

### 1. Purpose and scope

As a landlord, Papworth Trust is responsible for the majority of repairs to the structure of properties and aims to provide a repair service that maintains properties in an acceptable condition for tenants while ensuring the useful life of housing stock is maximized.

### 2. Policy statement

The Papworth Trust approach to managing customer requests for repairs is to:

- Meet relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Meet the Regulator of Social Housing's Home Standard.
- Meet the Government Decent Homes Standard.
- Meet contractual requirements of Tenancy Conditions and Fair Landlord.
- Deliver a cost-effective and customer focused service.
- Undertake as many repairs as possible as planned or packaged work to deliver Value for Money.
- Allocate requests for repairs to a category based on information provided by the customer but at the ultimate discretion of Papworth Trust.

### 3. Responsive repairs definition

Responsive repairs are defined as work requested by the tenant to existing elements of their property.

Responsive repairs are not part of:

- Planned cyclical maintenance, e.g., lift maintenance, electrical testing, or cyclical painting.
- Planned work, e.g., guttering, or fencing repairs.
- Capital improvement works, e.g., kitchen, bathroom, or external door replacement.

### 4. Requesting a repair

4.1 Papworth Trust will offer a range of ways to make requests for repairs including:

- Via e-mail at [repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk](mailto:repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk)
- Via the website – [www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing](http://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing)
- Via telephone, during our usual office hours this is connected to the Maintenance Helpdesk; outside of office hours to our out of hours call center – **0330 678 0008** option 1

4.2 Papworth Trust will regularly communicate the range of ways to make a repairs request, using the most appropriate means.

4.3 Customers are encouraged to provide as much information regarding the repair as possible, including photographs if possible.

4.4 All contacts are logged on to a database so that a clear audit trail is available.

## 5. Allocating requests for repairs

5.1 Requests for repairs will be allocated to one of the following categories:

- An emergency
- An urgent repair
- A routine repair
- A major repair
- Covered by planned works.
- Covered by cyclical works.
- Covered by capital improvements.
- Inspection required before allocation can be made.
- Not the Papworth Trust responsibility.

5.2 The allocation will be made by the Repairs Team using:

- The definitions within this policy using the information provided by the tenant or their representative.
- The vulnerability criteria (over 75, child under 1, a disability).

The vulnerability criteria means that we will look at the impact our categorization could have on the tenant and assess whether a change to the standard categorization would be appropriate in the specific circumstances.

## 6. Types of repairs

### 6.1 Out of hours calls

What is out of hours?

This means:

- between the hours of 17.00 and 09.00 or
- a bank holiday or
- a weekend

What is an out of hours repair?

This is a repair that has a direct risk to the tenant or building that cannot wait until the next working day.

An out-of-hours visit is to ensure that the tenant and the building are safe. It does not mean that the issue will be fixed at that time, but the tenant and property will be left safe.

A repair to solve the issue will be booked on the next working day based on the categorization.

For example: A call comes through for an uncontrollable leak on the pipework to a tap. A technician attends and isolates the pipe meaning the water stops and the tap is unusable. This is the extent of the out-of-hours visit. The situation is now safe.

On the next working day staff call the tenant and schedule a repair to the pipe.

Sometimes, however, our visit will solve the problem and a new visit will not be required. Or the fix is so simple and quick that it makes sense to fix it on the visit.

For example: A call comes through for no heating in December. The heating engineer visits, finds a fault and replaces a small part which he has on the van. No further visit is required, and the heating now works again.

If a tenant contacts and it is not classed as an emergency, then it will be referred to the next working day where a staff member will contact the tenant to allocate the repair and book a date for repair.

Tenants who are out when an out of hours visit is made will be recharged the cost.

## **6.2 Emergency (attended within 24 hours)**

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

What counts as an emergency?

- Total loss of heating in the winter (**This is only an emergency from November 01 to March 31**). The interim resolution may be to provide temporary heaters.
- Total loss of electricity (not caused by a power cut).
- Total loss of water.
- Uncontainable water leaks: those which a bucket cannot catch.
- Accidental damage to building structure which could cause further damage or injury.
- Insecure property – where the front or back door or a ground floor window cannot be secured.
- Loose roof tiles, gutters or drainpipes which are dangerous.
- Loose bricks or masonry which is dangerous.
- Defective smoke detectors and fire alarms fitted by Papworth Trust.
- Toilets which have uncontrollable leaks when there is only one in your home.
- Blocked drains where these are backing up into your home or overflowing (this may be rechargeable depending on the reason for

the blockage; this may also be the responsibility of the water authority).

- Hoist, through floor lift, stairlift failure where used by the disabled person.
- Unsafe electrics.

When we attend an emergency repair, we will make **the situation safe**, and we will fix it *if we can*. If we cannot, as it may need a part or require extensive repair, then we will arrange a further appointment for any additional work that is needed. This will be within 7 days.

Tenants who contact the Out of Hours Emergency Service when the issue is not an emergency will be recharged for the cost of any visit made to their home, based on the information they provided, suggesting it was an emergency. (Refer to the Rechargeable repairs policy).

### **6.3 Urgent Repairs (completed within 7 days)**

These are defined as faults causing considerable inconvenience or risk. Examples of urgent repairs may include:

- a containable leak
- loose or damaged stair tread
- defective central heating boiler
- a non-flushing WC
- a broken shower where it was supplied by us and is the only means of bathing
- front entrance or fire door needing easing and adjusting
- minor structural faults likely to create further damage in the short term, such as missing or slipped slates, dripping pipe or waste

### **6.4 Routine Repairs (completed within 30 days).**

Routine repairs are jobs which are our responsibility under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement. Examples include minor plumbing problems, general joinery and communal lighting failures.

### **6.5 Major Repairs (completed within 90 days).**

Major repairs are jobs where either the work costs over £1000 or takes more than a day to complete. Examples include replacing a ceiling after a leak, structural repairs or damp proofing.

### **6.6 Covered by capital improvements, planned or cyclical works.**

These requests will include work that is part of an investment cycle (such as a new kitchen or bathroom) or planned works (like painting or gutter repairs) or cyclical works (such as boiler servicing or lift servicing). Timescales for these works will depend on the timing of the investment cycle, MOT or cyclical schedule.

Repairs to items covered under these programs will only be carried out if there is a health and safety risk to the tenant or a security/defect in the property which will worsen and damage other components which are not

due for work/replacement. This will be determined by photos sent in or an inspection.

### **6.7 Inspection required before allocation can be made.**

Sometimes we cannot allocate a repair to a category without further investigation. In most instances questions can be asked to clarify gaps and photographs or video provided.

However, on occasions, an inspection appointment will be made to investigate further. Inspection appointments will be made within 10 working days of the repair request.

Orders or instructions for work will not be raised until the inspection has taken place.

### **6.8 Repairs which are the tenant's responsibility.**

Some requests for repairs are not Papworth Trust's responsibility. They are the tenant's responsibility.

This may be because:

- The item concerned was gifted at letting stage.
- The item concerned is general property improvements that Papworth Trust do not carry out.
- The item concerned is a repair classified as 'tenant responsibility' as set out in the tenancy agreement and/or the Tenant Handbook. These include blocked sinks and toilets and changing light bulbs.

Papworth Trust will try and signpost a customer to another organisation who may be able to help with these types of requests, the cost would need to be met by the tenant.

Permission for changes to the structure or fixtures and fittings need to be made in writing to [repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk](mailto:repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk)

### **6.9 Grouped Repairs**

In some cases where multiple jobs are to be completed, they may be grouped together for efficiency in terms of time for the tenant and cost. This will generally only apply to routine and major repairs.

This will be discussed with the tenant and agreed in writing as it will affect timescales.

## **7. Right 1<sup>st</sup> time**

We aim to offer a high-quality service to tenants as we understand repairs are a vital need for tenants to live in a comfortable and safe home, free from inconvenience. When a repair is needed, we aim to complete the repair first time, where technically feasible, so there is no inconvenience for tenants having to wait for the repair to be completed on a follow-up visit. We will take photographs of completed repairs.

We aim to diagnose repairs when a tenant reports it to us, so we can send the correct operative to complete the job, with the right material and tools.

We ask tenants to send us photographs or video footage where possible to assist us in making the right decision.

## 8. Appointments

8.1 Morning, afternoon or day appointments will be made with customers for all routine and major repairs and inspections where access to your home is required.

8.2 If we offer an appointment date and the tenant cannot make the date then the timing of the repair may fall outside the specified times stated in this policy. We will have met our responsibility by ensuring the date offered was within the guidelines we have defined.

8.3 The tenant(s) or an appropriate adult will need to be present at the property for the scheduled repair appointment. If on arrival an adult is not present the repairs call will be closed and will need to be rebooked. Any timescales will start again with the rebooking.

8.4 For communal area responsive repairs and external works where no access is required to be given, appointments will not be made. Our target is to meet all the appointments we make.

8.5 If we need to change an appointment, we will give you as much notice as possible.

8.6 Should tenants need to change an appointment we require a minimum of 4 hours' notice to be given by telephone unless exceptional circumstances arise.

If an appointment is missed due to tenant unavailability or refusal to allow access, the repairs call will be closed and will need to be rebooked. Any timescales will start again with the rebooking.

8.7 If a tenant misses an appointment or does not have an appropriate adult at the property then we reserve the right to recharge the tenant for the abortive visit.

## 9. Key tenant information relating to gas, electric and water.

**Gas: If a tenant smells gas, they need to phone the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 immediately.** Advice: Do not use anything electrical (including switching on a light) or anything with a naked flame

until they have told you it is safe to do so. They will make the situation safe.  
**This is a free service.**

Electric: Total loss of power. We will only treat power loss as an emergency if there is a danger to health. Tenants should be asked to check if a fuse has tripped or if the power loss is because of a power cut, or not having credit on an electricity meter or key card. Tenants can check if there is a power cut in their area by calling the Fault Emergency Service on **0800 783 8838**.

Water: Total loss of water supply. Tenants are to be asked to check that the stopcock is turned on, and then contact their water supplier.

## 10. Rechargeable repairs

Papworth Trust has a separate policy regarding rechargeable repairs. This includes remedial work following damage by a tenant and additional, chargeable work that tenants may request.

## 11. Specific tenancies

In certain circumstances a tenancy agreement or service level agreements may offer differing timescales than those listed in this policy for emergency and urgent repairs and may have varying classifications due to specific customer needs agreed with Local Authorities. In these circumstances the tenancy or service level agreement will prevail if it remains in date and current.

## 12. Acts, Events or Occurrences beyond organizational control

Circumstances may arise where there are Acts, Events or Occurrences beyond the control of Papworth Trust. Examples of this include civil unrest, war, pandemics, natural disasters etc. In these situations, guidance will be sought from the directing body at that time e.g. local authorities, central government, military. Papworth Trust will adhere to any changes that are administered which may lead to short-, medium- or longer-term changes to this policy and timescales.

In these circumstances we will communicate changes via our website.

### 13. Document control

Owner	Senior Business Manager, Property Maintenance
Consulted	Tenant Scrutiny Panel
Approver	Executive Team
Date approved	September 2023
Next review date	September 2026

### 14. Version tracker

Version number	Date	Comments/Reason for issue
2.0	June 2017	Revised policy
3.0	June 2020	Revised policy – general formatting, wording changes on S4.2, 6.8, 8.4, 8.7, addition of S12
3.1	Sept 2020	IA Amendments to approval section
3.2	April 2023	Amendments made to S4 in line with Scrutiny Panel Review and Action Plan agreed by Board
4.0	Sept 2023	Revised policy. Wording changes.

***If you have any feedback or want to suggest corrections to this policy, please contact the policy owner.***

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