

repairs and maintenance policy

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1. Policy statement

- 1.1. believe housing is committed to delivering a high-quality, modern and effective repairs service.
- 1.2. We aim to provide an excellent customer experience while ensuring homes are safe, healthy and well maintained.
- 1.3. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that all believe housing colleagues, contractors and customers are aware, understand and are equipped with information to deliver the requirements of the repairs service.

2. Policy aims

- 2.1. This policy recognises that a successful repairs service considers doing the right thing for believe housing's customers, colleagues and business.
- 2.2. The policy is designed to meet the following aims and objectives:

Aims

- Deliver a quality repairs and maintenance service and ensure homes are safe, healthy and well maintained.
- Deliver the promises made within the service standards (**Appendix A**).
- Utilise technology and best practice to achieve excellent results for both colleagues and customers.
- Make the best use of our data to understand customer expectation, demand and improve service delivery.
- Comply with relevant statutory and regulatory obligations.
- Fulfil our compliance responsibilities.
- Respect and protect our planet through our working practices.

3. Objectives

- To listen to and act upon customer feedback to shape service delivery and customer experience, now and in the future.
- To continually strive for the highest levels of performance and customer satisfaction.
- To place emphasis on the quality of repair works.
- To clearly define the repair responsibilities of believe housing and customers.
- To provide a service that is accessible and convenient for customers.
- To undertake repairs in the most efficient manner whilst adopting a right first time ethos.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy covers the responsive repairs and maintenance service to properties and communal areas owned and/or managed by believe housing and where believe housing has a legislative or contractual obligation to carry out repairs. Excluded from this policy are rechargeable repairs, customer home improvements and void repairs, which will have their own policies or procedures.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1. The Assistant Director of Repairs Operations will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 5.2. The Repairs and Property Experience Manager will ensure that the policy and associated procedures are embedded within the operational delivery of the repairs service and that all colleagues are aware of their responsibilities and are adequately trained and competent to carry them out.
- 5.3. believe housing colleagues, contractors and customers will follow the policy guidelines and its approach to repairs and maintenance.

6. Legislation and guidance

- 6.1. believe housing will deliver a repairs service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure the health, safety and security of people and property are maintained at all times.
- 6.2. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) provides The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from 2024 including 'The Safety and Quality Standard'.
- 6.3. The key areas of legislation in this policy are:
- Defective Premises Act 1972
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Building Regulations Act 1984
 - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Housing Act 2004
 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Social Housing (Regulation Act) 2023 (including Awaab's Law)

7. Definitions

- 7.1. **'Customer'** – Any tenant or leaseholder of a property owned or managed by believe housing.
- 7.2. **'Repair'** – The process of rectifying a component or installation when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair; in a believe housing owned and/or managed property.

8. Repair responsibilities

- 8.1. The responsibility for repairing and maintaining homes is shared between believe housing and our customers. A full list of these responsibilities, derived from the Tenancy Agreement, are detailed in **Appendix B**.
- 8.2. believe housing is committed to providing self-help guidance for some minor repairs and repairs that are the responsibility of the customer.
- 8.3. Customers must report repairs that are the responsibility of believe housing, as soon as reasonably possible, to ensure the property does not fall into disrepair.

9. Repair categories

- 9.1. Repairs will be classified and responded to within believe housing's repair categories and timescales.

Remote repairs

- 9.2. Depending on the nature of the repair, there may be occasions where believe housing is able to diagnose and carry out repairs remotely, via telephone or video call technology.
- 9.3. This will assist and support customers to carry out a repair themselves, where they want or are able to, reducing waiting times and preventing the need for believe housing to visit the property.
- 9.4. Where a repair has been categorised as a remote repair, customers will be contacted within 24 hours from the repair being reported.
- 9.5. Where a remote repair is actioned, but it does not solve the problem, a repair will be raised, categorised and appointed in line with the timescales set out in the policy.

Emergency repairs and hazards

- 9.6. Emergency repairs are any defects that put the health, safety or security of properties, customers or anyone else at immediate risk.

- 9.7. An emergency hazard is one that poses an imminent and significant risk of harm to the health or safety of the customer in the property.

Out of hours emergency repairs

- 9.8. Emergency repairs are available outside of day-to-day operating hours for repairs that pose an immediate risk to people and/or property. We aim to carry out the full repair. Where this is not possible, we will arrange a new appointment at a time convenient for the customer.
- 9.9. Emergency repairs/hazards will be responded to and the relevant safety works completed **within 24 hours**.
- 9.10. We aim to carry out the full repair. Where this is not possible, we will arrange a new appointment at a time convenient for the customer.

Next convenient appointment

- 9.11. An appointable repair is a repair that can prevent immediate damage to the property and/or overcome inconvenience to customers.
- 9.12. Appointable repairs will be carried out within **28 working days** from the time a repair is reported to the completion of the work, at the customer's convenience.
- 9.13. Appointable repairs will be available 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. In certain circumstances, we may offer appointments outside of these hours to meet specific needs. These appointments will be mutually agreed with our customers.
- 9.14. External repairs, where access is available, will be completed within a target timeframe rather than a specific appointment being made.

Planned repairs

- 9.15. There are some repairs that require specialist materials and/or equipment and further time to complete, these will be categorised as planned repairs.
- 9.16. Planned repairs will be carried out within **60 working days**.
- 9.17. External repairs, where access is available, will be completed within a target timeframe rather than a specific appointment being made.

Major repairs

- 9.18. Major repairs are works that include capital element replacements, structural works or are complex in nature. Due to the extensive nature of these works further planning time is required.
- 9.19. Major repair work will be carried out within **60 working days**.

9.20. Examples of repairs that fall under each response category are listed in **Appendix C**.

10. Reporting repairs

10.1. Customers can report repairs in a variety of ways at a time and place that suits them.

Repairs can be reported by:

- Customer app/online portal
- Email
- In person
- Telephone - via the believe housing customer hub.

10.2. believe housing's aim is to arrange a convenient appointment at first contact with the customer and complete the repair, where possible, within one visit.

10.3. Access to the repairs service will be reviewed regularly ensuring commitment to future technologies and embracing new ways of working.

11. Appointment timescales

11.1. believe housing offers a flexible appointment system for repairs (excluding emergencies, which are carried out within 24 hours).

Appointment slots offered include:

- 8am – 12pm
- 10am – 2pm
- 12pm – 4pm
- All day.

11.2. We will keep customers up to date with the status of their repair from reporting until completion, including 'operative on route' notifications.

12. Individual circumstances

12.1. believe housing appreciate and embrace the diversity of customers and there will be occasions where services will need to be tailored to accommodate individuals and their needs. This approach is set out in our Vulnerability Policy and Customer Strategy. Every attempt will be made to identify any individual circumstances at first point of contact to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made.

12.2. Repairs classified as complex, which may involve multiple trades over several days, will receive additional attention to facilitate the completion of work and support customers. Additional measures may include assigning a designated point of contact to assist customers throughout the repair process.

13. Inspections

Pre-inspections

- 13.1. A pre-inspection may be required before a repair appointment can be arranged. This will include circumstances where the scope of the repair is unknown. Following the inspection, the repair will be diagnosed and planned within the appropriate timescales. Pre-inspections will be carried out in person, via video call or by reviewing photographs.

Post-inspections

- 13.2. To ensure believe housing is delivering a high-quality repairs service and committing to added value, a sample of completed repairs will be inspected regularly.

14. No access

- 14.1. If believe housing is unable to gain access due to the customer not being home for an agreed appointment, the customer will be notified that the repair has been cancelled and to contact believe housing to raise another appointment.
- 14.2. Where a no access occurs and the repair is related to health and safety matters, compliance works, works for major repairs or materials have been ordered, the repair will stay open to allow time to make contact to rebook the repair.
- 14.3. believe housing will monitor no accessed visits to support the aims and objectives of this policy and associated procedures.
- 14.4. Repeated no access for compliance appointments will be monitored and action may be taken, including recharging in line with the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

15. Rechargeable repairs

- 15.1. Damage that has been caused by a customer, their family members or visitors to a property, may be rechargeable. A rechargeable repair is defined as, '*repairs that are above and beyond normal wear and tear, and arise from abuse, accidental damage, neglect or deliberate and/or malicious damage*'.
- 15.2. Rechargeable repairs are underpinned by the tenancy agreement and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy, which will enable believe housing to recover the costs resulting from customers who fail to meet their obligations.

16. Customer home improvements

- 16.1. Where customers have carried out alterations or improvements to a property and written permission has been sought, believe housing will not be responsible for carrying out repairs unless this has been previously agreed and in writing.

16.2. Any alterations made without prior approval will be referred to the Customer Home Improvements Team for investigation and action.

17. High levels of repairs

17.1. Where a customer has reported a high level of repairs over a set period of time, an inspection will be carried out to the property to determine the cause of the repairs. The inspection will identify whether further repairs can be raised. We will use this data to inform our approach to asset management; this may include more detailed surveys being carried out.

18. Leaseholders

18.1. Leaseholders should refer to their leasehold agreements for details of their repairs and maintenance responsibilities.

19. Performance and customer satisfaction

19.1. believe housing will collate and monitor performance information in relation to repairs strategic key performance indicators.

19.2. Customer satisfaction testing will be conducted regularly and independently on a random selection of completed repairs via various methods such as, but not limited to, online surveys or by telephone.

19.3. Analysis of the feedback will be used to identify trends and to continuously improve service delivery.

20. Monitoring and review

20.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years unless there is a significant incident, important change in circumstances or legislation that would warrant a review being carried out at an earlier date. Following the implementation of Awaab's Law we will complete a review of the policy to consider any significant changes.

21. Links to other policies

21.1. This document should also be read in conjunction with:

- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Customer Home Improvement Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Water Hygiene Policy
- Fire Management Policy
- Complaints, Compensation and Compliments Policy
- Gas and Solid Fuel Safety Policy

- Electrical Safety Policy
- Leasehold Management Policy
- Rechargeable Repair Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Vulnerability Policy.

22. Appendices

Appendix A – Service standards

Appendix B – Repair responsibilities

Appendix C – Repair categories and examples

Appendix A – Service standards

Repairs and maintenance	believe housing	Customers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide easy ways to report repairs and agree appointments that are convenient for you ✓ Provide clear and realistic timescales while ensuring appointments are honoured ✓ Deliver good quality work, with homes left clean and tidy ✓ Be polite, friendly and treat you and your home with respect throughout your repairs journey ✓ Aim to carry out your repair on the first visit, where possible ✓ Ensure clear and prompt communication throughout the repair process ✓ Enable colleagues to complete their work well, ensuring they are competent for the work they are undertaking ✓ Provide a repairs service that considers individual needs ✓ Use your feedback to continuously improve our services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inform us of any repairs that need doing to your home ✓ Give our employees access to your property to carry out any necessary work, including your annual safety checks ✓ If you cannot make an appointment, let us know in advance of the appointment date and time ✓ Treat our staff and contractors fairly, politely and with respect

Appendix B – Repair/improvement responsibilities

BH – believe housing

C – customer

Grey shading indicates who is responsible

*believe housing may carry out this repair in line with the rechargeable repair policy

REPAIR/IMPROVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	
	BH	C
EXTERNAL		
Communal areas including lifts and stairs maintenance		
Garages and outbuildings, if owned by us (excluding unauthorised alterations)		
Garden maintenance and clearance of rubbish		
Curtilage fencing, walls and gates erected by us or with our permission		
Curtilage fencing, walls and gates erected by the customer, we will remove if it is presenting a health and safety risk		
Footpaths and hard standings within the curtilage		
Footpaths and hard standings installed by the customer		
Clothes lines and rotary driers installed by the customer		
External painting and decoration		
External masonry, cladding and rendering		
INTERNAL		
Doors and windows		
Gaining entry to the property due to keys lost, lock-in and lock-out*		
Gaining entry to a fire door due to keys lost, lock-in and lock-out*		
Glazing and other damage due to misuse*		
Outside doors, frames and thresholds		
Outside door locks and ironmongery		
Internal doors catches and handles		
Adjusting doors for new floor coverings (exception of fire doors)		
Door entry systems		
Door vents repairs (the customer has the responsibility to keep vents clear to ensure permanent ventilation for heating appliances)		
Window frames and architraves, sills		
Window ironmongery and trickle vents		
Window blinds removing and adjusting		
Internal timber or UPVC window boards		
Additional window locks		

Security door chains		
Roofs and canopies		
Aerials, satellite dishes, telephone equipment and all associated cabling		
Chimneys and chimney stacks and pots		
Roof structure and coverings		
Fascia, soffit and barge boards		
Guttering rainwater pipes and clips		
Concrete canopies over doors and windows		
Pipes and drainage		
Soil vent pipes and clips		
Drain and gulley surrounds		
Drain grids		
Keeping gully grids clean		
Inspection chambers		
Clearing blocked drainage (not the water authority primary drainage)		
Walls		
Foundations and damp-proof course		
Core vents repairs (the customer has the responsibility to keep vents clear to ensure permanent ventilation for heating appliances)		
Major plaster work		
Minor plaster work such as small holes and minor imperfection in finish		
Decorative finishes - paint, panelling and Artex (some Artex may contain small traces of asbestos) customers must seek permission from us before removing Artex finishes		
Wall tiling if provided by us (where tiles are replaced an exact match cannot be guaranteed)		
Wall tiling installed by the customer		
Skirting boards		
Decorative dado and picture rails installed by the customer		
Ceilings		
Major plaster work		
Minor plaster work such as small holes and minor imperfection in finish		
Decorative finishes - paint and Artex (some Artex may contain small traces of asbestos) customers must seek permission from us before removing Artex finishes		
Decorative plaster coving		

Floors		
Timber floorboards and joists		
Concrete and screeds		
Vinyl flooring and floor tiles provided by us (where tiles are replaced an exact match cannot be guaranteed)		
Repairs to floor tiles containing asbestos		
Flooring in communal areas		
Floor covering and carpets (not in communal areas)		
Staircases		
Treads, risers, banisters, spindles and handrails		
Additional handrails and brackets		
Bathroom		
Bath panels		
Wooden airing cupboard shelving slats		
Internal pipe boxing (if provided by us)		
Sink unit		
Wash hand basin		
Bath/shower tray		
Showers		
Seals to bath/sink		
Toilet seat and lid		
Shower curtain		
Kitchens		
Kitchen cupboards (where parts are replaced an exact match cannot be guaranteed)		
Refixing or tightening cupboard drawer fronts and doors		
Refixing or tightening cupboard handles, catches and hinges		
Worktops (where parts are replaced an exact match cannot be guaranteed)		
Any damage to the above caused by misuse		
Plumbing		
Water service pipes from internal stop tap, overflow pipes and water tanks		
Blocked sink, bath and wash hand basin waste pipes		
Blocked toilets		
Taps, stop tap and wheel valves		
Toilet flushing system		
Plugs and chains		

Bleeding air from radiators		
Removing and replacing of radiators for decoration		
Repairs to plumbing due to misuse, decorating, carpet fitting etc		
Gas services		
Gas meter and supply of gas		
Gas pipework		
Gas boilers		
Gas fires		
Radiators, valves, time clocks and thermostats		
Gas cooker disconnection and reconnection		
Electrics		
Electric meter and supply of electric		
Electric consumer unit and trip switches		
Electrical wiring, sockets and light fittings		
External light fittings (if installed by us)		
Wired-in smoke and carbon monoxide alarms		
Standard light bulbs (except communal areas)		
Sealed lights and fluorescent tubes found in kitchens and bathrooms		
Electric storage heaters (if installed by us)		
Electric focal point fires (if installed by us)		
Immersion heaters		
Extractor fans		
Heat recovery units/air-source heating and PV installations		
Electrical appliances, plugs and fuses		
Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms		
Electric cooker disconnection and reconnection		
Solid fuel appliances		
General cleaning of appliances including de-ashing		
Repair of component parts and cleaning of throat plate inclusive of two services per year		
Energy efficiency		
Draught-proofing		
Loft insulation		
Condensation and mould		

Surveying, providing advice and treating large areas of condensation and mould		
Cleaning small areas of condensation and mould		

Appendix C – Repair categories and examples

Remote repairs:

- No heating/hot water.
- Tripped electrics.
- Assistance for minor repairs; for example, bleeding radiators, filling minor holes and cracks in plaster.

Emergency repairs/hazards:

- Total loss of water supply.
- Total loss of heating (between 1st October – 31st March).
- Total loss of electrics.
- Total loss of fire alarm coverage.
- Total loss of adaptation lifting equipment such as stairlifts or through floor lifts.
- Exposed electrical wires.
- Dangerous structures including wall or ceiling collapse.
- Unsecure doors and windows.
- Fire door make safe following significant damage or breach.
- Prevalent damp and mould that is impacting a customer’s ability to breathe.

Next convenient appointment:

- Plumbing leaks.
- Partial loss of electricity.
- Partial loss of heating or water.

Planned repairs:

- Repairing internal joinery including skirting and bath panels.
- Cleaning out and/or repairing defects to gutters and rainwater pipes.
- Fencing repairs.

Major repairs:

- Damp proof course (DPC) work.
- Capital component renewals; for example, kitchen, bathroom.
- Complex works; for example, full floor renewals.
- Structural works (non-emergency).