term **First Time Fix** is used to describe our aim to carry out repairs correctly in one visit to the customer's property. The exception to this can be emergency repairs whereby we may need to 'make safe' and return at a mutually convenient time to complete the full repair.

3. Reporting a Repair

- 3.1 We encourage customers to report a repair directly to us as soon as they are aware of it. Customers can report a repair by:
- Calling our Customer Contact Centre on 0333 010 4600 (9-5 staffed hours, all other hours managed by our dedicated out of hours response service)
 - Emailing us at repairs@lookahead.org.uk (48-hour response time)
 - Using our [online form](#)
 - Raising a request on our housing management system Cx
- 3.2 Our call centre staff are trained to [understand and prioritise repairs](#). We aim to respond to repairs within the following timescales:

Emergency Repairs	4 Hours*
Urgent Repairs	Within 5 working days
Routine Repairs	Within 20 working days

100.00_Repairs

* It may be that we will respond quickly to make a situation safe, following which the full repair may be re-classified to either an urgent or routine repair

- 3.3 Our out of hours service covers weekdays (after 5pm), weekends and Bank Holidays and can be contacted by calling our contact centre on 0333 010 4600.
- 3.4 Work orders are raised with contractors as a result of a reported repair. This is the official work instruction for the contractor and full details of this will be recorded in our Housing Management system.
- 3.5 Work orders are raised by our Customer Contact Centre Officers using the agreed Schedule of Rates code (as defined by the National Housing Federation). Where a repair is service chargeable or considered specialist works (ie door entry systems, CCTV, furniture) a separate, agreed, Manual Schedule of Rates code will be used.
- 3.6 Orders coming through the Customer Contact Centre will usually be charged against Reactive Repairs or if the repair is chargeable against the service (ie communal repairs covered in the housing service charge element), or specialist request from the scheme budget holder, then this can be charged to Service Expenditure.
- 3.7 Where we are managing a service out of another landlord's building, it is the responsibility of all operational staff to read their specification contract to understand our housing management responsibilities within the building. The Management and Leasehold spreadsheet sets out the relevant repair responsibilities.
- 3.8 Alerts are logged against each asset within our housing management system Cx. Guidance on the type of alerts and frequency is referenced in the alerts policy.

4. Quality Assessments & Customer Satisfaction

- 4.1 We use qualified and reputable maintenance contractors to carry out our repairs. The continued use of these contractors is based on expertise, track record, adherence to relevant health and safety legislation, quality workmanship and performance.
- 4.2 We are committed to ensuring that our properties meet Decent Homes Standards and that our customers live in safe and secure homes that are well maintained. Our repairs and maintenance function plays an important role in enabling us to fulfil these commitments by:
 - Delivering an accessible repairs service that delivers an excellent customer experience - aiming for a "First Time Fix" on responsive repairs
 - Managing a programme of cyclical decorations and planned maintenance in line with our Asset Strategy.
 - Robust contract management
 - Delivering Value for Money in all that we do
 - Solution focused approach - listening and acting on customer feedback

- 4.3 We are committed to actively seeking staff and customer feedback in relation to responsive repairs and maintenance performance and actively responding to improve the service.
- 4.4 All operational staff are required to provide feedback after the completion of all repairs works undertaken in their service(s) and to actively engage and support their customers in the process.
- 4.5 Complaints and compliments are key sources of customer feedback. Complaints and compliments are analysed regularly and used to influence policy and procedural change, where applicable. Our approach to handling complaints follows the Complaints & Feedback Policy and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.
- 4.6 Where necessary, the investigation manager may decide to offer compensation in the event of the non-completion of repairs. Under the 'right to repair' provision, there are categories of repair that automatically qualify for compensation following non-completion. This and all other qualifying instances are referenced in our Compensation Framework.

5. Completions & Post Inspections

- 5.1 The contractor will provide a photographic record of all works that have been post-inspected and every day-to-day responsive repair. Both the contractor and the Property Inspector will post-inspect a minimum of works as follows:
 - Works over £1,000 and void works may be jointly inspected by the contractor and the Property Inspector
 - Responsive Repairs: 25% (15% by the contractor and a different 10% by the Property Inspector)
 - Voids: 30% (25% by the contractor and a different 5% by the Repairs Team)
 - Repairs over £1,000: 100% by the contractor, including photographs then 100% by the Property Inspector via a desk top exercise or via actual site visits.
 - Voids over £1,500: 100% by the contractor including photographs then 100% by the Property Inspector which may be undertaken via desk top exercise or via actual site visits
- 5.2 Inspections by our Property Inspector may involve a desktop inspection or on-site inspections. The majority of contractor inspections are expected to be undertaken on site. There will also be occasions where customers may carry out joint inspections with the contractor and our staff.
- 5.3 Completed works are not to be paid until sufficient evidence of completion of all tasks is provided.

6. Communication

- 6.1 We are committed to providing timely and transparent communication with residents regarding repair progress and updates. Customers are kept informed of the status of repair requests, appointments and resulting orders through visibility of our housing management system. Where repairs are not our responsibility, our operational support staff will advocate on behalf of our customers with the landlord.
- 6.2 Access to properties will be gained by making an appointment for all repairs, including recalls, other than a visit for those classified as an emergency. The contractor is required to send an appointment reminder a day before the scheduled appointment. The reminder can be sent by text message, email or a phone call to the service contact or customer.
- 6.3 In the event of a no access order. The order will be closed down and re-raised by the Customer Contact Centre unless they are informed that no further works are required.
- 6.4 An order will not be considered a no access if a prior appointment was not made ahead of the attempted attendance.
- 6.5 Attendance for emergency call outs will be made without prior appointments due to the nature of the situation at hand. Where they are called through to the contact centre, confirmation of the order will be provided to the customer during the call. If Emergency repairs are requested by web submission, an email will be sent to the customer confirming it has been actioned.

7. Condensation, Damp & Mould

- 7.1 Guidance on how to manage condensation, damp and mould is available to customers in the form of a [You Tube video](#) on our website.
- 7.2 Our approach to the management of condensation, damp and mould is set out in our Damp & Mould Policy.

8. Rechargeable Repairs

- 8.1 We know that there are occasions when our customers cause damage either deliberately or through lack of care. Relevant Heads of Operations or Landlord Services colleagues are responsible for determining whether customers will be charged for any damage to their home which has been caused through wilful neglect, misuse, malicious damage, lack of care, or repetitive damage by the customer, other household members, or visitors to the property. This applies where the customer has not taken reasonable steps to prevent the damage being caused. Repairs will be categorised as rechargeable on Cx, whilst the aforementioned is decided.

- 8.2 We may also be required to charge for the completion of certain repairs which fall outside of our responsibility. In this event the Agency and Partnership Team will advise on whether we have grounds following discussions with our partnering providers.
- 8.3 Alterations or improvements made by our customers without approval of our Head of Repairs or relevant Head of Service will also be considered to be rechargeable. Operational Staff must encourage customers to restore the property to its previous condition prior to carrying out alterations to avoid these charges.
- 8.4 The misuse of the Emergency Repairs Service or refuse left, furniture, personal belongings in empty properties will be considered for recharge also.

9. Aids and Adaptations

- 9.1 We recognise the potential need for aids and adaptations to enable our customers to live independently and comfortably in their home. Provision for aids and adaptations reflect our commitment to ensuring our customers have a safe, accessible and supportive living environment.
- 9.2 We encourage our customers to contact us to obtain an accurate and detailed assessment of their specific requirements. This assessment will form the basis for the recommendations for works to be done.
- 9.3 Where funding/grants are required to cover the costs of adaptations, we will assist by liaising with local authorities or charities to seek funding through Disabled Facilities Grants.
- 9.4 Once approved, works will either be carried out by our own contractors or external contractors with our managerial oversight to ensure all adaptations have met customer requirements.
- 9.5 We are committed to the regular maintenance of any aids and adaptations and we will continue to check in with the customer to ensure their needs continue to be met.
- 9.6 Where operating out of another Landlord's building, we would seek out permission from the Landlord prior to any adaptations. Customer requirements will always be taken into account when determining suitability for such placements.

Record Keeping

We will comply with our Retention & Disposal Schedule which can be found by clicking Here or visiting our website at www.lookahead.org.uk
--

Policy Sign Off and Ownership	
Document Name	100.00_Repairs
Version	1.0
Equality Impact Assessment	N/A
Who was consulted?	Heads of Service
Approved By/Date	Policy Group, 2 October 2024
Date for Review	October 2030
Author	Head of Repairs and Voids
Owner (if different)	Director of Property & Asset Management
Document Location	SharePoint
Related Policies/Procedures	Fire Safety Policy Gas Safety Policy Electrical Safety Policy Lift Safety Policy Water Safety Policy Asbestos Safety Policy Health & Safety Policies Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Complaints & Feedback Policy Compensation Policy
Relevant Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	

Version History			
Version	Date	Description of Changes	Author
1.0	Nov 2023	New Policy	