



REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

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1. Scope of Policy

This policy sets out the overall approach that Redditch Borough Council will take in relation to the repair and maintenance of properties.

The principles of this policy apply to all customers regardless of tenancy type. However, the full provisions of this policy only apply to customers living in social, affordable and market rented homes with secure tenancies.

The full provisions of this policy do not apply to:

- new homes that are within the initial defect's liability period of up to a year after handover (customers should refer to their welcome pack for details); or
- Leasehold properties see link [Leaseholders Handbook RBC](#) section 5 pages 11 & 12.

Redditch Borough Council is committed to delivering a range of maintenance services that are shaped around the legitimate expectations of customers and to ensuring homes and communal facilities are safe and well maintained.

2. Aims and Objectives

We aim to provide all our tenants with a safe, warm and secure home that is well maintained.

We understand how important this service is to our residents and we are striving to make improvements to achieve the following aims and objectives:

Managing repairs services

- To keep residents at the centre of everything we do and be treated with empathy and respect by all staff and contractors involved in delivering our repairs services.
- To invest in, and manage, our properties to ensure our homes meet all statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations.
- To maintain fit for purpose asset management data and hold comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date information on our homes.
- To hold current and historical repairs information through our contractors and housing management systems to provide an accurate and clear record of our work and decisions.

- To share summary repairs performance information with our Resident Panel, Resident Forum and other resident groups as agreed.
- To confirm appointments with residents before attending a visit and, if unable to fix first time, we will keep residents informed throughout the duration of the repair.
- To work closely with our contractors to ensure that we co-ordinate visits to minimise disruption whenever possible.
- To work closely and collaboratively with our contractors and monitoring their performance to ensure they are meeting and wherever possible exceeding agreed contractual targets.
- Drive a first-time fix approach for all repairs where possible and actively monitor this through our service performance framework.
- To share details of the staff managing and delivering repairs services with our residents.
- To listen to feedback from our residents and to continuously improve our repairs service.
- To ensure that it is clear to residents where responsibility lies for completing repairs and that escalation routes are open and transparent.

Quality

- To apply rigorous contract, relationship, risk, cost and performance management to the operation of our contracts and the overall repairs service.
- To use repair post inspections, estate inspections, resident satisfaction surveys and photographs of completed works to monitor and improve performance.
- To make first-time fixes wherever possible.
- To provide residents with regular updates where a repair requires multiple trades, repeat visits or case management.
- To call contractors back on site when works are not completed or do not meet the required quality standard.
- To ensure that all repairs are by pre-arranged appointment with no unannounced visits except in case of emergency.
- To set out clear requirements for all operatives before they can record an appointment as missed and to analyse data on missed appointments.
- To analyse repairs data to identify problems and delivery trends and make changes to ensure that the service is always improving.
- To ensure we keep and retain records of each visit and share appropriate information with contractors whenever appropriate.
- To ensure innovation is an integral part of the improvement process.
- To listen to and learn from feedback from the Housing Ombudsman, Social Housing Regulator and other regulatory authorities.

3. Policy Outline

3.1. Classification of Repairs and Maintenance Activities

RBC classifies its maintenance activities according to their type and frequency.

3.2. Responsive Maintenance

Day-to-day repairs and maintenance issues that require an immediate or short-term response.

Redditch borough council will operate the following response times for dealing with responsive repairs. We have a set of four priorities.

Job Category	Timescale	Definition	Example
Emergency *	24 Hours - Will be made safe, then follow up if needed	Issues which pose an immediate health, safety or security risk.	Major Disaster or fire Severe storm damage Uncontrollable water leak within property
Urgent	5 Working Days	Issues which pose a health risk, but not an immediate risk.	Partial loss of electric power No hot water Blocked sink
Routine	up to 20 Working Days	Work that poses no threat to occupants and/or may require substantial repairs.	Unblock second toilet in the property. Repair dripping tap Renewal of bath, hand basin Remove Graffiti
Planned Maintenance Repair	up to 60 Working Days	These are works that cannot wait for the investment works programme and will be packaged together and dealt with on a programmed repairs basis.	Major plastering works to walls and ceilings. Large fencing areas
Out of Hours Emergency	5 Hours	Issues which pose an immediate health, safety or security risk.	Defective Doors Locks

*Trade Colleagues and contractors will not carry out any emergency work that will put them in danger e.g. roof repairs after dark or in severe weather conditions.

3.3. Repairing Responsibilities

Under the terms and conditions of the Tenancy Agreement, there are repairs that are the responsibility of RBC, there is a responsibility of customer's for their repairing obligations.

Under the terms of the tenancy, as set out in the Tenancy Agreement, all tenants are responsible for reporting repairs to the Council and must allow access to the property for works to be carried out.

3.4. Planned repairs

Larger works and batched works that have a lead in period and may be subject to consultation.

Any works that require 2 or more tradespersons for more than 2 days of work on a single element of works i.e. bathroom or kitchen replacement prior to specified component renewal date. For example,

- Fencing works, boundary only. Dividing fences between properties are the responsibility of both occupants.
- Whole element replacement of roof.
- Whole element replacement windows or doors.
- Bathroom or kitchen replacements where upgrade date is in future and condition of asset is beyond economical repair.

For a full list of planned maintenance works see appendix 1 -repairs timescales.

3.5. Out of hours service

Redditch Borough Council will provide an out of hours repair service which will operate solely for emergency repairs that occur outside the hours of 8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and during weekends and Bank Holidays.

Where RBC carries out emergency repairs, customers will be contacted the next working day to make an appointment for any follow up repairs required.

The response to emergency works required outside of standard working hours.

All qualifying out of hours emergency reports will be attended to within 2 hours.

Where an emergency repair is needed the out of hours call handler will send out a trade colleague to make safe or if possible complete the repair. Where a follow-on repair appointment is needed the Business support team will contact the customer the following day and make a suitable date appointment offer dependant on the urgency of

the repair identified.

3.6. Responsibilities

Redditch Borough Council is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure and common parts of its properties as set out in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenants' Handbook. For the full list of RBC repair responsibilities see Appendix 2.

4.0 Customers' Responsibilities

Customers are responsible for promptly reporting repairs for which Redditch Borough Council is responsible for. Repair, maintenance and replacement of certain items within the home as set out in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenant's Handy Hints book, which is located on the council's webpage.

For full list of Customer repair responsibilities see Appendix 3.

Responsive Repairs Service

Reporting Repairs

In order to ensure the service is accessible for all customers, RBC will maintain a range of ways for repairs to be reported. These include:

- by phone
- online
- via any employee or representative

Customers are responsible for reporting repairs to RBC and must allow access to their home for any work, inspections or surveys to be carried out by the RBC or any of its contractors or representatives.

All requests for repairs reported by customers will be assessed against the RBC's repairing obligations, as outlined in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenants' Handbook. Redditch Borough Council may charge for undertaking repairs where damage has been caused by the customer, members of their household or visitors to the property.

*Details of how recharges will be applied can be found in RBC Rechargeable Repairs Guide (Appendix 4).

No Access

In the event of an emergency, with the sign of an Assistant Director we can force entry to make the property safe.

In non-emergency situation when access is failed, BSU staff should make reasonable attempts to gain access, including a written appointment letter if communication for the appointment has been unsuccessful by call, email and text message.

If all communication methods have been unsuccessful the case should be passed to the Tenancy Team to complete a tenancy audit. This is to ensure there are no issues with access being granted ie a protected characteristic which would require a reasonable adjustment. The Tenancy Team may invite the Senior Trade to the audit to discuss access or will call through at the audit to schedule the works.

If the audit is an unsuccessful there are 3 outcomes:

- We suspect the property has been abandoned. In this case the Tenancy Team will proceed with recovering possession of the property through the abandonment process.
- The customer requires tenancy sustainment support to manage the tenancy and is referred for support. ie they may be a hoarder need to improve property condition for access to be granted.
- The case is taken to our prevention enforcement group, and we consider applying for an access injunction to complete the works through the courts

Home Improvements

A secure tenant has a legal right to make alterations and improvements to their home if they obtain written permission before they carry out any works and seek all relevant permissions including Planning and Building Regulations approval etc.

We will not unreasonably withhold consent when a request to carry out improvements/alterations is made. If consent is provided, the customer will become responsible for any subsequent repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement/alteration. At the end of the tenancy, a customer may claim compensation for certain eligible improvements carried out provided they have the relevant consent.

Full details are provided in the A Guide to Undertaking Your Own Home Improvements (Appendix 5).

4. Leaseholder Obligations

We will not carry out repairs for leaseholders where the terms of the lease state that a repair is their responsibility. Leaseholders' repair responsibilities are set out in detail within the individual lease agreement. The same recharge approach will apply to leaseholders as for tenants. We will not carry out repairs to homes we manage for third parties unless expressly identified in formal agreements.

We will consult with leaseholders in accordance with the Leaseholders handbook.

For more details please consult the [leaseholder handbook](#).

5. Equality and Diversity

We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our relevant policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

An Equality Impact Assessment may be carried out in respect of this policy and which identified no negative impacts on any person/group with a protected characteristic as a result of this policy.

6. Complaints

We aim to meet the needs of our customers by providing an excellent service. However, it is acknowledged that occasionally things go wrong, and customers may wish to complain. Should the need arise to make a complaint please click [here](#).

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or on the introduction of new legislation or best practice guidance, whichever is the sooner.

Members of Redditch Borough Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and recommend policy changes to improve service delivery and the customer experience. Performance and customer satisfaction outcomes will be reported through the

respective Portfolio Holder for Performance meetings, Tenants/Customer Panel, Senior Management Teams to identify any areas for review and improvement.

Approved documents are valid for use after their approval date and remain in force beyond any expiry of their review date until a new version is available.

8. Associated Documents

List of documents - associated policies, procedures and publications:

- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Management Policy
- Gas and Fuel Burning Appliance Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Water Systems (Legionella) Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Our Customer Commitments
- A Guide to Undertaking Your Own Home Improvements
- Lettable Standard
- Rechargeable Repairs Guide
- Allocations Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy

Appendix 1 – Repair timescales

Component replacement and works not classed as repairs

RBC will complete these works within the timeframes listed below. These are works outside the scope of a repair and as such are not subject to responsive repair KPI's

Alterations to kitchen and bathrooms where authorised (not A&A work)-up to 90 days

Replacement security doors and replacement windows-12 weeks

Replacing out of date smoke alarms-4 weeks

Extra electrical sockets or light fittings where authorised-12 weeks

Legionella works- (Timeframe according to risk identified)

Fire risk assessment works, including fire doors. (Carried out by an external contractor)
(Timeframe according to risk identified)

Gas fires will be inspected as part of the LGSR, however no repairs will be carried out if found faulty and will be condemned until repairs are carried out by the tenant and a compliance certificate issued or removed altogether. Electric fires are tenants' responsibility and no repairs will be carried out if faulty.

Adjustments to categories and timescales will be made to support vulnerable customers who have no available support to assist them.

Appendix 2 – RBC repair responsibilities.

Repair of Structure and Exterior

To keep the structure and exterior of the premises in good repair including:

The roof.

Drains (excluding drains maintained by mains provider), gutters and external pipes.

Outside walls, outside doors, window sills, window catches, sash cords (glass) and window frames, including any necessary external painting or decoration.

Internal walls, skirting boards, doors and door frames, door jambs, thresholds, floors, ceilings and kitchen units and work surfaces (but not painting and decoration).

Internal plaster work (not filling of minor cracks prior to decorations).

Chimneys and chimney stacks and flues *(leasehold shared chimney stacks will fall under section 20 and the section 20 process followed).

Boundary walls, fences, steps and ramps.

Footpaths from the drive/public footpath to the front door and from the front door to the backdoor

Car parking areas (where provided by RBC).

Garages and outbuildings (where provided by RBC).

Stair and passenger lifts.

Repair of Installations

To keep in good repair and proper working order any installations provided or adopted by RBC for space heating, water heating and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

Water pipes and tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring

Electrical sockets and light fittings (but not plugs or non RBC appliances)

Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes

Water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators (where provided by RBC)

Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors (where provided by RBC)

Repair of Communal Areas

To take reasonable care to keep the following in reasonable repair and fit for use by the customer and other occupiers and visitors to the premises

Communal entrances, halls and passageways

Stairways and passenger lifts

Rubbish chutes

Lighting

Any other communal parts

Decoration of Exterior and Communal Areas

To maintain the exterior of the property and any internal communal areas in a reasonable state of decoration.

Appendix 3 – Tenant repair responsibilities.

General

Tenants/customers are responsible for keeping the interior of their home in a good condition and to decorate all internal parts as often as is necessary to keep them in good decorative order. Customers are also expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent damage once a repair fault has been identified.

To repair, renew or replace as necessary any parts of the structure, installations, fixtures or fittings inside or outside the building that are damaged by the customers, a member of the household or someone the customer has allowed into the property, including children. Criminal damage or vandalism should be reported to the Police and a police crime number obtained.

Not to make any changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property without written permission from RBC.

RBC are not responsible for any sheds that have not been provided by RBC within the curtilage of the property and as such they are tenant responsibility in all cases.

To maintain any approved changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property.

To take reasonable steps to avoid moisture build up (condensation) within the property and causing damage.

To pay in full any rechargeable repair cost due to misuse or damage to the structure or fittings of the property.

Internal Decoration and Other Matters

To keep the interior of the premises in good and tenable repair and in clean and good decorative condition, and to decorate all internal parts of the premises as frequently as is necessary to keep them in reasonable decorative order.

Minor Repairs

Customers are responsible for carrying out minor repairs such as the following:

Replacing plugs and chains to baths, basins and sinks

Replacing keys that are lost or when customer have been locked out
Testing and maintaining battery smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, including battery replacement
Repair and maintenance of secondary heating, including electric or gas fires, open fires and wood burners.
Sweeping chimneys as often as necessary to prevent fires and to ensure efficient operation
Replacing fuses, light bulbs, florescent tubes and their starters for standard fittings.
Cleaning baths, wc pans and washbasins
Replacing toilet seats
First attempt to clear blockages in sinks, hand basins, water pipes, toilets or gullies
Repairing minor plaster cracks or holes to walls and / or ceilings
Taking steps to prevent water in pipes and tanks from freezing
Repairing gas/electric cookers and all white goods not provided by RBC
Garden Maintenance including trees
Replacing washing lines and posts or restringing including rotary dryers (except in communal areas).
Maintaining garden paths and patio/hard standings outside of the defined repairs in appendix 2.1
Maintaining driveways not installed by RBC
Repairing any fences installed by customers
TV aerials (except communal aerials) and any damage to property or neighbouring property caused by their installation.
TV/BT/Multimedia points and extensions within the home
Ensure the property is appropriately heated and ventilated-and report non-functional extractor fans
Cleaning off mould and condensation
Supplying and renewing dustbins
Altering doors for carpets.
Alterations to install additional appliances, fittings or fixers (after seeking prior permission from RBC)
Customers own Gas and electric cookers and hobs must be installed by an approved qualified contractor and evidence of certification provided to RBC.
Re-glazing of external windows and doors where the customer has caused the damage.
Cleaning leaves and garden waste etc. from rainwater gullies.
Removal of pests in the home (rats, fleas, wasps, etc.)
Minor repairs to internal door handles, catches.
The provision of window restrictors
Replacement window lock keys

Appendix 4 – Rechargeable repairs guide.

Customers can be charged for repairs under the following circumstances:

If the customer asks RBC to carry out extra work that is their responsibility

If the customer replaces any fixtures or fittings, or does any repairs or improvements without first obtaining RBC's written permission

If RBC has to repair anything that the customer, members of their family, visitors or pets have damaged (including blocked toilets or waste pipes caused by neglect or misuse)

If the customer misuses the emergency call-out system

Re-lighting boilers where this is caused by an act or omission of the customer

Any repairs that are customers responsibility

Garden Maintenance including trees..

Any damage to a chimney where there is a solid fuel appliance and is caused by burning incorrect fuel or failure to maintain appliance if their own has been fitted.

In certain circumstances customers may qualify for a waiver where vulnerability can be demonstrated, this will be decided on a case by case situation.

RBC will consider the replacement of locks where this is required to protect the customer from domestic violence or burglary. RBC will also carry out the work at no cost to the customer where this is required through no fault of the customer.

When a customer does not carry out repairs that are their responsibility and failure to do so causes a risk to the customer, neighbours or the property, RBC may carry out the repair and recharge the cost to the customer.

Where a customer is deemed to be vulnerable by way of disability, immobility through old age or for any other reason, RBC may carry out works that would normally be the responsibility of the customer to complete without recharging. Each case will be considered on its merits and the decision will be at RBC'S discretion based on known information and individual circumstances.

RBC expects that the customer takes reasonable care to avoid damage to the property, as an example: leaving the front or rear door open and the wind blows it shut and the glass in the door shatters this would be classed as a recharge.