



City of Westminster

# WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL HOUSING REPAIRS CHARTER

September 2024

## What is a Repairs Charter?

This Repairs Charter gives our commitments to residents. It sets out what and how our repairs service can deliver, and the standards our customers can expect from us. More detail about the services you can expect are in our Repairs Policy.

## Report a repair

To report a repair call **0800 358 3783** or report it online through the Westminster Housing Portal: [portal.westminster.gov.uk](https://portal.westminster.gov.uk). If your repair is an emergency outside of office hours (9am-5pm) then you should contact us by telephone and select Option 1.

## Our commitment to you

We will:

- meet the highest standards
- keep your home safe
- provide value for money
- deliver services within the allocated budget
- protect the environment
- meet our statutory and contractual repairing obligations.

## How will we do this?

We will provide:

### **A service that puts residents first:**

- consulting with you to ensure we deliver the service you deserve
- listening to any feedback about repairs services
- always putting the health and safety of our residents first.

### **A convenient high-quality service:**

- carrying out repairs quickly and in one visit whenever possible
- arranging appointments to carry out the work at a time that is suitable for residents
- setting the highest possible standard for the quality of our work
- considering the environmental impact of the products, materials, and tools we use

- undertaking post-inspections, including resident walkabouts of communal areas, to ensure that work has been completed successfully.

#### **A transparent service:**

- setting out clearly our responsibilities as your landlord and your responsibilities as a tenant
- publishing information on how we are performing and sharing tenant satisfaction data
- publishing clear procedures for complaints and working to put things right
- keeping our spending within agreed budgets.

## Respect

We understand the importance of how we behave in your home. We also recognise how important it is that we carry out appointments when we say we will and that we keep you informed about the work we're undertaking.

We recognise that we are coming to work in your home and will do all we can to ensure that we accommodate your requests whenever reasonably possible. This may mean, for example, providing a translator or our operatives removing or covering their shoes when entering your home.

If you have support needs or are a vulnerable tenant, we will endeavour to undertake the repairs as soon as possible, prioritising you and your needs. We encourage you to tell us about any special circumstances when you report an issue so that we can consider this. You should tell our contact centre or housing management staff about any disability you may have, such as hearing or mobility restrictions, so that they can make special arrangements [for example knock louder or allow longer for the door to be opened] and we will record this information for all future repairs.

We will:

- treat you and your home with respect
- be polite and courteous
- visit your home as scheduled and communicate any issues with your appointment
- carry out work at a time that is suitable and only by prior arrangement
- respect your privacy and confidential information
- listen to, and respond to, your needs
- ask for your permission to use your amenities when in your home.
- introduce ourselves and show identification before entering your home
- explain the nature of the work to be carried out and discuss any potential challenges
- work tidily and clear away all materials at the end of each working day
- use clean dust sheets on all occasions and clean away all rubbish.

We will not:

- use the rubbish bins in your home
- smoke in your home, use radio equipment or leave tools and equipment where they could be a hazard
- enter your home if it appears that there are unsupervised children (under 18) present.

## Landlord and tenant responsibilities for repair

We have set out each party's responsibilities in the council's repairs policy. The council is responsible for most plumbing, heating and electrical work. We will also repair any damage we cause to decorations while carrying out repairs. Tenants are responsible for minor repairs and maintenance to your home, including internal decorations, and keeping your home clean and in a good condition.

When you report a repair, we will give you a target time of when we will complete the repair. Repairs will be categorised as either immediate, urgent or non-urgent and the timeframes for these are also set out in the council's repairs policy and shown below, the guidance that accompanies this Charter and can also be found in your [Tenant Handbook](#).

Job category	Timescale	Definition
Immediate	24 hours – attend within two hours and make safe within 24 hours	Issues which pose an immediate health and safety risk such as total loss of electric power
Urgent	1 to 7 days – attend within seven working days to undertake repair	Works that do not pose an immediate threat or safety risk but negatively impact on an occupant's access to utilities or need repair such as blocked sink, bath or basin
Right To Repair	1 to 7 days – attend and complete work in line with Right To Repair legislation	See below
Non-urgent (or routine)*	Up to 28 days – attend and complete work within 28 working days	Work that poses no threat to occupants and/or may require substantial repairs

\*Where works require the issuing of a Section 20 Notice, these will sit outside of the published timeframe.

You are responsible for providing access at reasonable times for repairs to be carried out and inspected, and for gas safety checks and other compliancy checks to be completed. It is important that you, or a responsible adult aged 18 or over, is present to provide access in these situations.

The council is committed to improving the energy efficiency of its homes. We will take every opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of your home when upgrades are required, such as replacing heating systems with more energy efficient options.

## Landlord and leaseholder responsibilities

Leaseholders are responsible for maintaining the interior of your property excluding any structural items and communal services. We are responsible for maintaining the rest of the block and estate, for which you are required to pay a proportion of the cost.

More details can be found in the [Leasehold Handbook](#), including a table showing the type of repairs and who is responsible for them.

## Statutory response times

The Right to Repair covers 20 common repairs (called qualifying repairs) listed by the government and sets a period of working days in which they must be completed. If we do not complete the repair within the prescribed period, you have the right to ask us to get a second contractor. If the work is not completed in the second prescribed period, you may be entitled to compensation. If an inspection is needed, we are allotted extra time. The Right to Repair does not include major works so if the inspection identifies the need for these you will be given more details on the target time for completion of the works. The qualifying repairs must be our responsibility; that is, not caused through misuse. The 20 common repairs covered by the Right to Repair are listed below:

Repair type	Response time (working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1

Heating or hot water not working between 1 November and 30 April	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 May and 31 October	3
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap cannot be turned	3
Leak from a water pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan not working	7

## Putting health and safety first

As your landlord we have a duty of care to you, and we must ensure that our properties remain in a reasonable state of repair at all times and are safe to occupy. We use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to assess the health and safety risks in our properties. The HHSRS aims to ensure that any home is a safe and healthy environment to live in or visit.

Under the HHSRS, a local authority:

- carries out inspections of rented housing
- identifies whether any specified hazards are present
- categorises those hazards according to objective criteria.

A hazard is any risk of harm to the health or safety of an actual or potential occupier of accommodation that arises from a deficiency in the dwelling, building or land in the vicinity.

As our tenant you also have a duty to ensure that while living there, the property is kept in reasonable condition as required by your tenancy agreement.

## Arrangements for inspections and tenant satisfaction monitoring

To ensure repairs are completed to the highest possible standard, we will, where required, carry out inspections before and after work. We will arrange an appointment with you at a mutually convenient time.

We will carry out post-repairs inspections for:

- all in-flat repairs with works exceeding £1,000, plus 10% of all works between £500 and £1,000
- all communal repairs
- other repairs as necessary.

## Resident Feedback

We will carry out independent surveys to check satisfaction with repairs and your perceptions of the service. Each survey will contact approximately 200 residents each month. Our contractors may also contact you via text message and invite you to rate the quality for the work you have received.

## If we do not meet your expectations

If repairs are delayed beyond the agreed or expected timeframe, we will let you know why and when you can expect a resolution.

### **Procedures for responding to complaints and putting them right**

We understand that we do not always deliver the service that might be expected of us, and you may wish to complain about the service you have received. Anyone who wishes to make a complaint can do so either:

- in person, at our area offices
- by telephone – **0800 358 3783**
- in writing (by letter to Westminster City Council, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP, or by using the council's [online complaint form](#)).

Our complaints process has two stages, which means you can escalate your complaint if you are not happy with our first response. If you are still not satisfied after stage two, you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk). Contact details for the Ombudsman are available on their website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk).

## Shaping the Repairs Service

We are committed to involving residents in improving the repairs service. We hold a monthly Resident Forum, open to all residents, provide our Resident Panel with quarterly performance information, and run dedicated 'task and finish groups' where residents help examine our processes and suggest improvements.

We also seek feedback from a range of sources, including complaints, compliments, attendance at resident meetings, estate inspections, workshops, ad-hoc surveys and consultations.

The council will review its repairs policies and this charter on an annual basis.

## Damp and mould

We have published a Damp and Mould Policy which sets out how we manage cases of damp and mould. It reflects best practice and is intended to give all our residents the comfort that every case of damp and mould is taken seriously. It is based on:

- **Commitment** – we will prioritise resources to tackle damp and mould.
- **No blame** – our starting point will always be that damp and mould is not caused through any fault of tenants.
- **Communication** – we will communicate with you in a timely manner and will follow up on every engagement.
- **Speed** – we will arrange a visit to diagnose and book any treatment within three days of your first report.
- **Resources** – we have a rapid-response mould removal and treatment team.
- **Resolution** – we will agree an action plan with you to resolve the issues in your home.
- **Going forward** – if your home has persistent damp then we will investigate and resolve the underlying cause.
- **Prevention** – we will give you advice and tips on how to minimise condensation and can signpost you to advice and support for your energy bills.
- **Technology** – we will invest in technology to help resolve damp issues.
- **Delivery** – we will review our damp and mould policy each year.




# Repairs service standards and our performance commitments


We are fully committed to improving customer experience in the delivery of our repairs. It is important to us that you are satisfied with the service. We set out our performance and service commitments across the Repairs Service below. This is the minimum standard that we will look to achieve.

Commitment	Target
<b>Appointments</b>	
Appointments made	90% of appointments for urgent and routine works to be made within the timescales set out in the policy (excludes emergencies where appointments are not pre-booked)
Appointments kept	90% of those appointments are attended to by an operative. If we need to change an appointment, we will call you and explain why
<b>Satisfaction</b>	
Overall repairs satisfaction	85% of all repairs
Telephone satisfaction surveys	200 calls per month undertaken
Post-Inspections	All repairs over £1,000 plus 10% between £500 and £1,000. Plus 100% of communal repairs
Stage 1 complaints	Acknowledged in five working days and response in further 10 working days
Stage 2 complaints	Acknowledged in five working days and response in further 20 working days
<b>Servicing</b>	
Gas	Annually
Electrical	10 years after newly built; 5 yearly thereafter
Reference number	Provided for all repairs
Asbestos inspections	Undertaken annually

Type 1 Fire Risk Assessments	As per Archetype: High Rise – Annually Medium Rise – 2 Years Low Rise – 3 Years Aged Converted =<4 Floors - Annually Aged Converted >4 Floors – 2 Years
Water tank Planned Preventative Maintenance	Six month and annual inspections
Heat Interface Unit in communal heating systems	Inspected annually, but inspection is not legally required
Smoke alarm / CO2 detectors	Inspected annually
Fire door inspections (flat entrance doors)	Inspected annually
Communal fire doors	Inspected quarterly

**Get in touch:**

 [westminster.gov.uk](http://westminster.gov.uk)

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