

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY

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Executive Summary:
<p>The responsive repairs policy details how we will provide a responsive ‘tenant focused’ repairs service to our highest standards. The policy outlines typical repairs undertaken and expected completion targets developed with our tenant representatives.</p>

Policy Grouping/Directorate(s)	Customer and Community	
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EIA Completed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Publication	Intranet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Notes:		

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's (RBH) approach to managing responsive repairs.
- 1.2 We are committed to the provision of quality homes and to delivering a customer focussed, cost effective repairs service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choice to, customers.
- 1.3 We aim to complete repairs right first time, although not necessarily in a single visit. Where a repair requires multiple visits to complete (e.g. an emergency repair 'made safe' on first visit then follow up for permanent repair made), we will keep customers fully informed about the status of their repair.
- 1.4 This policy details our approach to prioritising and completing repairs, providing a flexible framework to operate within. This enables customers to have a clear understanding of the expected timescales for completion of any reported repair.

2 Context

- 2.1 This policy has been developed to ensure that RBH is compliant with all relevant regulations and legislation relating to the completion of responsive repairs within the homes of RBH's customers.
- 2.2 It takes into account good practice from various organisations which RBH is a member of e.g. Housemark, Housing Quality Network, Housing Ombudsman Service, and from internal audits and reviews which have been carried out.

3 Aims & Objectives

- 3.1 The aims of the policy are:
 - To communicate how we will provide a timely and cost-effective repairs service, setting clear expectations for customers in terms of when different types of repairs will be completed.
 - To set out how we will make the repairs service accessible and complete repairs in a way that meets the needs of individual customers at a time that is convenient and agreed with them.
 - To demonstrate how we will ensure ongoing compliance with all our legal and regulatory responsibilities.
- 3.2 The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

Responsibility – We take responsibility for the delivery of a cost-effective, customer focussed responsive repairs service.

Equity – We actively listen to our customers, with empathy and respect, and deliver services in a way that meets identified needs.

Democracy – We give RBH members and customers a say in the way we run our service, using customer feedback to inform improvement activity.

Pioneering – This policy supports a forward-thinking approach to responding to repair requests and to the challenges faced by the service.

Collaboration – We collaboratively work together with customers to improve the service and forge stronger relationships and a sense of trust.

4 Policy Statement

Landlord/Tenant Responsibilities

- 4.1 As landlord, we take responsibility for meeting our repair obligations as detailed in the tenancy, licence or lease agreement.
- 4.2 Customers also have a range of responsibilities relating to repairs. These are also detailed in the tenancy, licence or lease agreement. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about repairs can be found on the RBH website along with top tips and videos to help avoid, or deal with, common emergency repairs.
- 4.3 RBH asks that customers report repairs promptly and allow RBH representatives access to their homes to carry out property inspections, routine, emergency repairs and any work that RBH considers necessary to ensure that our properties do not put customers, employees, or members of the public at risk. This includes allowing us prompt access for essential safety checks including Gas and Electrical inspections.
- 4.4 Failure to provide reasonable access to carry out a repair or inspection may result in escalation action in accordance with the tenancy, licence or lease agreement. Any associated costs will be recharged to the customer.
- 4.5 We make appointments, in consultation with customers, for all routine repairs. Missed appointments cost RBH money. Where customers cancel appointments at the last minute (i.e. when we arrive at your home to carry out works), without what we consider a valid reason, the works will be re-prioritised as non-urgent.
- 4.6 If RBH undertakes a repair which is the customer's responsibility, the cost of the works will be charged back to the customer. If these works are undertaken out of hours, then an additional call out fee will also be incurred. Costs will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Further information on this can be found in our separate Chargeable Repairs Policy.
- 4.7 RBH is committed to providing excellent customer service and affordable, high quality and secure homes. All homes should provide a safe and healthy environment. To ensure this is achieved, RBH will carry out the necessary planned preventative maintenance and repair work. We will make sure that our customers are aware of how to report any problems and what to expect when reported. In return, we expect that customers keep their homes, gardens and any communal areas clean and in good condition so that our teams can carry out any repair and maintenance work.
- 4.8 If a customer is dissatisfied with a repair that has been completed, then all efforts should be made to resolve this at the point at which this dissatisfaction is made known. This may be through a call to our Contact Centre or a response to our satisfaction survey which is sent out after every repair. If it is not resolved satisfactorily at that first point of contact, the customer may go through our complaints process. Making a complaint is also the route customers should first take if they consider that RBH is failing in its duty to complete repairs, and where they have reported the problem at least once and given RBH a reasonable amount of time to do the work. Such instances are formally known as disrepair and, if this is found to be the case, we have a separate procedure in place for dealing with such claims.

- 4.9 RBH publish repair response times to give clarity about how long customers may need to wait for a repair to be completed. The table below summarises our current priority timescales. These have been set in consultation with customers. We will publish the actual average time it is taking RBH to complete different job types on our website so customers have information about our current performance.
- 4.10 In the event of extreme external influences, such as bad weather or a pandemic, we may need to review repair priorities in line with our extreme weather policy. Customers will be updated of any changes via our various communication channels including our website.

Priority level	Timescale (2023)	Sample job types
Emergency/ Urgent	24hours/ 5 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No heat or hot water • No electrics • Uncontrollable leak • Home insecure • Major health and safety risk • Urgent repairs relate to follow on works where initial emergency repair was to 'make safe'
Routine	20 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine electrical • Roof repairs • Routine joinery
Planned/ Programmed	By mutually agreed appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing and gates • Plastering • Gutter cleans and renewals • Internal joinery jobs which take over 30 mins • Internal plumbing jobs which take over 30 mins

Special circumstances

- 4.11 It is our policy to ensure that discretion is used in cases of identified vulnerability such as disability, frailty, illness, domestic abuse, concern for welfare or any other identified need. RBH will use data provided by customers and held in our systems (e.g. CRM) to assist in identifying vulnerabilities. We will also ask customers at the point of reporting a repair to make us aware of any issues or things to be considered, which will help us to take appropriate decisions when prioritising repairs.
- 4.12 In cases where abuse is identified or suspected at the point of reporting a repair, or while completing a repair, a conversation should be held with the Safeguarding Coordinator and/or a safeguarding notification sent through to Eyes Wide Open by the relevant employee.
- 4.13 **Right to Repair**

In line with the Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994, RBH operates a Right to Repair Scheme which enables customers to have qualifying repairs carried out at the landlord's expense, and to receive compensation if qualifying repairs are not carried out in the prescribed period

(Further details about the Right to Repair can be found at [Using the right to repair scheme - Citizens Advice](#)).

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 Monitoring of the delivery of this policy will include the production of weekly and monthly performance reports to enable operational managers to effectively monitor the performance and progress of the service.
- 5.2 Annual budgeting and regular reforecasting ensures we provide quality homes in a way that represent value for money for our customers.
- 5.3 We will monitor customer satisfaction levels and seek feedback following every completed repair. Customers will receive a SMS text message asking them to complete a survey. Where dissatisfaction is indicated, we will attempt to contact the customer to understand what has gone wrong and look to put things right. Customer feedback will be used to actively manage the repairs team and improve the service provided.

6 Review

- 6.1 All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.
- 6.2 This policy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

7 Links with Other RBH Documents

- 7.1 This policy links to the following policies and strategies:
 - Value for Money Strategy
 - Health and Safety Framework
 - Repairs Business Continuity Plan
 - Chargeable Repairs Policy
 - Tenancy/licence/lease agreements
 - Code of conduct for employees
 - Electrical Safety Policy
 - Gas Safety Policy
 - Disrepair Policy/Procedure
 - Damp and Mould Policy
 - Extreme Weather Policy