

# Frequently asked Questions

## Who is responsible for a repair?

Looking after your home is a joint responsibility. As a Registered Social Landlord, we have a duty of care to carry out certain repairs and maintenance to keep properties in a safe condition. Tenants are responsible for some minor repairs and maintenance. Tenants are also responsible for keeping their home in a good and reasonable condition, both internally and externally.

## How do I report a repair?

Emergency and urgent repairs can be reported to the Maintenance Helpdesk on **0330 678 0008 (option 1)**.

Day to day repairs can be reported between 09.00am & 17.00pm. All calls received outside these hours will be diverted to the Out of Hours Emergency Service, where only emergency repairs will be dealt with.

Non- emergency repairs can also be e-mailed to:

**[repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk](mailto:repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk)**

## What is an emergency repair?

Repairs that are required to avoid danger to health, a risk to the safety of residents or serious damage to buildings. These repairs will normally be attended to within 24 hours.

For example:

- Complete loss of heating and hot water, complete loss of power not caused by a power cut or loss of water
- Leaks that cannot be isolated or stopped or a for example bucket used to catch the flow
- Accidental damage to building structure that could cause further damage or injury

## What if my repair is not an emergency?

All non- emergency repairs will be classified as urgent, routine or planned maintenance. When you report a repair, you will be notified, by the Maintenance Helpdesk, what priority your repair is classified as.

For Example:

Repair description	Usual classification
A leak which can be contained with a receptacle	urgent
Loss of heating <b>or</b> hot water	urgent
Loose door handles	routine
Broken extractor fan	routine
Guttering work	planned

## What do I do if I have an emergency repair outside working hours?

Ring our repairs line on **0330 678 0008 (option 1)** and your call will be transferred to an emergency repairs service automatically. Please note that if you contact the Out of Hours Emergency Service, and the problem is not an emergency, you will be recharged for the cost of the call out charge.

## Will I need to be at home when the repair is carried out?

The tenant(s) or an appropriate adult will need to be present at the property for the scheduled repair appointment.

## How do I descale my shower head?

If you experience a lack of water pressure from the shower, one possible cause may be that the shower head needs descaling. Over time your shower head can become scaled up; descaling your showerhead is a good housing keeping exercise that we recommend is done periodically. There are many products available from supermarkets and DIY stores that can be used to descale the shower head; we advise that you follow the instructions on the label.

## **Why do you need to get in every year to carry out gas servicing?**

Papworth Trust has a legal obligation to test all gas appliances annually to ensure the safety of our tenants. Whilst this is an annual requirement, Papworth Trust works to an 11 month cycle. You must allow access for the appointed and approved contractors to carry out the annual testing and servicing to all gas appliances within your home. Should you continuously or willingly fail to provide access we may apply to County Court, to obtain an order to gain access to your home. In such situations the tenant will be responsible for the costs incurred to take such action.

## **What do I do in the event my electrics trip out?**

If your electrics trip, it has tripped for a reason as this is a safety function. If this occurs, check the RCD (Residual Current Devices) Unit where you will find the electrical safety switches that remove the supply to an electrical circuit when the circuit is unsafe.

When the electrics trip you will experience a loss of electricity to certain areas within your home. We recommend that you unplug all electric appliances in the affected area and reset the trip switch on the RCD unit. Then proceed to plug in each electrical item, one at a time, by doing this you will establish which appliance is causing the electrics to trip; this item will need to be appropriately repaired or replaced. We do not maintain personal electrical items.

## **Can you change my lightbulb?**

Lightbulbs are the tenants' responsibility. The only exception to this is communal areas in supported or group homes.

## **My sink is blocked, can you repair it?**

Unblocking sinks is the tenants' responsibility. There are many products available from supermarkets and DIY stores that can be poured down the plughole to clear blockages – we recommend you closely follow the instructions on the product label. To prevent blockages never pour fats down the sink as the fat solidifies when cooled and restricts the flow of waste water in the pipes, gullies and drains.

## **Who is responsible for locks and keys?**

Key loss or broken keys in locks are the tenants' responsibility.

Papworth Trust has responsibility for the external door locks and will fix them. However, if the tenant has clearly damaged the lock or taken it apart then it will be rechargeable. If this is known prior to the visit then it may be more prudent for to employ a local locksmith as this would likely be quicker and cheaper.

## **My toilet is blocked, can you repair it?**

Unblocking toilets is the tenants' responsibility. Items such as wipes, kitchen roll, rubber gloves, sanitary products and excessive toilet paper should not be flushed down the toilet as these are the most common cause of blockages.

## **Who is responsible for pest/vermin in my home?**

Tenants are responsible for eradicating pests and/or vermin, unless they are in common areas. If rodents are entering the property as a result of a repair, the fault is to be reported the Maintenance Help Desk.

## **I have a problem with my TV reception, what can I do?**

We only maintain communal aerial systems. If you have lost signal strength, we recommend you try retuning your TV set, following the instruction manual. Failing this we would further advise you to contact a specialist for help or contact your service provider if you have satellite or cable television.

## **Why have you sent me an invoice for a rechargeable repair?**

If Papworth Trust have incurred costs for carrying out repairs that are the responsibility of tenant, all costs will be invoiced to the tenant. This includes accidental damage or misuse by yourself or a visitor to your home. Likewise forcing entry to your home when you've lost your keys or providing replacement door entry fobs.

## **Do I need home contents insurance?**

Papworth Trust's Landlord insurance covers structural damage to the building from fire, flood or any other cause. Any damage or theft to your internal decorations or personal belongings is not covered by Papworth Trust's insurance. We strongly recommend you purchase contents insurance to

cover accidental damage, theft or loss of internal decoration and personal belongings. Papworth Trust is unable to provide financial assistance or compensation for losses if you do not have adequate insurance cover.

We have details of a contents insurance scheme that is endorsed by the National Housing Federation, for more information please contact your Housing Officer.

### **How do I pay my rent?**

Our preferred method of payment is Direct Debit. If you would like to set up a direct debit, please complete the Direct Debit Mandate and return it to your Housing Officer. A copy of this form can be found on our website.

Payments can also be made by standing order, debit card or cheque. We do not take cash.

### **How do I end my tenancy agreement?**

To end your tenancy agreement, you will need to give a minimum of 28 days written notice. Alternatively you can complete the online Termination of tenancy form and send it to:

**Housing@papworthtrust.org.uk**

### **How can I report Anti-Social Behaviour?**

To report cases of anti-social behaviour please contact your Housing Officer, who will be able to offer additional advice and support.

### **Can I add my spouse/partner to my tenancy agreement?**

If you have a sole tenancy and wish to add your spouse/partner to the tenancy, you must formally request this in writing. If you are married, we will require a copy of your marriage certificate. If you are living with a partner, you will be required to provide proof of residency for that person for a minimum of 12 months at your home.

Please note that permission for a joint tenancy is at the discretion of Papworth Trust – permission will be refused if your rent account is in arrears or if there are or have been issues with anti-social behaviour or any other breach of tenancy.

## **I have a joint tenancy and my spouse spouse/partner has left. Can I take them off the tenancy?**

For legal reasons, we cannot unilaterally remove someone from a tenancy. Both you and the other party must formally request to end the joint interest in the tenancy in writing. You can also seek a property variation order through the Court legal system – you should seek independent legal advice before doing so.

Please note that if you or your partner terminates the tenancy, the whole tenancy is terminated. It will then be at Papworth Trusts discretion to grant a sole tenancy to the remaining party.

## **Am I allowed to keep a pet?**

If you wish to get a pet you need to seek permission, in writing, from your Housing Officer.

Permission to keep certain pets will not be granted to residents living in flats or shared properties for reasons; exceptions may be made for recognised assistance dogs. Further information can be obtained from the pet's policy.

## **I want to carry out home improvements to the property, how do I request permission?**

If you wish to carry out home improvements, you must seek permission, in writing, from you Housing Officer. Home Improvements will be considered by the Housing and Maintenance Department. Permission may be granted with certain conditions. Failure to comply with the conditions may be considered a breach of your tenancy agreement.

Tenants are responsible for the costs of any/all home improvements, including installation costs, future maintenance and the cost to reinstate the improvement when the tenancy is terminated.

## **An Occupational Therapist has recently carried out an assessment; as a result my home requires adaptations. What happens next?**

The Occupational Therapist (OT) will send Papworth Trust a copy of the assessment. We will work with you and the relevant partner organisations to

ensure that your needs are met either through an adaptation, moving to a more suitable property or a revised scheme to suit the property type.

Any adaptations or equipment installed as a result of an adaption becomes the responsibility of the tenant once the warranty expires. This includes servicing and maintenance. Costs of reinstating works or removing equipment at the end of tenancy will be the responsibility of the tenant.

Further information regarding adaptations can be found in the Tenant Handbook and Adaptations policy.

### **Version Tracker**

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### **Document Control**

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