

# INTERIM RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY – 2020/21



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<b>Directorate(s)</b>	Customer & Communities
<b>Policy Title</b>	Interim Responsive Repairs Policy
<b>Author/Reviser/Owner</b>	Ralph Hall/Vicki Webb
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<b>Audience</b> (please include name of teams or individuals)	All Employees or Specific Team(s):	

<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Limited is a charitable community benefit society.

FCA register number 31452R.

Registered Office: Sandbrook House, Sandbrook Way, Rochdale OL11 1RY.

Registered as a provider of social housing. RSH register number: 4607

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This interim Repairs Policy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housings approach to managing responsive repairs following the COVID19 pandemic and the limitations this has placed on the service.
- 1.2. We are committed to continuing the provision of a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants. Our ambition is to complete repairs and improvements right first time and to keep customers fully informed about the status of their repairs whilst ensuring we are fully compliant with all legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 1.3. This policy clarifies our approach to prioritising and completing repairs within the restrictions brought about by COVID19 and provides a flexible framework to operate within if or when Government advice changes. This enables customers to have a clearer understanding of the expected timescales for completion of any reported repairs.

## 2. Context

- 2.1. This interim policy sets out how the Repairs & Maintenance service will respond to the challenges brought about by the COVID19 pandemic. As service delivery was severely restricted for a number of months it is anticipated that this interim policy will remain in place for a 12 month period to enable us to fully recover from the impact of a full lockdown.
- 2.2. Whilst we have continued to log routine repairs we have been unable to complete anything other than emergency work or work to communal or external areas. This means we have a significant backlog of work to catch up on. This policy sets out how we will prioritise our work to aid recovery whilst maintaining our repairing obligations.

## 3. Aims & Objectives

- 3.1. The aims of this interim policy are to communicate how we will continue to provide a timely and cost effective responsive repairs service. Our services will remain easily accessible and can be completed at a time arranged and agreed with our customers.
- 3.2. We will ensure ongoing compliance with all of our legal and regulatory responsibilities.
- 3.3. The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

**Responsibility**-We take responsibility for the delivery of a cost effective customer focussed Responsive Repairs service.

**Equity** - We carry out our business in a way that is fair and unbiased by being transparent about our priorities.

**Democracy** – We give our members a say in the way we run our service by using customer feedback to inform improvement activity.

**Pioneering** - This policy supports a forward thinking approach to responding to the COVID19 pandemic and its impact on our services.

**Openness & Honesty** – we will share information, do what we say we will do and when we make a mistake we will own up to it.

**Caring** - This policy will ensure we listen and respond to the needs of our members, tenants and employees and prioritise the most vulnerable of our customers when appropriate.

#### 4. Landlord / Tenant Responsibilities

4.1 As landlords we will take responsibility and meet our repairing obligations as detailed in your tenancy agreement or lease agreement. Details of our obligations are also detailed on our website <https://www.rbh.org.uk/>

4.2 Tenants also have a range of responsibilities relating to repairs. These are listed in your tenancy agreement or lease agreement. Supporting documents listing customer responsibilities can also be found on the RBH website along with top tips and video clips to help avoid most common emergency repairs.

4.3 RBH asks that tenants report repairs promptly and allow RBH representatives access to their homes to carry out property inspections, routine and emergency repairs and any work that RBH consider necessary to ensure that our properties do not put tenants, employees or members of the public at risk. This includes allowing us prompt access for essential safety checks including Gas and Electrical inspections.

4.4 Failure to provide reasonable access to administer a repair or inspection may result in escalation action in accordance with your tenancy or lease agreement. Any associated costs will be recharged to the tenant.

4.5 If RBH undertakes a repair for which the tenant is responsible the costs of the works may be charged back to the tenant. If these works are undertaken out of hours then an additional call out fee will also be incurred.

4.6 In response to the COVID19 pandemic RBH has realigned repairs response times to reflect the backlog of routine repairs that have accumulated and to give customers some clarity about how long they may need to wait for a repair to be completed. The table below summarises our new priority timescales. We will publish the actual average time it takes RBH to complete jobs on our website so customers have information about our current performance.

4.7 The RAG status indicates the priority of the job and our target time for completion. As we recover from delivering an emergency service only, the RAG status will be published on the website so customers are able to see what level of work we are currently undertaking.

4.8 From the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 our RAG status is at Green meaning we are able to attend all jobs reported to us in the order they were logged. However if the UK Coronavirus alert level is raised by the Government we may need to revert back to an Amber or Red status which limits the jobs we are able to respond to. Customers will be updated of any changes to our status via various communication channels including the website.

Priority level of Job	Timescale (Current)	RAG status	Timescale (New)	Sample Job types
1 or 2	2 hours	RED	24 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No heat or hot water</li> <li>• No electrics</li> <li>• Uncontrollable leak</li> <li>• Home insecure</li> <li>• Major Health and Safety risk</li> </ul>
3	15 days	AMBER	60 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing &amp; gates</li> <li>• Gutter cleans &amp; renewals</li> <li>• Routine Electrical</li> <li>• Roof repairs.</li> </ul>
4	12 months	GREEN	90 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plastering</li> <li>• Internal joinery jobs which take over 30 mins</li> <li>• Internal plumbing jobs which take over 30 mins</li> </ul>

## 5. Vulnerabilities and Special Circumstances

5.1 It is our policy to use discretion in cases of identified vulnerability such as frailty or illness or any other identified need. RBH will use data collected from its Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to ensure we have accurate and up to date customer profiling information to assist in identifying vulnerabilities. We also ask tenants to make us aware of any issues or considerations to be taken into account which will help us to take appropriate decisions when prioritising repairs.

## 6. Right to Repair

6.1 In accordance with the Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994, RBH operates a Right to Repair Scheme which enables tenants to have qualifying repairs carried out at the landlord's expense and to receive compensation from their landlords if qualifying repairs are not carried out within a prescribed period. (Full details of the Right to Repair can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/housing>).

## 7. Monitoring

- 7.1. Monitoring of the delivery of this interim policy will include production of weekly and monthly performance reports to enable operational managers to effectively monitor performance and progress of the service.
- 7.2 We will continue to monitor customer satisfaction levels and seek feedback following a completed repair. Customers will receive a SMS text message asking them to complete a satisfaction survey.
- 7.3 Where dissatisfaction has been indicated we will attempt to make contact with the customer to understand what has gone wrong and help to put things right. Customer feedback will be

used to actively manage the performance of the repairs service and improve the services provided.

## **8. Review**

- 8.1 All strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that they are fit for purpose and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.
- 8.2 As this is an interim policy it will undergo a desktop review every 3 months to ensure it remains relevant for our requirements.
- 8.3 The Responsive Repairs Policy will go through a full policy approval process before being reintroduced in June 2021.

## **9. Links with other RBH Documents**

This policy links to the following policies and strategies:

VFM strategy

Health & Safety Framework

Repairs Business Continuity Plan

Rechargeable Repairs Policy