



Repairs and Maintenance Policy



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1.0 Introduction

This policy sets out how we will provide a customer focussed, value for money repairs service that ensures the safety, comfort and security of our customers and protects the value of our homes. This policy supports our Providing Quality Sustainable Homes Strategy and its strategic vision of 'Tenants living in warm, safe, high quality, sustainable homes in a place they are proud to live'.

This policy has been developed following consultation with customers to ensure their voice is heard.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- o Ensure our homes are of good quality, well maintained and safe
- o Ensure repairs and maintenance issues can be reported easily
- o Ensure our repairs service is effective, efficient and that repairs are carried out in a timely manner
- o Ensure we provide a repairs service that is fair, equitable and easily accessible
- o Ensure the performance targets for repairs reflect the priorities of our customers
- o Ensure our homes comply with health and safety legislation
- o Ensure all customers affected by this policy are treated with respect and empathy,
- o and
- o Ensure that our empty homes are repaired to the lettable standard before being reallocated

3.0 Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- o Trust – being open with customers and enabling them to influence the way in which our repairs service is delivered. Being transparent with customers by publishing our targets and performance so customers can scrutinise the repairs service.
- o Respect – ensuring all customers are treated with respect, recognising the diverse views and needs of customers and providing accessible ways for them to access the repairs service and influence decisions about how the services are delivered.
- o Innovate – continuously improving and tailoring our approach to delivering the repairs service to create impactful improvements.
- o Working together – working in collaboration with customers in the development of policy statements and performance objectives so that they have a meaningful impact on the design of the repairs service and to review and scrutinise the repairs service.

4.0 Definitions

The key terms used in this policy are defined below.

Emergency repairs	Emergency repairs are those that need to be carried out to avoid hazards that pose a significant and imminent danger to residents or where a failure to carry out the repair could cause extensive damage to buildings and property or where there is a security issue.
Urgent repairs	Urgent repairs are those that can cause disruption and/or inconvenience, and repairs which may worsen or affect the health of occupants if left for longer periods of time.
Routine repairs	Routine repairs are day to day repairs causing low levels of disruption and/or inconvenience to occupants, and which are unlikely to worsen.

Scheduled repairs	Scheduled repairs are those repairs that cause minimal inconvenience to occupants and/or which may be grouped together.
Task orders	Major works such as damp proofing or structural repairs or component replacements where materials require manufacturing such as kitchens or new external doors.
Chargeable Repairs	Where a repair is identified which is not due to a defect and which is beyond the expected normal wear and tear for a fixture and/or fitting under normal domestic use e.g. caused by damage or neglect it will be identified and dealt with in accordance with the Recharge Policy.
Tenant Led Improvements or Alterations	<p>Is where the customer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alters, removes or replaces any of the existing building fabric, its grounds or boundaries. • Replaces a Living fixture or fitting with one of their own which is of similar quality or standard as the original, e.g. kitchen units. • Replaces one of our fixtures or fittings with one of their own which is of a higher quality or standard. • Installs an item where there is none at present, e.g. a shower. • Extends the floor area of the property in any way, e.g. by adding a conservatory or a porch. • any addition to or alteration in landlord's fixtures and fittings. • any addition or alteration connected with the provision of services to the property.
Customer	Customers are defined as tenants and residents, living in our homes, that are eligible to access and receive our repair services.

5.0 Scope

This policy applies to the customers all our social housing rental accommodation, low-cost home ownership homes classified as rent-to-buy and other intermediate rent homes.

The policy does not cover low-cost home ownership homes classified as shared ownership or leasehold properties.

This policy applies to all employees and to contractors delivering relevant services on our behalf.

This policy applies to the communal areas of all homes wholly owned by Livin and the external structure of leasehold properties.

Where design, product and/or workmanship faults occur to new build homes, we may determine to pursue these repairs as latent defects with the developer.

We may decide to make a temporary repair or to postpone a repair which has resulted from fair wear and tear when planned investment or cyclical works that will resolve the defect are due to commence within 3 months from the date the repair being reported by the customer. This decision will only be taken after discussing the matter with the customer and confirming it would not be detrimental to the customers' wellbeing.

Claims for loss or damage to customers or other third-party possessions will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy

When the condition of a privately owned property/boundary is adversely affecting the condition of a Livin owned property and we cannot legally carry out a repair we will raise the issue with the private owner in line with our Party Wall Procedure. This policy continues to apply to those customers affected.

This policy does not apply to planned investment in our existing homes covered by the Asset Management Policy.

6.0 Contribution to Plan A

This policy supports our Providing Quality Sustainable Homes Strategy and its strategic vision of 'Tenants living in warm, safe, high quality, sustainable homes in a place they are proud to live', and specifically the objectives of 'Maintaining homes to a standard which exceeds the needs and expectations of our tenants'; 'Providing homes that are safe, exceed the needs and meet the aspirations of our tenants'; and 'Improving the energy efficiency of our homes, to reduce carbon emissions and lower energy bills for tenants' homes'.

7.0 Legislative and regulatory framework

The Safety and Quality Standard sets out two required outcomes and five specific expectations relating to repairs and maintenance.

Required outcomes

- Registered providers must ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator.
- Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

Specific expectations

- Registered providers must enable repairs and maintenance issues to be reported easily.
- Registered providers must set timescales for the completion of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements, clearly communicate them to tenants and take appropriate steps to deliver to them.
- Registered providers must keep tenants informed about repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to their homes with clear and timely communication.
- Registered providers must understand and fulfil their maintenance responsibilities in respect of communal areas.
- Registered providers must ensure that the delivery of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to homes and communal areas is informed by the needs of tenants and provides value for money.

The legislation relevant to this policy is:

- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Housing Act 2004
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Home Standard, Regulator of Social Housing, 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims (England), 2021

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

This policy complies with the requirements of the Safety and Quality Standard, all relevant legislation and the Regulator of Housing's Code of Practice.

8.0 Policy statements

Appointments

We will provide a range of repair appointments covering mornings, afternoons, evenings and Saturdays. We will also provide "school run" appointments that are scheduled between 9:30 and 14:30.

When we cannot agree a mutually convenient appointment with you when you initially report your repair we will agree a mutually convenient appointment with you within 5 working days.

We will tell you if your repair is going to be allocated to a specialist sub-contractor and the name of the sub-contractor.

We will tell you if you need to be at home when external repairs are being carried out.

We will provide multiple channels to enable you to report repairs easily. Repairs can be reported through our App, our website, by telephone, email and in writing.

You have the right to receive notice of a proposed visit to carry out repairs or maintenance.

We will always contact you prior to attending to carryout repairs.

You can book appointable repairs outside of the target timescales except for emergency repairs, any works covered by our six compliance policies, where delaying works would have a negative impact on your wellbeing and where delaying an urgent repair is likely to lead to further damage to your home or an adjoining property or their contents.

Access to the emergency repair service will be available to you 24 hours a day.

Where a genuine emergency occurs and you or a member of the household cannot be contacted to allow access to carry out a repair, we may force access in the presence of the police.

Communal areas

We will carry out communal safety inspections in all communal areas at least every four months. The main purpose of a communal safety inspection is to:

- Ensure that any safety hazards are identified and resolved.
- Identify and arrange routine repairs.
- Ensure communal areas can be safely evacuated.
- Ensure that our cleaning contract and other services are being carried out effectively and to your satisfaction.
- Engage with you and obtain your feedback on communal area services.

The frequency of these inspections will be increased where issues are identified until they are resolved. This frequency is determined by a risk assessment and can range from three days to every three months.

Performance

We will repair and maintain your home to meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Standard and continue to maintain your home to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator.

Timescales for repairs:

- Emergency repairs, we will attend within 4 hours to make it safe and complete the initial repair within 24 hours.
- Urgent repairs, we will complete within 5 working days.
- Routine repairs, we will complete within 10 working days.
- Scheduled repairs, we will complete within 25 working days.
- Task orders, we will complete between 30 to 90 working days.

We will publish our key performance targets and our actual performance against them so you can hold us to account.

Completing repairs

We will always treat you and your home with respect by delivering our services in a courteous and professional manner.

Where decoration is damaged and the damage in our view was

avoidable, we will make good or agree a suitable resolution with you. Where damage to decoration during the completion of a repair is unavoidable decorating remains your responsibility.

We will carry out repairs to empty homes and ensure the properties meet our Lettable Standard prior to letting them.

Where you are actively pursuing your 'right to buy' or 'right to acquire' we will continue to carry out repairs to keep your home wind and watertight. We will continue to provide emergency repairs relating to health and safety and statutory compliance. However, no major modernisation, planned maintenance or improvement works will be carried out to your home during this period.

Communication

We will keep you informed about repairs to your home with clear and timely communication. As a minimum we will contact you.

- When we confirm the appointment.
- The day before the appointment.
- On the day of the appointment when the operative is on route.
- We will also contact you if we need to change or cancel an appointment.

We will tell you if the work is going to take longer than planned.

We will inform you when we believe a repair is your responsibility and the reasons why.

Where a follow up visit is required to complete a repair we will provide you with the follow up appointment at the end of the visit. Where specialist materials are needed and any appointment cannot be provided, we will normally provide you with progress updates every seven working days until the appointment to complete the work is confirmed.

Where a repair cannot be completed as components need to be replaced or a technical inspection is required, we will normally provide progress updates to you every seven working days until the appointment to complete the work is confirmed.

Diagnosis

Where a repair requires an inspection (not including damp and mould) we will contact you within 7 working days and complete the inspection in 21 working days. The inspection will be completed by someone who

has the required skills and experience to accurately diagnose the issue and remedial measures. We will contact you once the inspection is complete to inform you of the next steps.

We will gather as much information as practicable at the point of you reporting a repair to allow the repair to be completed in the minimum number of visits as possible.

Tailoring our services

We will prioritise repairs and make reasonable adjustments for customers with vulnerabilities if their health or wellbeing would be negatively impacted without adjusting the service. This includes inspections and repairs where there could be an impact to the health and wellbeing of customers living in our homes. We will also make reasonable adjustments to how we communicate with customers based on their vulnerabilities.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Reports of damp or mould where an occupant has a vulnerability listed in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities published guidance on 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home'.
- Loss of heating where an occupant is more vulnerable to the cold, e.g. occupants with cardiovascular conditions, occupants with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma), occupants with mental health conditions, occupants with mobility issues, older occupants (65 and older) and households with young children (from new-born to school age).
- Loss of power where an occupant relies on electrically powered medical equipment.
- Loss of lighting where an occupant is visually impaired.
- Repairs to increase security where a customer is identified as vulnerable by police or where we are aware the customer is fleeing domestic abuse.
- Loss of bathing facilities where an occupant has a skin condition requiring frequent bathing including eczemas, psoriasis, ichthyosis and palmoplantar keratodermas.
- Where a customer's vulnerabilities mean they are unable to clear the work area we will provide assistance. Customer satisfaction.

We will inspect a minimum of 5% of all completed repairs to ensure the quality of the repairs is high, that this policy is being followed and to ensure the repair delivered represents value for money.

We will ensure that you are provided with the opportunity to give feedback regarding the level of service you have received in the completion of your repair through customer satisfaction surveys.

To improve our customer's experience we will use repairs data to identify repairs that could be more complex to resolve and instances of repeated repairs. We will utilise this insight where practicable to instigate proactive measures to fully resolve any underlying defects, reducing the reliance on customers having to repeatedly report the same repair.

Customers Responsibilities

You should report repairs to your home, including communal areas, in a timely manner.

You should provide sufficient information to allow us to fully diagnose and complete your repair.

You should treat our employees, representatives, and contractors with respect.

You should refrain from smoking while our employees, representatives, and contractors are in your home.

Where possible you should ensure the work area is clear of furniture, belongings, and pets.

You should ensure there is an adult (16+) present for the duration of your repair appointment.

You should inform us if you need to cancel or amend your appointment.

You should inform us of any individual circumstances that may impact how we complete your repair.

You should allow us reasonable access to your home to complete an inspection or a repair to ensure the problem can be rectified as quickly as practicable.

Complaints and feedback

In line with our Customer Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy, we will work with customers who have specific needs and vulnerabilities to make sure they can access the service, have their views listened to and receive their complaint response in a way that meets their needs.

Customers can provide feedback about the services they have received in respect of this policy. If a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received from us, they can make a complaint to us in line with our Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy.

We define a complaint as:

‘Any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, our own employees, or those acting on our behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’

9.0 Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Roles and responsibilities under this policy are outlined below.

<p>Board</p>	<p>The Board has overall governance responsibility for this policy. As such, the Board will formally approve this policy and review it every three years, or earlier if there is a change in legislation or regulation. Board will receive quarterly performance reports containing high-level performance metrics measuring the effectiveness of this policy.</p>
<p>Executive Management Team</p>	<p>EMT will be notified of any significant, continued, noncompliance with this policy. EMT will receive at least quarterly performance reports containing high-level performance metrics measuring the effectiveness of this policy.</p>
<p>Executive Director of Finance and Investment</p>	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Investment has strategic responsibility for the management of property maintenance and for overseeing the implementation of this policy.</p>
<p>Head of property services</p>	<p>The Head of Property Services is responsible for joining up strategic and operational actions to monitor compliance with this policy and for ensuring the effective delivery of the policy. They are also responsible for the contract management arrangements under the Construction Related Services Contract with the repairs contractor.</p>

Repairs and Maintenance Manager	The repairs and maintenance manager has operational responsibility for the delivery of the services covered by this policy.
Surveying Manager	The surveying manager has operational responsibility for the delivery of the inspections and repairs covered by this policy.
Repairs and Empty Homes Inspectors	Repairs and empty homes inspectors will implement the processes and procedures underpinning this policy.
Corporate Health and Safety Manager	The corporate health and safety manager is responsible for ensuring the communal safety inspections are undertaken in all communal areas.

This policy will be communicated to employees via the Intranet and communicated to customers via our website and in other formats where needed. Those who have responsibilities under this policy will be required to formally accept and confirm understanding of the policy and will confirm understanding following appropriate training, advice, and/or guidance.

We are committed to the provision of seamless, responsive and convenient services and as such are a digital first organisation. We advocate encourage and support our tenants to engage with us via the most efficient and effective method, suitable to their needs, and will assist tenants or their advocates to engage with us digitally, where possible.

Digital copies of this policy and related guidance are available on our website and in an alternative format for tenants who may not be able to access services digitally or experience other communication barriers. Information on how to access the service will be promoted across different channels to ensure all customers are aware of how to make a complaint and what their rights are.

10.0 Related strategies and policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the related documents shown below:

- Providing Quality Sustainable Homes Strategy.
- Damp and Mould Policy.
- Recharge Policy.
- Aids and Adaptations Policy.

- Asset Management Strategy.
- Tenant Led Improvements or Alterations Policy.
- Affordable Home Ownership Policy.
- Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy.

11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

Assurance on compliance with this policy will be gained via a range of methods, as set out in the following table:

Type of assurance	Key source	Frequency
Management assurance	Contract performance meetings.	Monthly
	Pentana performance dashboards.	Monthly
Corporate Oversight	Board performance report.	Quarterly
	FI&C Property Services Progress Update.	Quarterly
Independent assurance	Internal Audit	Periodic

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless there is significant development that would require a more urgent review e.g. new legislation or regulation.