

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

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| Approved by / Date | Customer Services Committee / March 2025 |
| Annual Review Date | February 2026 |
| Full Review Date | February 2028 |

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| Executive Summary: |
| <p>This Repairs and Maintenance Policy details what we will do to provide a customer focused repairs and maintenance service which enables us to meet our corporate priority of ensuring our customers live in safe and warm homes.</p> <p>It sets out our legal and regulatory duties in respect of repairs and maintenance, and what we will do to ensure we comply with them. The policy includes details of the repairs work programmes we will operate to achieve this, and the measures we will take to ensure the programmes are delivered safely and in a timely manner. It also sets out how we will monitor delivery of the policy and of the work programmes.</p> |

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| Policy Grouping / Directorate | Customers and Community | |
| Owner Name / Job Title | Siobhan McCoy / Director of Property Services | |
| Author Name / Job Title | Siobhan McCoy / Director of Property Services Dario Leone / Head of Repairs and Environmental Services Abid Hanif / Head of Asset Performance and Investment | |
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| Notes: | | |
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1 Introduction and Aims

- 1.1 As a landlord, Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) is responsible for the maintenance and repairs to our homes, communal blocks and other properties we own and manage. This policy outlines our approach to managing and delivering repairs and maintenance to keep our homes in good condition and safe for our customers to live in, and to comply with our legal and regulatory duties in respect of property condition.
- 1.2 The key objective of this policy is to ensure our Senior and Executive Leadership Teams, colleagues, partners and customers are clear on our relevant legal and regulatory obligations and what we will do to comply with them. This policy provides the framework our colleagues and partners will operate within to meet these obligations.
- 1.3 The aims of the policy are:
 - To ensure that RBH has identified and complied with all relevant legal duties in respect of property condition and safe and quality homes.
 - To set out how we will deliver and manage the range of repairs and maintenance services to our homes so they are in a good condition and of the quality that our customers expect.
 - To provide clarity on how we will provide a timely and cost-effective repairs service, setting out our responsibilities and those of our customers in maintaining our homes.
 - To provide clarity for customers on how we will prioritise repairs and complete them.
 - To set out how we will deliver repairs and maintenance in an accessible, equitable and fair manner, to meet the needs of individual customers and give them choice.
- 1.4 This policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a customer focused and value for money culture amongst colleagues and contractors and it will be shared with all relevant RBH colleagues and partners.

2 Context

- 2.1 The **Housing Act 2004** sets out the overarching legal requirement in respect of housing condition. This requires homes to be free of major hazards as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- 2.2 The **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985**, as amended by the **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018**, requires that rented properties are fit for habitation when they are first let, and maintained in this condition thereafter.

- 2.3 This policy will support RBH to comply with the following regulatory standard:

Consumer Standards – Safety and Quality Standard

The delivery of this policy will support us to comply with the requirements set out in the Standard to:

- Identify and meet all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas.
- Enable repairs and maintenance issues to be reported easily.

- Set timescales for the completion of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements, clearly communicate them to tenants and take appropriate steps to deliver them.
- Keep tenants informed about repairs and maintenance to their homes with clear and timely information.
- Fulfil our maintenance responsibilities in respect of communal areas.
- Ensure the delivery of repairs and maintenance to homes and communal areas is informed by the needs of tenants and provides value for money.

2.4 The government has confirmed its intention to introduce specific requirements and timescales to investigate and address hazards through **Awaab's Law**, which they propose will be implemented incrementally from October 2025. Some details are still awaited, and the government has yet to introduce the necessary legislation to enact any duties and to publish implementation guidance. However they have set out the following requirements, which this policy makes provision for:

- All emergency repairs to be addressed within 24 hours.
- Damp and mould 'significant hazards' to be addressed within a fixed timescale.

2.5 We will keep the detail of this policy under review as the government provides additional clarity about the required duties, and will make any necessary updates to address any gaps.

3 Values

3.1 The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

Putting People First: We listen with empathy, respond with compassion, and make it easy for our customers to access our services and for our colleagues to deliver services. We work collaboratively with customers to improve our repairs and maintenance services and forge a sense of trust.

Doing What We Say: We earn trust through honesty, integrity, caring and keeping our promises. We take responsibility for the delivery of a cost-effective, customer focussed responsive repairs service, which provides customers with certainty.

Working As One: We embrace our mutuality and work together to deliver great outcomes for the people living in our homes and communities. We actively listen to our customers, with empathy and respect, and deliver services in a way that meets needs.

Delivering Quality: We invest wisely in our people and make it easy for them to deliver services and create places that our customers are proud to call home. This policy supports a forward-thinking approach to responding to repair requests and to the challenges faced by the service.

Open & Transparent: We are curious, embrace diverse ways of thinking and seek feedback to help us improve. We give RBH members and customers a say in the way we run our service, using customer feedback to inform improvement activity.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 We acknowledge and accept our responsibilities under the Housing Act 2004 and the Landlord and Tenant Act (as amended) as outlined in Section 2, and all other duties set out in relevant legislation. We take responsibility for meeting our repair obligations as detailed in the relevant tenancy, licence or lease agreement for each of our homes.

Repairs and maintenance programmes

- 4.2 We will operate work programmes which will enable an effective and robust approach to identifying and recording required repairs and maintenance to our homes, and delivering the necessary work. This will include a number of options for customers to use to report repairs and issues with their home, including by telephone, online, by letter, by email, and in person to an RBH colleague.
- 4.3 This will include proactive work programmes to identify and deliver repairs which are necessary to ensure our homes are safe and of a good quality when they are first let, and then maintained to that condition thereafter.
- 4.4 We will operate the following work programmes:
- **Responsive repairs** – to undertake repairs which are required to tenanted homes, to respond to a customer request / report, or issues which we or our partners / stakeholders identify. This includes internal and external works or repairs to public or communal areas. The objective of responsive repairs is to maintain our homes outside of any planned investment or cyclical maintenance works; an example is the reactive repair of a kitchen drawer rather than a replacement of a whole kitchen if this is not required.
 - **Empty homes** – to undertake repairs to ensure our homes are safe and meet our lettable standard for quality, safety and cleanliness when our customers move into them. The standard we will achieve is set out in our lettable standard, which will be subject to periodic review to ensure it is affordable and meets customer expectations.
 - **Cyclical maintenance** – to carry out planned periodic maintenance of our homes to ensure they are safe and meet our legal duties in respect of property compliance, including gas and electrical safety. Further information is set out in our separate policies as detailed in paragraph 7.1.
 - **Planned investment** – to replace whole components within our homes, such as new kitchens, bathrooms, roofs etc, on a planned basis. Such works will be undertaken in accordance with the planned renewal timescales which are identified through our stock condition surveys and other data / insight, and will be undertaken on a 'just in time' basis due to component age and condition.

Responsive repairs

- 4.5 We will diagnose, prioritise and deliver repairs in accordance with the following principles, which will be our repairs standards:
- Operate a robust diagnosis process which correctly identifies the repair and prioritises it in accordance with this policy.
 - Make appointments, in consultation with customers, for all responsive repairs and confirm this through a text message. We will aim to make the appointment when the customer first reports the repair to us.

- Where we are unable to provide an appointment within target timescale for the repair, we may make this for a date which falls outside of the target date and seek to bring it forward if possible.
- We may agree an appointment outside of the target timescale for non-emergency repairs, where the customer requests this.
- Undertake an inspection where the repair cannot be accurately diagnosed at the first point of contact or the customer is reporting a large number of repairs and we identify that we need to investigate further to ensure we have identified all required repairs.
- Attend the property to carry out the repair at the agreed appointment time. Where we cannot do this, we will contact the customer as far in advance as possible, apologise and explain the reason we are unable to honour the appointment, and agree an alternative appointment.
- Aim to complete the repair within one visit. Where we cannot do this, we will explain why we haven't been able to complete the repair, outline what will happen next, and confirm our customer's understanding of this. Before we leave the customer's home, we will make an appointment for the follow up visit wherever possible.
- Upon arrival to undertake the repair, explain to the customer what repair we will address. Upon completion, we will advise the customer of this and summarise the work that has been completed.
- Carry out a customer satisfaction survey following completion of the repair, to understand the customer's experience and confirm that the work has been satisfactorily completed. We will follow up any dissatisfaction with the customer and put things right if necessary.
- Leave a 'sorry we missed you' card if we are unable to gain access and request the customer contacts us to rearrange the appointment. We will leave the repair open for seven calendar days to allow the customer to make contact and to enable us to consider how the repair needs to be followed up.
- We will review all repairs where we have been unable to gain access, and where any of the below applies we will proactively contact the customer and make two further attempts to gain access:
 - We identify the repair as being necessary to address a health and safety risk;
 - We identify the repair as being necessary to prevent / address any damage to the home or other property;
 - The repair is in a priority / target neighbourhood or property archetype where we have identified specific risks.

If we still do not get access, we will refer the repair to our access process for further investigation and consideration of appropriate action.

4.6 We will operate the following repair priorities and target timescales. We will aim to complete the repair within the target timescales set out.

| Priority level and description | Timescale | Which repairs will be included |
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| Emergency Defects which present an | Attend within 24 hours to make safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total loss of heating or hot water • Partial loss of heating where the customer is elderly, or otherwise vulnerable and is placed at risk by the lack of heating • Total loss of gas supply |

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| <p>immediate risk to the health, safety or security of the home, the customer or any visitors.</p> <p>This includes any such repairs that are reported outside of normal working hours.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total loss of water or electricity • Unsafe electrical fittings / installation • Uncontrollable leak • Insecure windows and doors which present a security risk • Repairs to faulty doors and windows which are a single point of access/egress • Blocked sewer / foul drain if this is backing up into the home • Unusable toilet facilities, if there is only one toilet in the property and / or all toilet facilities are unusable • Immediate health and safety risk, including fire and HHSRS hazards, and emergency services call out where access is required • Lost keys where the customer has no other means of access or egress (the cost will be recharged to the customer) • Broken glazing which presents a health and safety risk • Out of service passenger lifts • Warden call system out of operation • Door entry system failure where this creates an immediate health and safety risk for a building / premises, or where it creates a health and safety risk for a vulnerable customer (for example if they require daily assistance) • Treatment of mould growth where this is extensive and pervasive and presents an immediate risk to the health and safety of our customer |
| <p>Urgent</p> <p>A repair which is not an emergency but requires a more immediate response than a routine repair, either because it has the potential to deteriorate and become an emergency or to cause damage to our home of adjacent homes.</p> | <p>7 calendar days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial loss of power • Partial loss of water supply • Partial loss of heating (unless this presents a health and safety risk to the customer) • No bathing facilities • Containable leaks • External leaks causing internal water damage but no immediate health and safety risks • Blocked sewer / foul drain where it is not at risk of backing up • Blocked toilet if the customer has access to alternative facilities within the home • Blockages to waste pipes where there are no immediate health and safety risks • Repairs to flooring, footpaths and walkways which create a trip hazard • Repairs to fencing which are a health and safety risk • Mould treatment to address a category 1 HHSRS hazard or which presents a significant risk to the occupants of the property, but is not an immediate risk requiring an emergency response • Repairs which are likely to become an emergency if they are not attended in a timely manner |

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| <p>Routine</p> <p>A repair which does not pose a risk.</p> | <p>28 calendar days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General electrical repairs • General water supply and installation / distribution repairs • Roof repairs which are not causing significant internal damage, and any roofing repairs needed to complete any follow up works after being made safe • Leaking gutters and downpipes • Replacement glazing • General joinery repairs, internally and externally • General plumbing repairs e.g. dripping taps, leaks to sinks or baths and faulty pipework • Repairs to kitchen fittings, for example cupboard doors, drawers, worktops and handles • Easing of doors (internal and external) and windows, replacement handles and faulty mechanisms • Faulty / leaking external windows and doors • Insecure doors and windows in communal areas, unless they present a health and safety / security risk • Minor plastering repairs or any plastering repairs required to address damp and mould root cause works • Repairs and replacement of fans / ventilation systems • Non-urgent repairs to fencing which are necessary to ensure boundaries are safe (we may remove fencing if it cannot be made safe through minor repairs) • Treatment of mould growth where this does not require an emergency or urgent response |
| <p>Programmed</p> <p>Repairs which cannot reasonably be delivered within 28 calendar days, for example because they require large or specialist works.</p> | <p>120 calendar days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large or complex repairs, or replacement of components, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Are required following an initial responsive repair which has left the element or component in a safe condition; or ◦ Cannot be delivered within 28 calendar days as they require specialist manufacture or ordering of parts/equipment (e.g. doors and windows) • Repairs which can be delivered via a planned programme to obtain better value for money, for example large scale replastering, removal of damp / failed cavity wall insulation, kitchen / bathroom repairs which require the removal and replacement of a number of units / items, renewal / replacement of external windows and doors |

- 4.7 If we are unable to accurately diagnose the repair when the customer first reports it (for example because it is a complex repair or because we identify that we need to inspect the problem), we will carry out an inspection within a maximum of 14 calendar days from the customer reporting it to us.
- 4.8 In the event of extreme external events, such as prolonged adverse weather or a pandemic, we may review and temporarily amend our repair priorities in order to maintain service delivery. If this is necessary, we will update customers of the changes via our various communication channels.

Appointments

- 4.9 We will operate the following appointment slots:
- Morning (Monday to Friday)
 - Afternoon (Monday to Friday)
 - All day (Monday to Friday)
 - Weekday evening (upon customer request)
 - Saturday morning (upon customer request)
- 4.10 We will also take account of and meet customer's reasonable adjustment requests, and will offer appointments to avoid school run times.

Customer adjustments

- 4.11 We will operate a robust process to identify and respond appropriately to any customer vulnerability such as disability, frailty, illness, domestic abuse, concern for welfare or any other identified need which may impact on the urgency of the repair or how we need to deliver it. We will also offer and make reasonable adjustments to deliver the required repair where this is necessary to meet a customer's needs.

Customer safety

- 4.12 We will act in accordance with our wider policies which aim to support and safeguard our customers, including our Safeguarding Policy, and will make referrals for the customer to receive support should we identify any needs or issues in the course of carrying out the repair.
- 4.13 In an emergency, where there is a serious risk or health and safety issue which could lead to considerable damage to the property, we may seek to gain access in accordance with the emergency access provisions of our tenancy agreement.

RBH responsibilities

- 4.14 The following are the responsibility of RBH:
- Logging the repair and providing the customer with an appointment for undertaking the work.
 - Ensuring repairs appointments which are agreed with the customer are attended at the appointment time.
 - Ensuring repairs operatives and contractors carry and show identification when attending customers' homes.
 - Carrying out all work that is necessary to complete the repair to the customer's home, in order to leave the property safe and the area which has been worked in clean and tidy following the work.

- Carrying out repair and maintenance work in a clean and tidy manner.
- Engaging with customers to inform them of the work that is to be carried out during the repair, and explaining to them what work has been completed at the end of the repair visit.
- Providing an explanation of any work that cannot be completed at the time of the visit, and setting out what will happen next to complete the work.
- Making good any areas that have been disturbed during the repair, where this is RBH's responsibility.

Customer responsibilities

4.15 The following are the responsibility of our customer:

- Reporting repairs to us in a timely manner, so that we are aware of them and can take steps to deliver them.
- Providing access for the repair to be carried out, at the time agreed with them.
- Keeping in good repair the areas of their home and surrounding areas for which they are responsible, in accordance with the conditions of the tenancy agreement or lease.
- Decorating inside the property and keeping it in good order.
- Ensuring that a responsible adult is present at the agreed time for the repair appointment.
- Clearing the area that will be required to work in to carry out the repair of personal items or valuables (including furniture, wall and floor coverings) prior to a scheduled appointment, and for reinstating these items upon completion of the repair.
- Reimbursing RBH for the cost of any repair which is the customer's responsibility but which is carried out by RBH, as set out in the Chargeable Repairs Policy.
- To seek permission for any alterations to the exterior and structural elements of the property and the key building components and installations within it which are the responsibility of RBH. Where permission is given, the customer must carry out the alterations in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the approval, including making any specified reinstatements before they terminate the tenancy.

Chargeable repairs

- 4.16 If RBH undertakes a repair which is the customer's responsibility or which has been caused by deliberate damage or loss, the cost of the works may be charged back to the customer. This will be done in accordance with our Chargeable Repairs Policy.
- 4.17 If customers have made alterations to their home which requires RBH to remove them and / or to reinstate the original elements / installations, we will identify the most suitable way of doing this. Where there are health and safety risks, the customer is unwilling to reinstate, or the nature of the works means that specific standards need to be met, we will undertake the work and recharge the customer in accordance with our Chargeable Repairs Policy.

Monitoring and intervention to address repairs

- 4.18 We will monitor the costs of repairs to our homes, and where we identify indicators or potential risk to our customers and / or homes, we may take steps to identify the root cause and to safeguard our customers and assets. Examples may include properties which require multiple repairs over a short period, high cost repairs, and indicators of customer vulnerability.
- 4.19 We will use our repairs data and other key datasets to develop our understanding of repairs and maintenance demand and to develop insight which will enable us to better forecast and plan for the delivery of this and to ensure that all customers are able to and do access the service. This will include triangulating relevant data to identify potential homes and customers where intervention is appropriate to address potential risks and to manage our resources.

Managing risk

- 4.20 We will maintain an operational risk register for repairs and maintenance, setting out our key risks and appropriate mitigations.
- 4.21 We will operate a robust process to investigate and manage any RIDDOR notifications submitted to the HSE in relation to repairs and maintenance and will take action to address any issues identified and lessons we have learned, to prevent a similar incident occurring again.
- 4.22 We will operate a robust process for dealing with and escalating any significant non-compliance with our legal or regulatory duties. Our definition of significant non-compliance is: any incident which has the potential to result in a material breach of legislation or regulatory standard, or which causes a risk to health or safety.
- All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred, or of an RBH employee becoming aware of it.
 - Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to either the relevant Service Manager or Head of Service in the first instance, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Director of Property Services. The Director of Property Services will report details of the same to the Executive Leadership Team.
 - In cases of serious non-compliance, the Executive Leadership Team will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive. In such instances, the issue will also be reported to Board.

The issue will also be recorded and investigated in accordance with the RBH accident and near miss reporting process.

Training and competency

- 4.23 We will deliver training on this policy and the procedures that support it, through appropriate methods including: team briefings; training courses; and on the job training for those delivering repairs and maintenance as part of their daily job. All training undertaken by RBH colleagues will be formally recorded.

- 4.24 We will check our contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations when we procure them, and thereafter on an annual basis; we will evidence these checks and each contractor's certification appropriately.
- 4.25 Our operatives and contractors will be skilled and trained to deliver work to a good quality in a professional way. All work will be delivered in line with our code of conduct.

Customer communications

- 4.26 We consider good communication essential in the effective delivery of repairs and maintenance, and we will undertake regular engagement and promotion of the services and support we deliver. This will encourage and support customers to report repairs and any concerns about the safety and quality of their home, and help us to engage with vulnerable and hard to reach customers. We will share information clearly and transparently and will ensure that information is available to customers via regular publications and information on our website via regular publications and information on our website via regular publications and information on our website.
- 4.27 Where we identify that customers, or groups of customers, are not accessing our services we will implement initiatives to understand the barriers and address them.

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 We will hold repairs and maintenance records against each property we own or manage.
- 5.2 We will operate a programme of post inspections and other checks to assess and monitor that repairs have been completed in accordance with this policy, and to support the effective monitoring of our budgets and financial expenditure.
- 5.3 We will monitor performance against the following indicators, and will set annual targets for each of these metrics as part of our annual business planning processes:
- Touchpoint surveys on customer satisfaction with the repair just completed
 - Satisfaction with repairs (TSM TP02)
 - Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair (TSM TP03)
 - Satisfaction that the home is well maintained (TSM TP04)
 - Satisfaction that the home is safe (TSM TP05)
 - Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard (TSM RP01)
 - Repairs completed within target timescale (TSM RP02)
 - Repairs appointed at time of reporting the repair (as % of appointable repairs)
 - % of repairs appointments attended within agreed appointment time
 - % of repairs completed at first visit
 - Number of live responsive repairs orders
 - % of responsive repairs orders which are overdue
 - Average number of calendar days to complete non-emergency repairs

- 5.4 We will periodically publish our performance against key indicators on our website so customers have information about our current performance.

6 Review

- 6.1 All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.
- 6.2 This policy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

7 Links with Other RBH Documents

- 7.1 This policy links to the following policies and strategies:

- Value for Money Strategy
- Homes and Communities Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Chargeable Repairs Policy
- Code of conduct for employees
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Gas and Heating Safety Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Fire and Building Safety Policy
- Asbestos Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy
- Disrepair Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Complaints Policy

8 Inclusivity statement

- 8.1 We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all. We ensure that everyone is valued and respected. Our policies aim to be inclusive, and will comply with UK laws, including the Equality Act 2010, to create a diverse and supportive environment for people to thrive.
- 8.2 We understand not everyone absorbs information the same way. If you have any difficulty understanding or interpreting this document please email people@rbh.org.uk or call Freephone 0800 027 7769. We will work with you to ensure your individual needs are met.