



# REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE POLICY



<b>Repairs, Maintenance &amp; Planned Improvements Policy</b>			
<b>Last Reviewed</b>	<b>January 2026</b>	<b>Next Review</b>	<b>January 2028</b>
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director of Operations</b>		

### **Policy Statement:**

We aim to maintain and improve our homes to a high standard, and to develop high quality housing. The repairs service is one of our most important functions. We are committed to providing a high-quality service that considers our residents' needs, our resources, statutory obligations, and external affecting factors. The responsive repairs service complements our planned and cyclical maintenance programmes to ensure our stock is well maintained, up to date and meets the needs of our residents.

### **Policy Detail:**

#### **Introduction**

This policy outlines the plan for the delivery of an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvement service to the homes and communal areas for which Freebridge Community Housing (FCH) is responsible.

#### **Scope**

This policy details the service that FCHs customers can expect in the delivery of repair, maintenance and planned improvement services. It provides details on how FCH, its own repairs operatives, contractor and our supply chain partners are committed to delivering these services.

#### **Application**

This policy applies to all social housing tenants of FCH.

This policy should be read in conjunction with FCH's Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

#### **Exclusions**

The full provisions of this policy do not apply to leaseholders, shared owners, and residents whose properties are managed by but not owned by FCH. Details of the services these customers can expect are set out in their individual lease or tenancy agreements.

### **Leasehold Properties**

Repairs for leasehold properties are carried out in accordance with the terms of the individual lease and Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. Responsibilities typically include maintaining the structure, exterior, and common areas, ensuring buildings insurance is up to date, and keeping communal areas clear and well-lit. Leaseholders will be recharged for repairs according to their lease agreements. Details can be found in individual lease agreements.

### **Properties not Owned but Managed by FCH**

For properties not owned but managed by Freebridge on behalf of the freeholders, we will communicate with the property owners to ensure necessary repairs are conducted in line with this policy's principles. Details can be found in the relevant management contract.

### **Support Needs**

When we determine the category of a repair, we will take into consideration your individual and household situation, circumstances, the impacts of the repair required, and support needs so that we can support you in the best way possible.

Repairs will be assessed and prioritised on a case-by-case basis and consideration will be given to the individual circumstances and the work required. We may need one of our team to visit the home if needed. Decisions relating to repairs will be made alongside FCH Vulnerability Policy and Principles.

### **Accessibility**

We are committed to ensuring that all of our customers are able to access our Repairs and Maintenance service. Whether you need to access our services in alternative ways, want to update your details to reflect a change in circumstances or need additional support, we want to help as best we can.

Examples of support we provide are:

- Supplying auxiliary aids such as:
  - sign language interpreters
  - Induction loop
- Providing information in alternative formats (e.g. large print, Braille, coloured paper, audio etc.)

- Giving extra time for customers to report repairs or provide access to their home
- Sending emails or communicating via telephone in preference to hard copy letters
- Communicating with a nominated family member or third party

Customers can let us know about any additional support needed at any point during the repairs process. We will always try and meet the needs of our customers. There may be instances where this isn't possible. When this happens, we will do our best to work with you to find another solution.

## Reporting

Repairs, maintenance and planned improvements can be reported by a customer, colleague, contractor, or a member of the public.

## Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvement Categories & Response Times

### Emergency Repairs

- **Definition:** Repairs required that could present a significant and immediate risk of harm and threat to life to our customers (inc. members of their household) and/or damage to their home or community.
- **Examples:** Fire or flood, gas leaks, total loss of electrical power (unless outside of our control, such as a power cut), broken communal entrance doors that pose a significant security risk), blocked main drains or sewage systems, damp and mould that is affecting a customer or a member of their household's ability to breathe, internal leaks that cannot be contained or inability to access water (Where this is Freebridge's responsibility), blocked toilet and there is only one toilet in the property, loss of heating or hot water (emergency temporary heating will be provided if unable to affect a temporary or permanent repair) during the months of October – February (Or all year in the event of customers with health conditions that require their heating on throughout the year). Internal leaks that cannot be contained.
- **Response Time: 24 hours.** An out of hours service is provided for emergency repairs. The emergency repairs service operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days per year

### Urgent Repairs

- **Definition:** Repairs that do not present a risk of harm, threat to life to our customers or a risk of damage to their home but are required to prevent significant inconvenience
- **Examples:** Partial loss of electrical power, minor leaks that can be contained, blocked pipes, blocked toilet and there is more than one toilet in the property, loss of heating or hot water during the months of March to Sept. Continuously running overflow pipes
- **Response Time: Within 7 calendar days**

## Routine Repairs

- **Definition:** Repairs required that do not pose a risk of harm to our customers (inc. members of their household) or further damage to their home or community
- **Examples:** Dripping taps, loose tiles, cosmetic damage (e.g., wall cracks), repairs to kitchen units or doors
- **Response Time:** Within **28 calendar days**

## Hazards & Repairs

**Definition:** Repairs required to address Category 1 Hazards under the Health & Housing Safety Rating System, or where a risk or dangerous condition poses a significant risk of harm to a customer or a member of their household. [Shelter Legal England - HHSRS definition of hazards - Shelter England](#)

**Examples:** Damp and mould that is affecting a customer or a member of their household's ability to breathe and causing respiratory health issues. Presence of mould on walls or ceilings, persistent damp patches, condensation issues, excess cold, excess heat, poor ventilation.

### Response Time:

- **24 hours** if repairs pose a significant and immediate risk of harm or threat to life to a customer or a member of their family. To avoid delays in emergency repairs, FCH will not provide a written summary before completing the work. In cases where temporary measures are taken or customers are given alternative accommodation, FCH will communicate with the customer and issue a summary explaining the issue, the planned permanent solution, and the expected timeframes when repair will be complete
- **Within 10 working days** FCH will complete an initial investigation and provide a summary of findings to the customer for repairs that do not pose an immediate risk of harm. If the investigation identifies a repair posing a significant and immediate risk, either a temporary or permanent repair will be done within 24 hours. FCH recognises that sometimes a full investigation takes longer than 10 days. In such cases, an initial investigation will be conducted within the 10 day period to assess the issue and determine next steps, which may include a specialist damp survey. Exact dates for next steps may depend on external contractors' and will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable. FCH will communicate with the customer and provide an estimated timeframe when the issue will be investigated

**Within 3 working days of completing the initial investigation**), FCH will share a summary of findings to the customer. This summary will include details of any identified hazard, the next steps, and a timeline for repairs. If only temporary

repairs are made, FCH will provide the customer with a timeframe when they can expect the full repair to be completed.

- If a hazard is identified but does not pose a significant risk, FCH will explain why it is not covered by Awaab's Law and outline the next steps as a routine repair. If no hazard is found, FCH will provide the customer with a summary of findings from the investigation and its conclusion, assuring the customer their home is safe.
- **5 working days to commence repair work** from the date the initial investigation concludes (for repairs that do not pose a significant and immediate risk of harm or threat to life to a customer or a member of their family). If further works are needed and cannot begin within 5 working days, works will start **as soon as reasonably practicable**, but **no later than 12 weeks** from the conclusion of the investigation.
- Repair work will be completed within a reasonable period based on complexity of work and the needs of our customers. FCH will ensure that repairs will not be unreasonably delayed, and evidence provided where delays to repairs are necessary. FCH will communicate delays with the customer and take into account any needs and impact the delay with repairs may or will have. Future planned programmes of works will not be used to substitute work needed to address hazards in our customers' homes, as these will be prioritised.

### Summary:

- ✓ **Day Zero:** Freebridge becomes aware of a hazard.
- ✓ **Emergency Hazard:** Investigate & repair within **24 hours**; written summary within **3 working days**.
- ✓ **Significant Hazard:** Investigate within **10 working days**; written summary within **3 working days**; repairs initiated/completed within **5 working days**, full works within **12 weeks** if delayed.

### Pest Control

Freebridge are legally required to ensure that homes are safe, habitable, and fit for human occupation. This means we will deal with issues that could make a home unsafe or unhealthy, including pest infestations that arise due to structural issues or disrepair.

### Examples:

- Rodents entering through gaps caused by broken walls, floors, or roofing.
- Infestations of insects due to damp or poor building maintenance.

If pests are present because of structural problems or failure in maintenance, we are responsible for arranging treatment. This could include:

- Sealing entry points for rats or mice.
- Repairing holes, broken pipes, or faulty drains.
- Fixing damp issues that attract pests like cockroaches or silverfish.

We are also responsible for pest control in communal areas of blocks or estates, such as:

- Hallways and stairwells
- Shared gardens or waste disposal areas
- Roof spaces or basements

Customers will usually have to manage pests that are directly caused by their own actions, such as:

- Poor hygiene leading to ants or cockroaches.
- Leaving food out that attracts mice.
- Failing to report issues promptly so they worsen.

We will consider charging tenants for pest treatment if the infestation is clearly caused by negligence. See also **Rechargeable Works Policy**.

**For more details on different pests please see Appendix 1.**

## Other Works

### Minor Adaptations

- **Definition:** Small one-off adjustments or installations to a property to assist a customer or household member to access/exit, move around and/or comfortably and safely enjoy their property or garden.
- **Examples:** Grab rails, lever taps, door handles, or additional power sockets.
- **Response Time:** Up to 28 calendar days. Where it is considered that the customer or household member requires a minor adaptation more urgently for safety reasons, we will endeavour to complete these within 7 calendar days.

### Minor Works

- **Definition:** Small, basic one-off projects that are a significant repair, renewal or improvement which are not part of an existing programme
- **Examples:** Structural repairs, passenger lift renewal, door entry system upgrade/renewal, large roof repairs, extensions, communal heating replacements, resurfacing works, communal garden redesign
- **Response Time:** Up to 90 calendar days. Customers will be advised on the planned response time and any disruptions to standard of living which may occur. FCH will consider the needs of customers who have support and

mobility needs, how these planned works may impact them and how we can support them

### **Planned Improvement Programmes**

- **Definition:** Planned replacement and/or improvement work to maintain, improve and upgrade properties and communal areas
- **Examples:** Roof replacement, window & door replacement, kitchen replacement, bathroom replacement, heating system replacement
- **Response Time:** Programme timings are based on data held on our properties. Customers will be consulted with prior to work commencing and updated on a regular basis.
- FCH will consider the needs of customers who have support needs, how these planned works may impact them and how we can support them

### **Cyclical Maintenance**

- **Definition:** Work carried out at regular intervals to maintain properties and communal areas
- **Examples:** Decoration of internal and external communal areas, gutter clearing, fencing renewal
- **Response Time:** Programme timings are based on data held on our properties. Customers will be consulted with prior to work commencing and updated on a regular basis. FCH will consider the needs of customers who have support needs, how these planned works may impact them and how we can support them

### **Servicing and Testing**

- **Definition:** Work carried out to ensure that the health and safety of our customers is maintained
- **Examples:** Gas safety check, heating servicing, electrical installation inspections, lift servicing, fire safety equipment servicing and testing
- **Frequency:** Servicing and testing frequencies are based on statutory, regulatory and best practice requirements. Where relevant, customers will be contacted prior to servicing and testing being undertaken.
- FCH will consider the needs of customers who have support needs, how these planned works may impact them and how we can support them

### **Repair Completion**

There may be some instances, due to the complexity of the work or when new parts need to be ordered, when the repair cannot be completed within the above timescales. In these instances, we will aim to undertake a temporary fix and complete the repairs within 90 days of the date the repair was reported and will keep the customer updated.

## Temporary Relocation (Decants) for Repairs That Pose a Significant and / or Immediate Risk of Harm or Danger

If a hazard poses a significant, or a significant and immediate risk of threat to life, harm or danger, and the property cannot be made safe within the specified timescales, FCH will offer to arrange for the occupant(s) to stay in suitable alternative accommodation until it is safe to return. See FCH's Moving Out Policy for further information.

FCH recognises that some customers will have reasons to decline being moved from their homes, even if temporarily. In these instances, FCH will communicate to customers with clear information on how to keep themselves and their families safe ahead of the hazard being addressed, including if it is FCH's judgement that it is not possible to do so. We will support the customer to ensure all the risks of staying in the property have been understood and why we are advising that temporary move is recommended.

If the customer is being moved to alternative accommodation, FCH will take into account all practicalities required to help the customers to continue their daily lives and will do its best to accommodate these – i.e. location of school, workplace, access to bus route, GP's, shops etc.

If any of these can't be accommodated FCH will communicate with the customer and where possible agree suitable options.

## Repair Responsibilities

We will repair many items in our customer's home, but we will not do everything. In accordance with our tenancy agreements our customers have some responsibilities to keep their home in a good state of repair. A full list of repairing responsibilities can be found on FCH's website [HERE](#).

FCH will fix damage due to fair wear and tear, but may not carry out repairs where a customer, a member of their household or guests visiting accidentally or deliberately cause damage, unless the damage poses a significant risk of harm to the occupants; in this event the cost of the repair will be recharged to the tenant (see also [Charges for Damage and Repairs that are not FCH's Responsibility](#)). We will be mindful of the potential for damage to be caused for other reasons and ensure we consider this to safeguard customers and their families – see also domestic abuse and safeguarding policies.

We will continually monitor repairs data to highlight trends such as frequent reoccurrence of the same issues, to identify and resolve any systemic or underlying problems.

## Charges for Damage and Repairs that are not FCHs Responsibility

In accordance with FCH's Rechargeable Works policy, repairs will be refused or charged to the customer for damage caused through neglect, misuse, unauthorised alterations, or if the repair is not the responsibility of FCH. However, these will be undertaken and recharged to the customer if the repair poses a significant risk of harm to a customer, a member of their household or damage to the property or community.

## Access and Record-Keeping

FCH will offer customers suitable timeslots for repairs that take into consideration customers needs for example their working pattern and childcare arrangements or need for an appointed third party to be available with the customer. This list is not exhaustive should FCH or its contractors be unable to access a property to investigate or make repairs following three reasonable attempts, FCH may apply to the courts for an injunction to gain access. Should access be refused to undertake compliance related activities, FCH will apply for an injunction to gain access.

FCH will keep clear records to provide assurance of compliance with this policy. This will include records of all:

- correspondence with customers (inc. household members) and contractors
- reasonable attempts to comply with the timescales within this policy
- reasons that have prevented FCH from complying with response times and frequencies
- correspondence with customers on offering alternative suitable accommodation

## Improvements

In most cases customers wishing to make improvements to their home will need permission from FCH prior to commencing work. Customers can check FCHs website to determine whether permission is required or not.

## New Build Property Defects

For newly built properties, any defects identified within the defect's liability period will be managed in accordance with our new build defects policy and contract with the builder.

## Customer Engagement

We welcome customer feedback in order for us to continually improve our services. After a repair, maintenance or improvement is completed, customers may be invited to provide feedback through a range of methods. Our Vulnerability Policy and Customer Influence Plan sets out how we work to ensure all customers are enabled to provide feedback.

## Compliance Review and Audit

Activities covered under this policy will be subject to continuous performance monitoring with Key Performance Indicators reported to both the Operations Committee and Board to provide assurance.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if required, to ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and best practice requirements.

Periodic audits of this policy will be undertaken to ensure that the requirements are being undertaken consistently, with findings and any action required, reported to the Audit and Risk Committee of the Board.

## Appendix 1

Pest Type	Freebridge Responsibility	Tenant Responsibility	Notes / Typical Scenarios
<b>Rats &amp; Mice</b>	<p>✔ If entry is due to structural defects (holes in walls, floors, drains, gaps in roof) or communal areas</p>	<p>✘ If attracted by poor hygiene, uncovered food, clutter</p>	<p>Freebridge will treat infestations in shared gardens or communal bins.</p>
<b>Cockroaches</b>	<p>✔ If infestation is caused by damp, leaks, or property disrepair</p>	<p>✘ If caused by food left out or untidy kitchens</p>	<p>Infestations in flats often start from structural issues; early reporting helps.</p>
<b>Bedbugs</b>	<p>✘ Usually tenant responsibility unless infestation was present when moving in</p>	<p>✔ Treat or allow professional treatment at tenant expense</p>	<p>Freebridge may help coordinate professional exterminators, but the cost will be for the tenant.</p>
<b>Fleas</b>	<p>✘ Usually tenant responsibility (especially from pets)</p>	<p>✔ Treat pets and home</p>	<p>Freebridge will help if linked to structural dampness, rarely the main cause.</p>

Pest Type	Freebridge Responsibility	Tenant Responsibility	Notes / Typical Scenarios
<b>Wasps / Bees</b>	<p>✔ If nests in roof voids or communal structures</p>	<p>✘ If nest is on balcony or private garden</p>	<p>Freebridge arranges safe removal from building structures.</p> <p><i>Currently it is estimated that around 25% of all bee types are endangered. In keeping with this Freebridge do not support extermination of bees. Instead, and where it is our responsibility to do so, our pest control contractor will advise and facilitate the safe moving of bee nests and swarms when absolutely necessary.</i></p>
<b>Birds / Pigeons</b>	<p>✔ If nesting in roof, vents, chimneys that affect property</p>	<p>✘ If in private garden</p>	-
<b>Mould-related pests (e.g., silverfish, mites)</b>	<p>✔ If caused by damp or leaks</p>	<p>✘ If due to neglect of cleaning by tenant</p>	Addressing underlying damp is our job.
<b>Ants</b>	<p>✔ Only if caused by structural issues</p>	<p>✔ Otherwise, keep property clean, seal food</p>	Commonly minor, usually tenant responsibility although Freebridge may intervenes if linked to building faults.