



# Customer guide to repairs

Working with you to keep your home in good repair

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# About this guide

We want to work with you to help keep your home in good repair. This includes us carrying out repairs that are our responsibility, as well as supporting you to look after things that are your responsibility.

This guide sets out how we will carry out repairs for you in line with our responsibilities as a registered social landlord. It also sets out your responsibilities for keeping your home in good order and for carrying out some repairs.

The guide provides a summary of:

- The repairs we will take responsibility for carrying out, and those you need to do yourself
- How to order repairs for your home and what to do in an emergency
- Our timescales for attending to and completing repairs
- Information about the steps you must take when planning your own alterations or improvements
- Our approach to servicing equipment and carrying out longer-term investment in homes
- Our customer service standards, compensation and complaints process
- How we will report back to customers on our repair's performance.

The guide is intended to provide a general summary of the repair arrangements. You should refer to your tenancy or lease agreement for additional details.

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# 1. Repair Responsibilities

## What repairs are we responsible for?

As your landlord, we are responsible many of the repairs needed to the outside and inside of your home. This includes keeping your home safe, secure and waterproof. Our repair responsibilities fall into four main types:

- The building structure – the roof, walls, windows, doors, gutters, downpipes, and drains.
- Essential facilities – the heating, cold and hot water, electrical wiring, plumbing, mechanical ventilation, kitchen, toilet and bath/shower.
- The internal structure – keeping the inside walls, doors, floors, ceilings and steps/stairs of your home structurally sound, and free from damp and disrepair.
- Communal areas – the shared entrance, hall, stairs, landing, lighting, and lift and door entry facilities in flat blocks.

It is easy and free of charge to report repairs to us, check about whose responsibility something might be, or raise any issues or concerns with us. See section 2 for how to report repairs.

## What things are you responsible for?

Under the tenancy agreement, it is your responsibility to:

- Carry out some items of minor maintenance, keep your garden, terrace or balcony tidy, free from rubbish, and ensure you do not cause your home to become unsafe. This includes tasks like replacing light bulbs, keeping drains clear (unless caused by a fault), mowing grass and garden maintenance, and disposing responsibly of litter/rubbish.
- Prevent damage caused by neglect or misuse (where this happens you may be charged) and insure your own possessions (we recommend you take out home contents insurance in case your belongings become damaged).
- Carry out repairs necessary to any items or equipment you have installed in your home. However, if we need to carry out an emergency repair on any items or equipment you have installed, for example due to safety or property concerns, you may be charged for the repair.
- Report repairs promptly to emh, give access for them to be carried out, and let us know about any issues or concerns.
- See section 9 for a full list of repairs you are responsible for.

## Are you struggling with your repair responsibilities?

You could ask a friend or neighbour to help, search online for 'how to' guides (for example on YouTube) or use a handyman service or tradesperson. If you are especially frail, have a disability or are vulnerable please let us know as we may be able to provide special assistance.

## 2. Reporting repairs

### Contacting us

The quickest way to report a repair is via: [myhomeonline](#). This online reporting system will quickly guide you through all the steps needed to let us know about the problem.

You can also email us at [customerservices@emh.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@emh.co.uk)

Or you call us on **0300 123 6000**. The Contact Centre is open for calls from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday (from 10am Tuesdays) excluding Bank Holidays and the festive period. If you call us outside of these times you'll be directed to our out-of-hours service.

### Our out-of-hours service

Sometimes, repairs need attending to quickly to protect your safety, the safety or wellbeing of other residents, or to prevent ongoing damage to your property. So, when our Contact Centre is closed, our out-of-hours service is always open on the usual number **0300 123 6000**.

The out-of-hours service is for things that can't wait until the Contact Centre is next open. Examples include no heating or hot water, no electric power, and serious leaks that cannot be contained and are causing damage to the property and/or your belongings. In many cases, the situation may be 'made safe' or a temporary repair carried out, with us returning to make full repairs.

### Gas emergencies

If you smell gas in your home contact the **National Gas Emergency Service** immediately on 0800 111 999 and do this:

- Turn off your gas supply at the meter
- Open all your doors and windows to allow the gas to escape outside
- Do not use any electrical appliances or turn light switches on or off
- Limit the use of your mobile phone to emergency calls only
- Do not use doorbells
- Do not light any matches or lighters
- The National Gas Emergency service is a free service. They will identify the cause of the leak and isolate it, but you must contact us to carry out any repairs needed after they have attended.
- For any repairs to gas heating systems, please contact us directly.

# 3. Repair priorities and timescales

We prioritise repairs based on the nature and urgency of the work involved. This is to deliver an efficient and cost effective service and to ensure our resources are used where customers need them most. Repairs needed because of breakdowns of critical equipment or that put residents' health and safety or the property at risk will be dealt with more quickly than those that can safely wait.

## Emergency repairs – to be addressed within 24 hours

An emergency repair is a fault or failure that poses a significant and/or immediate risk to your health, safety, or security, or could cause significant damage to the property.

Examples include dangerous structures, external doors that are insecure, no heating or hot water, no electric power, severe cases of damp/mould, and serious leaks that cannot be contained and are causing damage to the property and/or your belongings.

## Urgent repairs – to be addressed within 5 working days

An urgent repair is often a partial fault or failure that, whilst not an immediate emergency, requires a quick response to prevent further damage or inconvenience to you or your property. Examples include partial loss of power, lighting or heating, containable plumbing or roof leaks, and damp and mould remedial work if it presents a significant hazard.

## Routine repairs – to be addressed within 28 working days

A routine repair is a non-emergency or urgent repair that is not causing a serious health or safety risk and does not require early attention to prevent inconvenience to you or further damage to the property. These repairs can be scheduled over several weeks.

Examples include minor plumbing repairs (e.g. drips, faulty but working taps), repairs to non-dangerous wiring), repairing or replacing a pendant light fitting, non-urgent roof/chimney and gutter repairs, and general repairs to walls, plastering and brickwork.

## Responsive planned works – to be commenced and completed within 60 working days

A responsive planned repair usually involves a larger scale repair, replacement or renewal of a component that might typically be carried out under a longer-term planned programme but has been assessed as being needed sooner. It may require parts or components that require manufacture and/or need more time to organise.

Examples include replacement of WC, basin, sink or bath/shower facility (if they remain working in the meantime), replacement of electrical consumer unit or wiring, larger repairs and rebuilding of walls, fencing, including non-urgent damp and mould remedial work, and replacement of windows/doors.

## Pre-inspections

Some jobs will require a pre-inspection visit by one of our surveyors before the repair can be arranged. These are where we need more information about so we can decide what works are needed.

## 4. Appointments, access, and completing work

### Appointments

We aim to offer you an appointment when you contact us to report a repair, or in a follow-up call within four hours of the repair being reported. Sometimes, we may need to ask our contractor to contact you directly to arrange the appointment.

The reason for making appointments is so we can efficiently organise the works and to try and make things as convenient for you as a customer. We will try to accommodate specific timeslot requirements, but this is not always possible.

The following appointment slots will be offered both for initial appointments and for any subsequent follow up appointments that may be necessary.

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| AM – between 8am and 12pm                       | Monday to Friday |
| PM – between 12pm and 4pm                       | Monday to Friday |
| All day – between 8am and 4pm – for larger work | Monday to Friday |
| School run – avoid school run                   | Monday to Friday |
| AM – between 8am and 12pm                       | Saturdays        |

### Access arrangements

We ask that you give us access to carry out the repair work (or a repair pre-inspection) at the time of the arranged appointment.

If you need to change the day or time of the appointment, we ask that you give us as much notice as possible (ideally at least 24 hours' before).

If you are not in at the arranged time, we will leave a card asking you to get in touch to re-arrange the appointment. If you miss an agreed appointment time we may need to charge you. We may also try to get in touch with you by phone, text or email. If we are unable to arrange a further appointment with you, we may have to cancel the job.

### Completing work

We aim to complete all work in the timescales we set, ideally on the first visit. However, we may not be able to complete a repair on the first visit, for example if parts are needed or if on an emergency call-out we can only make the situation safe.

If the repair cannot be fully completed on the first visit, you will be given a *'what happens next card'* providing the reason and a timescale/appointment for when the repair is likely to be completed.

If an outstanding repair affects the ongoing health, safety, comfort or convenience of you and your household we will work with you to see what temporary arrangements are needed. Examples include providing you with portable heaters if your heating system has broken down or offering short-term alternative accommodation.

## 5. Carrying out your own alterations or improvements

In general, if you have installed something in your home it is then your responsibility to carry out any repairs or maintenance required on that item.

You must obtain permission from us before making any alterations or installations in your home. If you are not sure if permission is required, contact us and we can advise you further. If any alterations are carried out without permission, this is a breach of the tenancy agreement, and we may require the home to be put back to the way it was. If you refuse to do so, we may carry out the work and charge back the cost.

For some improvements for which you obtain permission, you may be able to claim compensation for a portion of the cost at the end of your tenancy. We can provide further information on this.

Should we be required to carry out an emergency repair on any items you have installed, for example if not doing so would result in further damage to the property, you may be charged for the repair.

## 6. Servicing and longer term planned works

To ensure homes and properties continue to remain in good condition we service equipment and have a long-term plan for renewing and replacing the main structural parts of buildings, internal facilities, fixtures and fittings. We test and service equipment at set frequencies. Our programmes of work are planned many years ahead and are informed by ongoing surveys and information about the condition of homes and properties.

Examples of our testing and servicing work include annual gas boiler safety checks, five yearly inspection of electrical wiring in homes, and lift servicing. Please allow us access for these vital safety checks; for repeated missed appointments we may charge you.

Examples of items for which we have planned replacement programmes include kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, windows, doors and roof coverings.

We also carry out regular programmes of planned preventative maintenance. This work helps keep the main parts of buildings in good condition, so they last longer. Examples include the treatment or painting of timber surfaces and maintaining the good appearance of buildings by things such as redecoration of internal common areas, the cleaning of UPVC items and so on.

# 7. Customer service, compensation and complaints

We are committed to delivering high standards of customer service when carrying out repairs. We will therefore make sure that:

- All works are undertaken to a high standard by skilled operatives wearing readily identifiable uniforms and carrying identification
- We provide inclusive, fair, and accessible arrangements, providing additional assistance if you have special needs or vulnerabilities
- Your home is left clean and tidy following any repair work
- We monitor how we are doing against our standards and targets, including measuring levels of satisfaction
- We constantly try to improve our repairs service, learning the lessons when things go wrong.

## Complaints and compensation

We welcome feedback about our repairs service, including complaints where service levels have fallen below our standards. Please see this guide for more information on the Complaints Process and our contact details [emh-complaints-guide.pdf](#)

You may be entitled to compensation in some circumstances if we have failed to complete repairs satisfactorily or in the timescales we set.

Our Compensation Policy sets out clear information about how compensation payments for service failure are calculated. For example, for a failed appointment - where we have failed to keep an agreed appointment or attend within the agreed timescales without attempting to advise the customer in advance – we may pay £10 per appointment up to a maximum of £50.

## 8. Accounting for our performance

We are committed to delivering high standards of work and excellent levels of customer service in all our repair and maintenance work.

To help us do this we measure our performance and the targets we have set and compare ourselves against other social housing landlords. This helps us to continually drive improvements in how we deliver our works and services for the benefit of customers.

As a social housing landlord, we our performance is monitored and checked by the Regulator of Social Housing. We are required to use a set of national Tenant Satisfaction Measures to check what our customers think of the repair and other services we provide. This includes surveying customers about what they think of the services, and we publish the results annually. This information can be found on the emh website.

We also seek to actively involve customers in our repair and maintenance work. By doing this, we can take on board views and feedback about what matters most, what is working well, and where we need to improve. We have a repairs group in which customers are involved, and we engage more widely using surveys and newsletters.

# 9. Easy-read guide to repair responsibilities and priorities

## 1. Gas, heating and hot water

We will provide safe and reliable heating and hot water for your home. We will carry out annual servicing for any gas heating system and repair your heating system promptly if it breaks down. We will provide temporary heating if your heating fails in the colder months (generally Nov - Mar).

## 2. Electrical

We will maintain the electrical distribution and components in your home, repairing faulty wiring, switches, and electrical components.

## 3. Water, plumbing and drainage

We will repair and maintain your bathroom, toilet, water supply pipework, and drainage systems. We ask that you help keep drains clear from blockages by refraining from pouring oil and grease down sinks.

## 4. Building structure, fixtures and fittings (outside and inside)

We will carry out repairs and maintenance to make sure your home remains structurally sound, safe, secure and in good order.

## 5. Communal areas

We will take responsibility for keeping communal areas for which are responsible in a good state of repair, maintaining and managing them well.

## 6. Pests and infestations

We will help prevent pests and infestations by keeping buildings in good repair, and tackle problems caused by recognised pests. We expect customers to minimise the risk of pests and infestations by disposing of refuse responsibly and not feeding pigeons and vermin.

## 1. Gas, heating and hot water

| Issue                                  | We are responsible for   | Your responsibilities   |
|--|--|---|
| Gas meter and gas supply               | Providing you will help and advice.  | Gas meter and supply of gas (by containing your gas supplier) and maintaining credit on your meter.   |
| Gas cooking appliances                 | Carrying out visual inspections during the annual gas safety check of gas cookers, ovens and hobs provided by you. | Repairing and maintaining gas cookers, ovens and hobs provided by you.  |
| Gas boilers and fires                  | All repairs, maintenance and carrying out an annual safety inspection.   | Checking your gas supply and that you have credit on your meter.  |
| Electric heaters and focal point fires | Electric storage heaters, electric radiators, immersion heaters or focal point fires installed by us.              | Any portable electric heaters or focal point fires provided by you.   |
| Showers                                | Showers and isolating switches installed by us.  | Showers and isolating switches installed by you. You will also need to de-scale shower heads periodically, as well as putting cleaning agent down sink U-bend pipes occasionally to stop them getting blocked up. |
| Radiators and pipework                 | Faults and leaks to pipework, radiators, and hot water cylinders.  | For containing leaks (using isolation valves if possible) and collecting leaking water as best as possible, for bleeding air from radiators, and helping prevent pipework from freezing in cold weather.          |
| Chimneys                               |  | Sweeping chimneys (real fires) as necessary (annually is recommended)   |

## 2. Electrical

| Issue  | We are responsible for   | You are responsible for   |
|--|--|---|
| Electric meter and supply of electric                                  | Providing you with help and advice.  | Contacting and dealing with your electricity supply company and keeping credit on your meter.   |
| Electric consumer unit (fuse box) and trip switches (fuses)            | The mains consumer unit and trip switches.   | Resetting any fuses that have 'tripped', and making sure your own electrical appliances aren't causing the fuses to trip.   |
| Electrical installation  | The wiring, sockets, switches throughout your home.  | Making sure you don't overload sockets and that your own electrical appliances aren't causing sockets to trip the mains consumer unit.                              |
| Lighting and light fittings  | Standard pendant light fittings and sealed lights and fluorescent tubes found in kitchens and bathrooms. | Light fittings and shades fitted by you.  |
| Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms                                       | Mains and battery alarms fitted by us.   | Any additional battery alarms installed by you.   |
| Extractor fans   | The servicing, repair or replacement of extractor fans.  | Dusting and cleaning the grill of extractor fans (do not remove the grill front).   |
| Heat recovery units/ air-source heating and PV (solar) installations   | The servicing, repair or replacement of equipment provided by us.  | The servicing, repair or replacement of equipment provided by you.  |
| Electrical appliances, plugs and fuses                                 | Cookers and other electrical appliances provided by us.  | Repairing, maintaining, and replacing (including connecting/disconnecting) all electrical appliances (e.g. cookers, fridges, washing machines, TVs) provided by you |
| TV aerial, TV sockets, satellite dishes and phone/internet connections |  | All TV and phone equipment, connections and service contracts.  |

### 3. Water, plumbing and drainage

| Issue                              | We are responsible for  | You are responsible for   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Water meter and supply of water    | Providing you with help and advice.   | Contacting and dealing with your water supply company and keeping credit on your account.   |
| Pipework and water supplies        | Faults and leaks to pipework in your home and the water supply pipes within the grounds of your home.   | For containing leaks (using the stop tap or isolation valves if possible), collecting leaking water as best as possible. Contacting and dealing with your water supply company about leaks and supply issues on pipes in the road or other public areas.  |
| Drains and soil pipes              | Clearing blockages and carrying out repairs due to their poor condition or unforeseeable damage of drains and inspection chambers within the grounds of your home.  | For making sure you do not block the drains by the disposal of items down the toilet or sink that cause blockages (for example, fats, food, objects, etc.). You may be charged if it is found the blockage has been caused by you. Also, for contacting and dealing with your water supply company about blocked drains in the road or other public areas |
| Bathroom sanitaryware and fittings | Repairs to toilets, basins, taps, baths, bath panels, shower trays, level access showers or wet rooms, replacing items if broken. We will repair dripping or leaking taps, pop-up wastes, flushing mechanisms, cisterns or overflows. | Replacing basic plugs and chains, WC seats and lids, shower curtains, as well as the cost of repairing or replacing items that you have damaged. Cleaning of sanitaryware, grout, and seals/sealant using regular cleaning products.  |
| Kitchen sink, tap and fittings     | Repairs to sinks, taps, draining boards, replacing items if broken.   | Replacing basic plugs and chains, as well as the cost of repairing or replacing items that you have damaged. Cleaning of the sink, seals/sealant using regular cleaning products.   |

## 4. Building structure, fixtures and fittings (outside and inside)

| Issue   | We are responsible for  | You are responsible for   |
|---|---|---|
| Roofing (including bargeboards, soffits, guttering and rainwater pipes), external walls and foundations | Keeping the building in good repair, structurally sound, wind and watertight, ensuring guttering and rainwater pipes remain clear and functioning properly.   | Ensuring outlets and grids remain clear of leaves and debris. Not stacking soil or building materials or other items against the external walls of the property.  |
| Doors and windows (including glazing, keys and locks)   | Carrying out routine repairs and maintenance to internal and external doors and windows and repairing broken or faulty locks and handles. We will also secure your property and replace locks and glazing if due to a break-in or attempted break-in. | Making changes to doors when carpets are fitted. Painting of internal timber doors (if required). Replacing damaged or broken glazing (apart from that due to a crime). Arranging access to your property if you are locked out. You may need a locksmith, and you will be responsible for the cost. If you lose window keys these can be bought at most home and DIY stores. |
| Walls and ceilings  | Repairing or renewing plaster finishes that have failed, or where significant cracks arise. Internal woodwork, including skirting boards and door frames.   | Filling and decoration of plaster finishes throughout your home, including smaller hairline cracks and minor plasterwork issues. Repairs to decorative coving, dados, picture rails and shelving.   |
| Kitchen cupboards and worktops  | Sinks, kitchen units and worktops we have installed. When carrying out repairs we will try to match kitchen doors and worktops, but this may not always be possible.  | Installing kitchen appliances (e.g. cooker, washing machine and dishwasher) as well as minor maintenance such as tightening up loose handles on kitchen units.  |
| Wall tiles  | Repairing or replacing tiles we have installed. We will try to match tiling, but this may not always be possible.   | Cleaning grouting and repairing or replacing wall tiles you have installed.   |
| Floor coverings   | Providing, repairing and replacing anti-slip flooring in the kitchen, bathroom and any  | Providing, maintaining and replacing carpets, laminate, rugs or other floor   |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | WC rooms. We will also take responsibility for any pre-finished (e.g. solid vinyl tile) floor coverings in other rooms if installed by us.  | coverings that you have installed or taken over from previous occupants of the property.   |
| Floorboards and concrete floors/screeds | Repairing broken or rotten flooring, and solid concrete floors/screeds.   | Sanding and varnishing any uncovered floorboards to provide a smooth finish for living.  |
| Staircases, handrails and balustrades   | Maintaining the structural condition and safety, including of additional handrails installed by us or through a Disabled Facilities Grant.  | Painting of timber handrails and balustrades (if required). Repairing and maintaining any additional handrails you have installed.   |
| Stairlifts and lifting equipment        | All equipment we have provided or that have been provided through a Disabled Facilities Grant.  | Repairing, maintaining and servicing any equipment you have installed.   |
| Damp, mould and condensation            | Maintaining the structure of your home, carrying out repairs when required to remedy problems, cleaning or reinstating damaged plasterwork or decoration. Improving the insulation of your home up to higher standards or providing better, more effective ventilation. | Trying to limit the amount of moisture created in your home through activities such as washing and drying of clothes, as well as keeping your home heated and ventilated as best as you can. Using widely available cleaning sprays to regularly wipe down and clean surfaces, grouting and sealant. |
| Paving and driveways                    | Repairing and maintaining pathways and driveways we have installed, ensuring they remain free from trip hazards.  | Weeding, moss clearance and sweeping of surfaces, as well as avoiding spillages of things such as oil that may stain the surfaces. Repairing and maintaining any pathways or driveways you have installed.   |
| Fencing, gates, walls and outbuildings  | Repairing and maintaining fencing, gates, walls and outbuildings we have built or installed.  | Repairing and maintaining fencing, gates, walls and outbuildings you have built or installed.  |
| External decoration                     | Periodic redecoration of painted surfaces.  |  |

## 5. Communal areas

| Issue   | We are responsible for   | You are responsible for  |
|---|--|--|
| Communal doors, entrances and letterboxes                         | Carrying out routine repairs and maintenance to communal doors and entrance areas, repairing broken or faulty locks, handles, and glazing. | Keeping communal doors and entrance areas clear of obstructions, not keeping bicycles or scooters etc. in locations not designated for such storage. Paying for the cost of replacing any lost keys or fobs. |
| Passenger lifts   | All repairs, maintenance, servicing, and safety work, attending to all breakdowns.   | Taking care when moving furniture and heavy items in and out of the lift.  |
| Fire panels, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, fire doors etc. | All repairs, maintenance, servicing, and safety work, attending to all faults.   | Ensuring you do not tamper with equipment or interfere with its proper operation.  |
| Door entry and intercom systems                                   | All repairs, maintenance, servicing, and safety work, attending to all faults.   | Repairing and maintaining any equipment you have installed.  |
| Internal surfaces   | Periodic painting and redecoration.  | Ensuring you, your household, and visitors do not cause damage to internal surfaces  |
| Graffiti  | Removing graffiti in a timely manner.  |  |
| Garden areas  | Carrying out regular maintenance and ongoing management of grass, planted areas and trees.   |  |

## 6. Pests and infestations

| Issue   | We are responsible for  | You are responsible for  |
|---|---|--|
| Pests and infestations in your home or on your property | <p>Inspecting some cases to assess the nature, extent and consequences of the problem, along with the potential remedy, notably if the issue could result from a problem with the building fabric, and/or the nature and extent of the reported problem could potentially be causing a health/hazard issue.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> we consider pests to be rats, mice, daddy long-legs, silverfish, cockroaches, and bed bugs.</p>     | <p>Keeping your property clean and tidy to help prevent pest issues. Making sure you refrain from feeding feral animals and from storing refuse (especially food waste) in a way that could encourage vermin or other pests.</p> <p>Helping prevent, manage and resolve problems relating to pests that do not fall under emh's definition of a pest, due to their nature and/or the risk they present. Examples include woodlice, beetles, and earwigs for which you should use methods such as ant killer powder etc. which can be purchased inexpensively from a wide range of retailers and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.</p> |
| Pests and infestations in communal areas                | <p>Keeping external and internal communal areas in a good state of repair, carrying out proofing and prevention measures as part of a proactive approach to reducing the potential for problems to occur. Carrying out appropriate works or measures to help tackle and remedy the pest problem or infestation.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> we consider pests to be rats, mice, daddy long-legs, silverfish, cockroaches, and bed bugs.</p> | <p>Refraining from feeding pigeons and leaving refuse (especially food waste) where it could attract vermin or other pests.</p>  |