Repairs Policy

Introduction

This policy explains how our repairs service works and sets out our responsibility to keep our customers' homes in good repair. The policy also describes how we will provide our customers with a high-quality customer experience and tailor our support to their individual needs (where we have repair obligations). We want customers to feel safe and listened to, and for them to live in good-quality homes. Throughout this policy, the use of the term 'homes' also includes communal areas.

This policy details how we will provide (where we have repair obligations) a consistently great service offer for customers that is easy to use by designing our services in collaboration with users and colleagues. As part of our 10-year ambitions, launched in 2026, we will ensure that every customer lives in a safe, well-maintained and energy-efficient home.

In addition to delivering a quality repairs service for our customers, this policy ensures our continued compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety_and_Quality_Standard, and the various legislation detailed in the **Legal references** section (below).

What do we mean by responsive repairs?

A responsive repair is day-to-day maintenance work following a request from a customer and can include internal works, external works, or repairs to communal areas. This work maintains our properties to a good standard, until the next set of planned investment works.

So, for example, it might be a repair to a kitchen drawer (responsive) rather than the replacement of a whole kitchen (planned).

We have responsibility for the majority of repairs we undertake in our rented properties. Our customers also have a responsibility to look after their homes. Tenancy agreements and leases explain to customers who is responsible for which parts of home maintenance. Some customers may have an enhanced service based on their needs. This support may be explained in their agreement and will include how to contact us. It is important for customers to read their individual lease or tenancy agreements and be clear about responsibilities.

Early identification and reporting of repairs helps to keep homes safe and well maintained, and reduces the impact on customers. It is important that any defects/faults are reported

promptly to avoid more serious issues developing. It is a customer's responsibility to report any faults or repairs needed at the earliest opportunity.

We will always look to complete a repair to an item rather than issue a full replacement, as these works will usually be included in future planned investment programmes.

What are our Service Level Agreements?

- **Emergency (24 hours):** An emergency repair is one which may be dangerous and immediately threaten customer health or cause damage to a home; for example, repairs that involve water, electricity, gas or drains;
- **Urgent (5 Days):** An urgent repair is one which is not immediately threatening customer health (and therefore not an emergency) but still needs to be carried out promptly;
- **Routine (20 Days):** A routine repair is one that does not pose an immediate risk to health, safety, security or the property.

Our aims

- To make sure all of our homes are kept to a good standard and that our customers live in safety, comfort and warmth;
- To achieve high standards of customer experience;
- To ensure all customers get a service which is suitable for their needs, when possible;
- To be open with customers, and listen to them through customer feedback and involvement;
- To meet the standards set out in our tenancy agreements and leases;
- To provide value for money in the repairs service and those services charged directly to customers.

What is involved?

This policy includes responsive repairs for all our owned or managed properties. The service is delivered using a combination of Great Places' colleagues and external contracts for a wide range of tenures.
In line with the Safety and Quality Standard, it is our intention that:

- We will complete repairs and improvements in a way that is safe;
- We will provide value for money in the work we do and the materials that we use;
- We aim to get repairs right first time;
- We will plan works to customers' homes and communal areas with clear communication to customers;



- We will make our service easy to use and provide a number of different ways to report a repair, make a complaint or get involved;
- We will provide opportunities for customers to share their views on our performance and evidence how we act on their feedback;
- We will regularly share updates and performance information with customers.

Shared Ownership and Leasehold Responsibilities

For shared ownership, leasehold properties and freehold properties through transfer agreements, where the lease says that we have responsibility for the fabric of the building or communal areas, we will work with home-owners to address any repairs, with the costs being met through the service charge for the building.

For leaseholders and shared owners, service provision and response times may vary depending on the individual terms of their ownership agreement. Similarly, new homes less than 12 months old may have different contracts affecting repair response times, except for emergency responses which will still be within 24 hours.

Reporting a repair

There are several ways customers can report a repair:

- Using our website "Live Chat" during working hours (Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm);
- Online via the web form;
- By email to customerhub@greatplaces.org.uk (Great Places customers), or directory@plumlife.co.uk (Plumlife customers);
- By phone to our Customer Hub (Great Places customers) on 0300 123 1966; or Plumlife Directory (Plumlife Customers) on 0161 447 5050, both 24 hours a day;
- By letter to Great Places Housing Group, 2a Derwent Avenue, Manchester, M21 7QP;
- Telling us in person when we visit a home or neighbourhood.

Repairs commitment

We will:

- Use information we hold about customers to ensure we provide an appropriate response to repairs requests including communal areas, addressing both the customers' needs and any risk to the home;
- Adopt the best use of available technology to enhance and improve accuracy of diagnosis of repairs reporting;



- Aim to complete the repair in one visit or explain why we haven't, and what will happen next; we will always try to arrange follow-up repairs before we leave the initial appointment;
- If it's an emergency, we will visit to make things safe within 24 hours; if a follow-on appointment is required, this will be booked in, in line with our service level agreement dependent on works required;
- Confirm an appointment with the customer (this can be tailored to suit customer needs; for instance, we can offer flexible appointments avoiding school run times);
- Where possible, text or call customers to let them know when we are on our way to the repair;
- Let customers know once we have completed the repair and allow them to confirm that it is completed to a good standard via a text survey sent out following completion;
- Communicate clearly with customers, from reporting to completion.

Value for money

Customer feedback, supported by findings from our Insight Scrutiny Panel, tells us that repairs is the most important service to our customers and also constitutes a major expense for the organisation. We therefore manage our commitment to providing value for money in a range of ways, including:

- Comparing cost and performance information;
- Reviewing how we run our services and systems;
- Looking at past repairs to identify things that happen repeatedly, which informs our future planned works;
- Carefully considering our contractors through robust procurement and contract management;
- Competitive tendering for the supply of the materials we use for our repairs.

Damp and mould

We understand that damp and mould could create a potential hazard for our customers and we treat these instances as a priority.

To protect the safety of our customers, we follow a separate damp and mould policy and process. This ensures we take the correct action to address damp and mould in a timely manner, in accordance with Awaab's Law. In line with our policy, we will investigate reports of damp and mould within 10 working days and emergencies within 24 hours. Our approach to damp and mould may include emergency, urgent, routine and/or major repair works.

Full details of our approach and timescales are outlined in the Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy. Customers have a shared responsibility to heat, ventilate and maintain their homes. We can provide detailed guidance, advice and support to help customers manage condensation in their homes to avoid damp and mould occurring. Where needed, we refer our customers to other organisations for additional support, if this is appropriate and would benefit customers.

Emergency repairs, urgent repairs, routine repairs and major repairs

We monitor our repairs service performance in four areas:

- Emergency repairs;
- Urgent repairs;
- Routine repairs;
- Major repairs.

Emergency repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Total loss of water or electricity;
- Unsafe electrical fittings but not customers' own fittings (i.e. extension leads, electrical appliances);
- Blocked main sewer drain that is backing up into the property;
- Unusable toilet facilities, if there is only one facility in the property or the available toilet is inaccessible;
- Insecure doors and windows to the property;
- Full heating and/or hot water loss for older or vulnerable customers;
- Out-of-service lifts;
- Warden alarm or call system not working;
- Total loss of gas supply (gas leaks will be dealt with through the gas emergency line and the gas emergency process will be used);
- Failure of door entry system for older people or vulnerable customers needing daily assistance.

We will aim to carry out works to make emergencies safe within 24 hours of the customer contact.

Sometimes other repairs and additional appointments may be needed to complete the repair. Where this is the case, we will always try to arrange further appointments to complete repairs before we leave the initial appointment, and arrange these at a time that suits the customer. Should this situation arise, we will reduce any presenting risk to 'make safe' the customer's home. For example, providing temporary heating solutions if a boiler cannot be repaired immediately.

In exceptional circumstances, such as during bad weather or circumstances outside of our control, we may need to lengthen the time for some emergency repairs. We will tell customers if this is the case.

Urgent Repairs

Urgent repairs are those that significantly affect comfort, convenience, or could escalate into a health or safety risk if left unresolved, but are not classified as emergencies. We will attend these within 5 working days.

Urgent repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Water leaks;
- Drainage issues;
- Child-resistant window restrictors;
- Pest control proofing works;
- Toilet won't flush (only toilet in property);
- Tap won't turn off;
- Tap won't turn on (preventing bathing);
- Bath blocked (only bath in property/form of bathing);
- Shower blocked (only shower in property/form of bathing);
- Fire door repairs;
- Kitchen cupboard/door (risk of falling);
- Partial loss of lighting/sockets;
- Tripped electrics (where customer cannot re-set);
- Wet room pump issues;
- Gates (communal access);
- Damp and mould (Significant Hazard);
- Doorbell (audio/visual);
- TV aerials (communal only).

Routine repairs

The majority of other repairs are classed as routine and will be attended within 20 working days.

Routine repairs include, but are not limited to:

- General joinery repairs internally and externally;
- Minor plumbing repairs e.g. dripping taps, leaks to sinks or baths and faulty pipework;



- Repairs to kitchen fittings, such as cupboard doors, drawers, worktops and handles; these will be completed on a like-for-like basis wherever possible. Where an exact match is unavailable, we will install the closest-suitable match wherever possible;
- Repairs to leaking gutters and downspouts;
- Easing of external doors and windows, replacement handles and faulty mechanisms;
- Partial loss of electrical power where the fault is inside the property;
- Partial loss of water supply where the fault is inside the property or boundary;
- Heating and hot water faults or breakdowns;
- Blocked sink, bath, toilet or basin that a customer has been unable to unblock themselves;
- Insecure doors and windows in communal areas.

These are examples and not a list of every case. We will consider the impact of this approach on individual customer needs and adjust our approach when necessary.

Routine repairs which are broader in scope or in duration of works are what we call **major repairs**. While we will attempt to commence and complete these in the 20 working days, by their very nature they may take more time to both organise and complete.

Leaseholders and management contract arrangements

For non-rented tenures including leaseholders and management contracts, we will review against the lease or legal agreement to determine the correct responsibility. This ensures that repairs and maintenance activities in these properties are managed appropriately, in line with the service standards and obligations set out for shared ownership and leasehold properties.

Enhanced service offer

Our enhanced service offer may apply to some customers, such as those in our Independence & Wellbeing schemes for example, who may be unable to carry out tasks without our assistance. Some repairs reported by customers receiving enhanced services may be considered emergencies where they would not under normal circumstances. Please note, some jobs would be recharged to the customer.

Enhances service offer examples include, but are not limited to:

- Unblocking sinks, showers and drains (these may be recharged to the customer);
- Adjusting, repairing or replacing a toilet seat;
- Unblocking toilets (this may be recharged to the customer);
- Changing bulbs in enclosed light fittings and spotlights or high ceiling lightbulbs;



- Repairs to doorbells, where the doorbell is hard wired (this does not include battery changes).

Appointments

Emergency repairs can be reported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year directly by telephone.

If an emergency repair is reported outside of our normal working hours or during bank holidays, this will be registered by our third party out-of-hours provider, who will assign the works to the relevant contractor or Great Places operative/colleague.

Where the emergency is related to a major incident, we have a clear escalation process and Business Continuity Plan which will be mobilised in this event.

In an emergency, where there is a Health and Safety issue or there's likely to be considerable damage to the home, we may gain access in line with our No Access Policy.

If the repair is not an emergency, we will arrange an appointment, at a time that suits the customer and meets their individual needs. We offer full day, morning, or afternoon time slots and can take the school run into account.

We will confirm the customer's appointment time by text message, with a further confirmation sent the day before we are due to attend. We will send a final confirmation text message on the day.

Appointment cancellations and No Access

If a customer is not at home when we attend, we will try to reach them by phone and text. We will try other telephone numbers on our records and will only contact a third party if we have permission to speak to someone other than the customer named on the tenancy. If we are still unable to reach the customer, we will leave a card asking them to contact us or the contractor and send a text message where possible. If we do not hear from the customer (following a 'no access' visit) we may cancel the repair but will rearrange the required works when we are contacted again. In the case of communal jobs, we will attempt to call the person who reported the repair to make any necessary arrangements for access.

We may make direct attempts to reschedule the appointment with the customer, where the repair is an emergency or urgent repair. There are several circumstances where we would



not cancel the repair where we need to maintain statutory or internal SLA compliance, or to protect the home.

Performance measures

Our service will be measured against the timeframes outlined in the Service Level Agreements above. We report performance to our Customer Committee, customers, stakeholders, Executive Team and our Board.

We measure:

- Overall customer satisfaction with the service;
- Jobs completed within the outlined timescales;
- Jobs completed, right first time;
- Emergency and routine job completion times;
- Compliance with statutory requirements.

Customer voice and influence

Customers are at the heart of our services. In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, we ensure that we offer our customers meaningful opportunities to engage with, influence, and scrutinise our services. This includes taking account of the diverse needs of customers in ensuring that our repairs service is delivering fair and equitable outcomes.

We analyse any feedback and complaints received, their outcome and proposed changes as part of our reporting and planning process, including programmes of planned maintenance. We share feedback with our service managers to ensure we learn from cases. Our Customer Feedback Team produces regular reports shared with Managers, Senior Management, Directors, formally involved customers, and our Executive team and Board.

Senior leaders use themes and trends highlighted from customer feedback to work with colleagues, customers, contractors and stakeholders to improve services for our customers. We tell our customers how they have influenced changes to policy and improvements to services by publishing findings from complaints on our website, in customer communications, through our annual Customer Complaint and Service Improvement Report and in various publications.

Further guidance

The Repairs Policy is linked to a number of other property-related policies and guidance. These are detailed below:



Adaptations

We will work with organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets customers' needs and changing circumstances. Major and minor adaptation works will be carried out in line with our Adaptations Policy.

Minor adaptations such as grab rails and banister stair rails will be reported to repairs using our normal channels and managed by the repairs service, with no occupational therapy assessment needed.

Decoration of the home

Customers are responsible for decorating inside their home and keeping it in good order. Some repairs may affect the decoration of the home. If this happens, the area will be repaired to its original condition (or as close to this as reasonably possible). This does not apply to access panels, hatches, or ducting covered with wallpaper, tiles, carpet, wood, laminate or other finishes. In these circumstances customers will be advised before work is started. Great Places will not refund decoration costs.

Customers' own alterations

Any alterations to customers' homes must not take place until Great Places has been informed of what alterations are intended, and appropriately documented approval has been provided by Great Places. We will only say no if we have good reason to do so and if we refuse permission for alterations, we will explain why in writing. If we grant permission, we may ask that the work is done in a certain way, or to a standard, or apply other reasonable conditions. All works must be carried out to our satisfaction, in line with our Customer Home Improvement Policy.

Any work carried out by customers that has not been agreed in advance will not be the responsibility of Great Places. This relates to all future upkeep and maintenance.

Damage caused by customers

Where damage to a Great Places property, its fixtures, fittings, or communal areas has been caused by the customer, a member of their household, or a visitor, any repair or replacement work carried out by Great Places will be completed on a rechargeable basis.



Our responsibility to undertake repairs does not remove the customer's responsibility for damage they have caused. We will advise customers where a repair is deemed to be the result of avoidable damage and provide details of any costs that may be recharged.

Damage to a Great Places property as a result of domestic abuse, or other exceptional circumstances, will be treated on a case-by-case basis. In some circumstances it may be necessary for us to be confident the perpetrator is no longer present at the property, either temporarily or permanently, in order for repairs to be completed. We may seek to reclaim any costs against the perpetrator by adding the value to any legal action being taken against them.

Insurance

Great Places holds appropriate property and public liability insurance for all properties and buildings for which we are responsible. This insurance covers damage to the structure of the building and any required repair works arising from major incidents such as fire, flood, or other significant structural events.

Our insurance does **not** cover damage to customers' personal belongings or decorative finishes, including damage resulting from leaks or similar incidents. Customers are responsible for arranging and maintaining their own contents insurance to protect their personal possessions. More information is available here: Contents Insurance and Buildings Insurance.

Any loss of, or damage to, personal items must be claimed through the customer's chosen contents insurance provider. Great Places does not reimburse customers for damage to, or loss of, their personal contents.

Responsibility of this policy

The Director of Repairs is responsible for this policy. Our in-house repairs service will be supported by a number of partners who will help us deliver this policy. These include helping us address repairs, specialist repairs, damp-proof works, major structural issues and drainage work, and also to provide support in times of increased demand.

Equality and diversity

We are committed to making our services and communications fair and inclusive for everyone. We value diversity and understand that our customers have different needs, so we tailor our support accordingly. We also recognise that people's circumstances can

change, and we will respond flexibly to ensure customers receive the right support when they need it.

Our Hub and Inclusive Services Teams are trained to use information we hold about customers' health or other individual needs to ensure we provide an appropriate response to customers' requests. Where we have gaps in our information, we check this information for accuracy at every point of contact.

Legal references

We will repair and maintain homes in line with the following legislation:

- Awaab's Law (The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed requirements) (England) Regulations 2025);
- The Decent Homes Standard;
- Housing Acts 1988, 1996, 1998 and 2004;
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985;
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994 (for secure tenants of Local Housing Authorities);
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- The Defective Premises Act 1972;
- Building Regulations;
- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Care Act 2014.

Great Places-related policies, procedures and plans

- Repairs Strategy;
- Asset Strategy;
- Asset Investment Policy;
- Customer Experience Strategy;
- Damp and Mould Policy;
- Access Policy Statement;
- Customer Home Improvements Policy;
- Allocations Policy;
- Procurement Strategy;
- Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy;
- Service with Respect Policy.
- Adaptations Policy

Appendix 1 – General needs repair obligations

Repair Issue	Responsibility
EXTERNAL STRUCTURE	
Drains, gutters and external pipes (except where the drains are the responsibility of the water authority, when we will report the defects to that authority).	Great Places
The roof, covering, tiles, facias, soffits and gutters.	Great Places
Outside walls, outside doors, windowsills, window catches, sash and window frames (including painting and decorating outside).	Great Places
Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues but not including sweeping them except (if necessary) for the annual service by us.	Great Places
Balconies, walkways, hallways, steps or other means of access, including disabled access which we have provided or for which we have accepted responsibility.	Great Places
External and internal plaster work where full skim coats are required.	Great Places
Garages, carports, outbuildings and stores that form part of the home if they exist at the start of the tenancy or are later erected by us.	Great Places
Boundary walls, gates and fences that are present at the start of the tenancy, or subsequently installed by us, will be maintained by Great Places. However, where damage is caused by the customer, responsibility for repair or replacement will rest with the customer.	Great Places
Pathways, steps and other means of access owned by us.	Great Places
Maintenance of gardens and landscaped areas where they are provided for exclusive use by one household.	Customer
Garden timber sheds (unless noted specifically on the tenancy).	Customer
Decorative paving, patios and hard landscaping that was fitted at a previous tenancy.	Customer
Storage and placement for collection by the Local Authority of all domestic refuse.	Customer



The erection/removal and making good after the installation of satellite dishes.	Customer
The repair or replacement of clothes lines, including posts, where they are provided for exclusive use by one household	Customer
Repair or replacement of refuge bins or bin holders.	Customer
Taking and recording of utility meter readings e.g. gas, electric, water.	Customer
Repairs to equipment in common parts.	Great Places

Repair Issue	**Responsibility**
INTERNAL STRUCTURE	
Repairing and maintaining any equipment we have provided for heating, hot water and sanitation including basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes.	Great Places
Electric wiring including sockets, light fittings and switches, and non-standard doorbells such as audio/visual; but excluding plugs, bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters.	Great Places
Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires, central heating systems (if they are fitted by us) and gas pipes.	Great Places
Internal door handles.	Customer
Plug and chains to sink, bath, wash hand basin.	Customer
Curtain battens, hat and coat hooks and rails.	Customer
Internal cupboards door catches, handles and hinges.	Customer
Electrical faults arising from the use of faulty appliances.	Customer
Minor plaster cracks and internal decorations.	Customer
Any appliance (other than gas flued appliances), structure or installation which was not supplied by us. This includes gifted built-in appliances.	Customer
Electrical plugs (not socket outlets), fuses, flexible gas tubes, light bulbs and external lights customers have fitted.	Customer

Internal decorations and all soft furnishings provided by our customers including all flooring e.g. carpets, laminated flooring etc. This includes the removal to a recognised tip of all unwanted items.	Customer
All white goods e.g. cookers, fridges, washing machines provided by customers.	Customer
Replacement of lost/stolen door keys (both interior and exterior doors) and any subsequent lock changes.	Customer
Replacement of broken or cracked glass if caused by tenant damage (e.g. in an accident).	Customer
Renewal of fluorescent strip light tubes.	Customer
Toilet seats.	Customer
Minimising the cause of airborne condensation.	Customer
TV or radio aerials installed by customers and the repair to damage caused in their erection or removal.	Customer
Cleansing of sink, baths, wash hand basin and toilet, basin wash pipes, flexible pipe/hose connections for washing machines.	Customer
Doorbells (hardwired or battery powered).	Customer
Door security chains installed by customers.	Customer
Dwelling alarm systems.	Customer

Policy approval date:	Month / Year
Equality impact assessment date:	Month / Year
Reducing carbon impact assessment date:	Month / Year
Safeguarding/Modern Slavery impact:	
Policy review date:	Month / Year
Lead team:	
Level of authorisation required:	
Please record all authorisation meetings, with dates and details	e.g., approved at Directors on 01/01/2022 pending inclusion of latest legal definition