

<b>Policy Title:</b> Responsive Repairs Policy	
<b>Author (Owner):</b> Operations Director	<b>Version:</b> 2
<b>Approved by:</b> Executive Team	<b>Date:</b> March 2025
<b>Date for Review:</b> March 2028	

## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines Soho Housing's commitment to providing an efficient, high-quality responsive repairs service that aligns with the needs of our residents while complying with all statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements.
- 1.2 Repairs maintenance is integral to our service offering, directly impacting residents' quality of life. We are committed to maintaining Soho Housing homes in an efficient and affordable manner, ensuring all properties offer residents a secure, comfortable, and well-maintained living environment with fully functional systems and amenities.

## 2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to repair services provided to residents who rent their home under a tenancy agreement, as well as those who own their homes, either as leaseholders or shared owners. Repair responsibilities differ depending on the tenure type, and those distinctions are reflected in the policy.
- 2.2 The scope of this policy covers responsive repairs within residents' homes (subject specific tenancy and/or lease terms), as well as repairs required to communal areas and common parts, such as lifts, corridors, and communal gardens.
- 2.3 "Responsive Repair" is defined as unplanned work reported by a resident about their home. It also includes works arising from damage and/or wear and tear to communal areas and common parts of our properties. Responsive repairs address and rectify faults or defects in components, installations, or parts, within our repair responsibility, restoring them to proper working order.
- 2.4 The scope of this policy excludes Planned or Cyclical Maintenance programme works, including any Aids and Adaptations installation works. Appendix 1 sets our definitions of Aids and Adaptations and Planned and Cyclical Maintenance.
- 2.5 This policy should be read alongside policies and documents referred to in Section 7 of this document.

### 3 Principles

3.1 Soho Housing is committed to providing its residents with an efficient repairs service that is responsive to their needs.

3.2 The principles and standards underlying the policy are: -

- To comply with all legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations, including meeting any obligations arising from tenancies and leases
- To provide an effective and responsive repairs service aimed at completing repairs first time, whenever possible
- To complete an inspection, where necessary, and determine nature and the extent of the repair required
- To ensure repairs provide good value for money through low lifecycle cost
- To ensure that access to and the extent of the service is available and understood by residents
- To ensure both residents and Soho Housing are aware of their repair responsibilities and are meeting those
- To prioritise repairs which affect safety and ensure that the principles of health and safety are central to working practices
- To provide opportunities for residents to be involved in developing a responsive repairs service
- To communicate effectively with our residents thought delivery of the repair and ensure they are kept updated
- To measure customer satisfaction and learn from feedback with the aim of continuously improving the service
- To consider the impact of our practices on the environment, the community and the workforce

### 4 Policy Approach

4.1 Soho Housing aims to provide easily accessible methods for reporting of repairs. Residents can report repairs to us in several ways. These include:

- By emailing us at [housing@sohoha.org.uk](mailto:housing@sohoha.org.uk)
- By phoning us on 020 7557 7400
- By writing to us at 18 Hanway Street, Soho, London, W1T 1UF; or
- In person, by visiting our office at the address immediately above.

4.2 We categorise responsive repairs according to their nature, urgency and timescales for completion. Responsive Repairs are classified as follows:

- Emergency Repairs – Respond to and make safe within 24 hours of reporting
- Urgent Repairs – Respond to and make good within 5 working days of reporting
- Routine Repairs – Respond to and make good within 20 working days of reporting

Appendix 1 sets out our definitions of each type and provides examples of different categorisations of Responsive Repairs.

4.3 We are committed to completing repairs during the first visit, whenever this is possible. Where this cannot be done, our contractors will either apply a temporary fix, or make safe, and book a follow-up appointment to complete the repair.

- 4.4 When categorising repair requests, Soho Housing will also consider vulnerability of its residents, taking into account aspects such as age, health, disability, mental health condition, etc., to name a few.
- 4.5 Some repair requests may require a pre-inspection. If one is required, one of our surveyors will attend the property and inspect the issue requiring repair within 5 working days of reporting.
- 4.6 Soho Housing is committed to meeting its repair responsibilities, however not all repairs within our residents' homes are our responsibility. Our tenancy and lease agreements set out specific repair responsibilities for both Soho Housing and its residents. These are outlined in more detail in Appendix 2.
- 4.7 All repair requests will be assessed to determine repair responsibility, however in instances where Soho Housing is required to undertake a repair, which is considered resident's responsibility under the terms of their tenancy or lease agreement, Soho Housing reserves the right to recover the cost of that repair. The cost will be equal to the expense Soho Housing has incurred in carrying out the repair.
- 4.8 To provide its repair service, Soho Housing relies on services of pre-approved contractors of different trades. All contractors working in our residents' homes are expected to meet our Code of Conduct (see Appendix 3). Soho Housing will carefully monitor conduct of its contractors and address any issues promptly and thoroughly, as they arise. Equally, we expect our residents to treat our staff and contractors with dignity and respect throughout the course of their interaction.
- 4.9 Our tenancy and lease agreements require our residents to grant us, and our appointed contractors, access to their homes to carry out repairs at the pre-agreed appointment time. If we are unable to access the property to complete the repair, and the integrity of the property, its structure, or the safety of residents or those nearby is at risk, we may take appropriate action to gain access to carry out the repair. This includes applying to court for an injunction to force access, as well as taking legal action for breach of tenancy terms. Should we have to resort to such actions, we would look to recover any resulting costs.
- 4.10 We recognise that missed appointments can cost both residents and Soho Housing time and money. In cases where appointments are missed by contractors, compensation paid to residents will be in accordance with our Compensation Policy and procedure. Where residents miss appointments, Soho Housing reserves the right to recharge the resident for the cost that would be charged by the contractor who attended. Repair requests that do not impact the integrity of the property, its structure, or the safety of residents or those nearby, will be automatically closed after two missed appointments. Any recharges would be made in accordance with our Recharges Policy and procedure.

## **5 Monitoring, Complaints and Resident Engagement**

- 5.1 We are committed to meeting all our repair obligations; those set out in law, as well as those arising from our tenancy and lease agreements, and also from this policy. On occasion where we fall short of these commitments, our residents are encouraged to notify us. We will promptly address any issues raised and always look to set things right. Our residents are also able to provide negative feedback about our repairs service by lodging a complaint. Any complaints received about our

repairs service will be addressed and handled in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

5.2 Soho Housing will monitor the quality of its repairs service through tenant satisfaction surveys. These surveys give our residents the opportunity to provide their feedback on our repairs service.

5.3 Soho Housing will work closely with our resident panel to obtain valuable insight into its repair service with the aim of improving it to better serve the needs of its residents and communities.

## **6 Equality and Diversity Impact**

6.1 Soho Housing is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently.

6.2 We will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities and will take positive action or make appropriate adjustments where required. We will not directly, or indirectly, discriminate against any person or group of people in line with our Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Policy.

## **7 Related Documents and Policies**

7.1 This policy should be read alongside the following policies and documents:

- Asbestos Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Policy
- Electrical Works Policy
- Fire Policy
- Fire Safety Management Requirements for Contractors
- Gas Servicing Policy
- Hazardous Substances Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Pest Control Policy
- Recharges Policy
- Rechargeable Works Procedure
- Resident Engagement Strategy
- Responsive Repairs Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy
- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

## 8 Policy Review and Version Control

Version number: 2  
 Last review date: 31 March 2025  
 Next review date: 31 March 2028

Version	Type of Change	Date	Revisions from previous issue	Approved By
1.1	Review	Nov 2022	Updated to reflect current process and updated format	RS
2.0	Review and Redraft	Mar 2025	Policy redrafted to reflect changes in internal repairs handling and updates made to inter-dependant policies and procedures	Exec

### Appendix 1 – Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Aids and Adaptations</b>	<p>Adjustments or upgrades made to a resident's home, and/or common areas, in order to support their ability to perform daily tasks and maintain independence living in their home.</p> <p>Aids generally refers to movable pieces of equipment used to assist residents and does not require alterations to their home. Examples include walking frames and shower chairs.</p> <p>Adaptations are usually fixed pieces of equipment, or physical alterations to the property, carried out to support resident's ability to reside in their home. These include installations of grab rails, ramps, stair lifts, as well as bathroom and layout adaptations.</p>
<b>Planned or Cyclical Maintenance</b>	<p>Work carried out on a scheduled cycle as part of our strategic investment in maintaining and improving our properties.</p> <p>Planned Maintenance refers to large-scale, proactive works designed to address reported issues, replace aging components, or improve building systems. These works are often scheduled based on surveys or long-term investment strategies and focus on major upgrades or replacements (such as upgrading fire safety systems, modernising kitchens and bathrooms, roof replacements etc.)</p> <p>Cyclical maintenance refers to routine, recurring tasks performed at regular intervals to preserve the property's condition and prevent deterioration. Cyclical works follow a fixed schedule and include works such as exterior painting, decorating and replacing carpets in communal areas, etc.</p>

<b>Emergency Repair</b>	<p>Emergency repairs are mainly those that have immediate and serious effect on health and safety of people or condition of their home. In these cases, we are committed to responding and making safe within 4 hours of reporting. If we need to carry out a temporary repair, in order to make safe, Soho Housing's contractors will return at a later date to complete a full repair.</p> <p>Examples of some repairs which may be classified as Emergency Repairs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Burst plumbing, flooding or leaks that cannot be contained</li> <li>- Gas leaks or faulty fire and carbon monoxide detectors and alarms</li> <li>- Complete loss of heating and hot water, electricity, or water supply</li> <li>- Blocked drains and/or sewers, sewage water overflowing into the property</li> <li>- Damaged or faulty electrical wiring</li> <li>- Faulty lifts</li> <li>- Faulty or unsafe external doors and windows including communal and fire safety doors</li> <li>- Missing or damaged safety equipment and signage</li> <li>- Anything else which may present an immediate health and safety risk</li> </ul>
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<b>Urgent Repair</b>	<p>Urgent repairs deal with defects that do not pose an immediate threat to the health, safety, or security of people or condition of their home. Although not considered an emergency, they must still be completed promptly to prevent the risk or condition from increasing.</p> <p>Examples of some repairs which may be classified as Urgent Repairs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Defective cistern or overflow</li> <li>- Faulty extractor fan</li> <li>- Leaking or faulty radiator valve</li> <li>- Faulty communal TV arial</li> </ul>
<b>Routine Repair</b>	<p>Routine repairs are those are those that cause inconvenience but are not urgent and do not pose immediate risk to resident's health and safety of condition of their home. In these cases, we are committed to responding and making good within 20 days of receiving the report.</p>

	<p>Examples of some repairs which may be classified as Routine Repairs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dripping/leaking taps or shower units</li> <li>- General joinery repairs e.g. floorboards, work tops</li> <li>- Easing of doors and windows and repairs to door/window furniture (handled etc.)</li> <li>- Plaster work</li> <li>- Tiling</li> <li>- Fencing/gates/garage doors</li> <li>- Blocked or broken guttering</li> </ul>
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## Appendix 2 – Repair Responsibilities

External Repairs	
<p><b>Soho Housing's Responsibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside drains and gullies within the property boundary.</li> <li>• Roofs, chimneys, downpipes, and gutters.</li> <li>• Boundary walls and fences separating your home from communal spaces, public footpaths, or roads.</li> <li>• Maintaining external walls, paths, and steps.</li> <li>• Outbuildings – sheds, garages.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Resident's Responsibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping drains and gullies clear of debris, fats, and wipes. Clearing minor blockages.</li> <li>• Maintaining private gardens and balconies or clearing rubbish from them.</li> <li>• Maintaining patio areas that we didn't install.</li> <li>• Any outbuilding we didn't install.</li> </ul>
<b>Walls, windows, doors, floors and other internal repairs</b>	

<b>Soho Housing's Responsibility</b>	<b>Resident's Responsibility</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with damp issues.</li> <li>• Replacing kitchens and bathrooms when they are past economical repair.</li> <li>• Front and rear entrance doors including letterboxes.</li> <li>• Repairing or replacing kitchen fire doors.</li> </ul> <p>Window handles and catches. Large cracks to walls/ceilings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making safe broken glazing in windows/doors and/or boarding up (replacement to be carried out only when a valid crime number is obtained).</li> <li>• Wall tiles in kitchens and bathrooms when damaged due to wear and tear.</li> <li>• Loose floorboards or skirting boards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping us to manage condensation within your home, for example using extractor fans, opening vents, and using your heating system.</li> <li>• Minor repairs to kitchens, such as fixing doors and drawers</li> <li>• Fitting or replacing draught excluders.</li> <li>• Lock changes or replacing entry if keys are lost, including obtaining locksmiths' services to regain entry where residents have locked themselves out of their flat.</li> <li>• All non-fire rated internal doors and handles; minor hairline cracks to walls and ceilings.</li> <li>• All internal decoration.</li> <li>• Replacing windows or glazing when damaged by neglect or an accident.</li> <li>• Damaged tiling due to neglect or not fitted by us.</li> <li>• Floor coverings – laminate, carpet or tiles unless installed by us.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 – Repair Responsibilities (continued)

<b>Plumbing and pipes</b>	
<b>Soho Housing's Responsibility</b>	<b>Resident's Responsibility</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaking hot and cold water pipes.</li> <li>• Unblocking communal stack pipes.</li> <li>• Shower repairs if installed us.</li> <li>• Taps to hand basins, sinks, and baths if installed by us. If these are non-standard and are in need of replacement, these will be replaced with standard taps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unblocking toilets, hand basins, sinks and baths.</li> <li>• Washing machine or dishwasher connections.</li> <li>• Replacing shower heads, hoses, or plugs.</li> <li>• Damage to pipes, taps, sinks and baths caused by neglect.</li> </ul>
<b>Heating and electrics</b>	



Soho Housing's Responsibility	Resident's Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed controllable heating systems, gas fired boilers, storage heaters, radiators, and gas supply pipe work.</li> <li>• Electric immersion heaters fitted to hot water storage cylinders.</li> <li>• Mains operated fire or smoke alarms installed by us.</li> <li>• Communal door entry systems and intercoms.</li> <li>• Air extraction systems.</li> <li>• Communal TV aerials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacing any type of light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, and starter motors.</li> <li>• Resetting trip switches.</li> <li>• Repairs to your own portable heaters or electrical items.</li> <li>• Regular testing of smoke alarms.</li> <li>• Front doorbells.</li> <li>• Phone points or internal TV points.</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3 – Code of Conduct

When carrying out repairs, Soho Housing's residents, staff and contractors have the right to feel safe and respected.

Our contractors are expected to meet the following Code of Conduct:

- Ensure agreed appointments times are honoured, and in cases where appointments need to be rescheduled, that this is done in a timely manner and communicated to resident promptly.
- Identify themselves on arrival, including presenting their ID card bearing their photo, name and the name of their employer.
- Be polite and treat the resident and their home with dignity and respect.
- Work tidily and clean up after themselves.
- If a repair cannot be completed during the initial visit, book a follow-up appointment directly with the resident to come back and complete the repair.

In return, Soho Housing asks its residents to:

- Allow Soho Housing and its contractors access at the agreed appointment time, and if required, communicate any changes to their availability promptly and ahead of the scheduled appointment.
- Check our staff and contractors ID cards and satisfy themselves of their identity. In cases of any suspicion, to notify Soho Housing immediately on **020 7557 7400**.
- Ensure any children and pets are controlled and looked after whilst our staff and contractors are in their home.
- Ensure our staff and contractors are notified of any vulnerability prior to the agreed appointment.