



home  
group



# Repairs and maintenance

Customer guide

[www.homegroup.org.uk](http://www.homegroup.org.uk)

# Repairs and maintenance

The upkeep and repair of your home is the shared responsibility of you (the customer) and Home Group, (the landlord).

By working together we can ensure your home is maintained to the highest possible standard. This section sets out the repairs that you are responsible for, the repairs that we are responsible for and the repairs service that you can expect from us.

## Reporting a repair

If we are responsible for a repair it is best to report it quickly.



### You can report non-urgent repairs:

online at [www.homegroup.org.uk](http://www.homegroup.org.uk)

through the Home Group app (see [www.homegroup.org.uk/homegroupapp](http://www.homegroup.org.uk/homegroupapp) for more information on how to do this)

by phone on **0345 141 4663**.

Our customer service centre is open Monday to Friday, 7am to 8pm and Saturday, 8am to 12noon

**Emergency repairs should always be reported by phone to our customer service centre and can be reported at any time.**

## Gas appliances

By law, Home Group must inspect gas appliances in your home every 12 months. We carry this out as part of our service to you. Our contractors' engineers who carry out this work are registered with the Gas Safe Register. During the service we will check all flues, chimneys, appliances and gas piping in your home.

The engineer will give you a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate as evidence that the work has been carried

out. Please keep this in a safe place and you'll be contacted when your next service is due. If you end your tenancy, leave the certificate for the next customer.

If you have not had a gas service in the past 12 months please contact us immediately on **0345 141 4663**.

This inspection is compulsory and vitally important for your safety. You will be given reasonable notice and will need to ensure they can get access to your home to carry out the inspection. If you fail to comply you will ultimately put your tenancy at risk. We will take legal action to gain access and legal costs will be claimed against you. If necessary we will also take out possession proceedings.

## Access for other reasons

There may be other health and safety reasons that we need to access your home to inspect or carry out work. We will always give you reasonable notice if we, or our contractors, need to access your home.

## Your repairs responsibilities

Your rent includes payment towards the cost of most repair and maintenance work, however you also have some responsibilities for keeping your home maintained to a reasonable standard. This includes being responsible for some minor repairs, examples of which are listed below.



Please note that you are also responsible for repairing anything damaged through wear and tear, misuse or neglect by you, your family or visitors.

Where you are unable to carry out the repairs yourself you can ask someone else with the suitable ability, skill, knowledge and experience to properly carry out the repair to do the work. You are responsible for ensuring the work is carried out safely and to a good standard. If the work is not carried out to a good standard then you could be liable to pay the cost of any subsequent work that Home Group has to carry out.

## Door furniture

### Your responsibilities include:

- fitting or repairing door bells (unless we fitted it or there is a door entry system)
- door-number plates
- replacing door locks and keys if you lose your keys
- fitting or repairing door security chains (unless we fitted it)
- any door locks that you have fitted
- replacing broken glass in doors or screens (unless caused by criminal damage)



## Windows

- cleaning windows
- replacing glass smashed through neglect or an accident including by a football. This includes cost of boarding up the window until it's replaced
- replacing broken glass in windows (unless caused by criminal damage)
- window locks that you have fitted

## Electrics

- fitting or repairing TV aerials or satellite dishes (unless covered by your service charge)
- replacing light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- replacing or repairing striplights – tubes and starters (unless we have provided them)
- repair and maintenance of any appliances that belong to you or which you have installed eg washing machine, cooker, shower
- we will carry out a gas safety check for gas cookers every 12 months but you will have to arrange and pay for any repairs
- repairing any damage caused by your appliances, for example washing machine floods
- checking and changing the battery in a battery powered smoke detector
- maintaining smoke alarms that have not been fitted by Home Group

## Property maintenance

- redecorating inside your home and keeping the decoration in good condition
- fitting or repairing curtain rails
- filling minor internal cracks in plaster
- floor coverings e.g. carpets and vinyl (unless we have written to you)
- preventing and cleaning away mould and mildew caused by condensation
- repair and maintenance of any fixtures not fitted by us, including bathroom and kitchen tiles and kitchen units
- upkeep of anything that belongs to you, for example furniture
- trimming doors so the carpet will fit
- replacing toilet seats, bath and sink plugs and chains
- replacing damaged internal doors, finishes and fittings
- floor coverings - cleaning and replacing carpets and laminates (you must ask Home Group for permission to install laminate or wooden flooring)

## Heating

- maintenance of any central heating system not fitted by us
- bleeding radiators (to get rid of air bubbles that prevent the radiator from working properly)



## Plumbing

- plugs and chains in baths, basins and sinks
- clearing blockages to bath, sinks and basins caused by misuse
- any repairs to showers unless provided with the property
- keeping drains clean

## Garden

- keeping your garden and any shared areas clean and tidy
- repair and maintenance of sheds
- repair and maintenance of timber garages
- repairs and maintenance of washing rotary dryers or water storage butts

## Our repairs responsibilities

Broadly it is our responsibility to carry out most repairs to the outside of your home, the main structure and communal areas. We also cover standard fittings, such as kitchens and bathrooms, that we have provided within your home. We will also carry out tests of gas heating appliances and the gas pipework every 12 months.

## Bathroom - fixtures and fittings

- bath
- showers provided with the property
- toilet
- washbasin
- taps
- tiles fitted by us

## Central heating

- chimney and flue
- chimney sweeping
- coal bunker if you have solid-fuel heating
- electric storage system
- electric warm-air system
- fireplace tiles
- gas-fired system with radiators
- gas-fired warm-air system
- solid-fuel system

## Door furniture

- door bells fitted by us
- door entry systems
- door chains fitted by us
- replacing glass in doors and screens caused by criminal damage
- internal doors
- handles and latches to internal doors
- all locks fitted by us
- external doors

## Kitchen

- electric cookers provided by us
- cooker socket
- kitchen units fitted by us
- sink bowl and drainer
- tiled splashback fitted by us

## Plumbing

- domestic cold water supply
- downpipes (rain and soil)
- drains
- gutters
- hot water supply
- washing machine fittings where the appliance was provided by us



## Structural and external

- ceilings
- damp-proof course
- floors
- outside woodwork
- skirting boards
- stairs (internal)
- steps to entrances
- walls
- outside decoration – this will be monitored and done approximately every five years

## Windows

- frames and fittings
- window locks fitted by us

## Garden

- posts and wires that are boundaries (in Home Group's ownership)
- fences between gardens (in Home Group's ownership)
- footpaths
- gates
- brick and concrete sheds provided by us

## Electrical

- fuses in circuit breakers and fused spurs
- wall sockets
- fuse boxes
- electrical wiring

## Reporting a repair to the customer service centre

As well as taking your name, address and a telephone number where we, or our contractors, can reach you our advisors will ask you a number of security questions to confirm your identity such as your date of birth or tenancy number. They will then ask you some questions to help them diagnose the repair. Please have as much information available as possible about the problem to help us make sure we respond correctly.

If your door has been broken or you have been the victim of some other act of vandalism we will also need a crime reference number. You will need to report the damage to the police even if they do not intend to investigate the crime. Our insurance requires us to have a crime reference number whenever we repair damage caused by vandalism or other criminal activities. The police will only issue a reference number to the victim of the crime (you).

Once the problem has been diagnosed and it is our responsibility to do the repair, our advisors will arrange an appointment with you for one of our contractors to come out to complete the repair. We want to provide repair appointments at times that are convenient for you and will offer you a morning or afternoon appointment between the hours of 8am and 5pm.

If you need to reschedule your appointment please contact the customer service centre at the first opportunity and a new appointment will be issued.

## Repairs appointments

On the day of the appointment, the contractor will contact you to confirm that they are on their way to the appointment.

Our repairs contractors will be polite and show consideration and respect. They will carry identification, including the Home Group logo, contractor logo, their name and photograph and must show this when visiting your home. If you have reported a repair and are unsure if the person who attends is legitimate please contact our customer service centre.

We operate a 'right first time' system for repairs. Where possible we complete the repair at the first visit. Where this is not possible, we will keep you informed about when you can expect the repair to be completed.

If you are out when the contractor calls, they will leave a card and the job will be cancelled on their system. You should ring our customer service centre on **0345 141 4663** to rearrange the appointment.

Contractors will endeavour to inform you of what the repair has entailed and will leave the work area clean and tidy when they have finished.



## Repairs standards

We seek to carry out repairs to a high standard and monitor our contractors and manage the service to ensure value for money and delivery of a high quality service.

The materials, products and all work undertaken is in line with good building practice. We work to meet all legal requirements and relevant safety standards.

We are always keen to hear your views about our repairs service so please let us know what you think of our performance by filling in our feedback form on our website.

## Repair waiting times

When you call the customer service centre the urgency of your repair will be assessed by our advisor. Repair requests are put into two categories. Each one has a timescale in which the work must be carried out. These are:

- Emergency repairs: within six hours
- Routine repairs: within 14 calendar days

## Emergency repairs

Emergencies are problems that present immediate risks to your safety, security or health, or could lead to serious damage to the property. These risks could also affect your family, your visitors or anyone else in your building.

Examples include:

- serious water leaks
- electrical faults
- major structural damage
- no heating in winter

We will attend and make sure your home is safe within six hours. It may take longer to fully repair the problem.

## Routine repairs

Routine repairs include less serious repairs which do not affect health, safety or welfare, and will not cause any more problems to the property. For example:

- guttering
- kitchen cupboard repairs
- non-urgent glazing

## Right to repair compensation

You can claim compensation from us if we take an unreasonable amount of time to complete a repair which is defined as a qualifying repair by the government. If your repair is not carried out within the target time, you should contact the customer service centre. If the work is not carried out within the second target time, you may qualify for compensation.

Works covered by the right to repair are generally small scale jobs which do not require any planning or special materials.

If you want further information about when you can claim right to repair compensation please contact our customer service centre.

## **What happens if you carry out a repair that is my responsibility?**

We will recharge you for repairs that we carry out which are your responsibility.

Generally, we will not carry out repairs that are your responsibility unless you have paid for the cost of the work in advance. When you report the repair, we will tell you, where possible, that it is a rechargeable repair and will advise you how much it will cost for us to do the work.

You can decide to do the work yourself if it is a minor repair or arrange for and pay a competent tradesperson to do it on your behalf. Alternatively you can pay us to do the repair.

All repair work must be completed to Home Group standards and comply with any relevant legislation. For example electrical and gas repairs have regulations that require work to be completed by a skilled and competent tradesperson and you must therefore not attempt these repairs yourself as you may put yourself and others in danger.

Before you engage any contractor to do works on the electrical or gas installations in your home you must tell us what it is

that you intend to do and who is doing the work on your behalf and get our approval.

If you report an emergency repair that involves a risk to health and safety, we will do the repair. If the repair is your responsibility, we will still charge you for the work.

When your tenancy ends you must ensure that any repair work you are responsible for is done before you leave. If you leave your home, garden or garage in a state of disrepair or leave behind any belongings or rubbish, we will rectify the situation and charge you for the work.

## **Adaptations for people with disabilities**

We want you to be able to enjoy your home and live comfortably. If you find it difficult to access parts of your home, we can help to make things easier for you.

You may benefit from a small aid, such as a handrail to help you to climb steps or stairs, or you may need a bigger adaptation such as a stairlift.

We're able to provide some aids and adaptations for you or, where this is not possible due to the cost or specialist nature of the equipment, we'll signpost you to other organisations that are able to help.

It is possible for you to carry out your own adaptations and pay for them yourself, however you must ask for our permission to do this. We will always agree to any reasonable requests for you to do this, however we will need to consider planning and other regulations.

## Improving your home

We may carry out major improvements to your home in addition to the normal repairs service. This is called the Decent Homes Standard programme and can include putting in new central heating systems, kitchens and bathrooms. Wherever we can, we will give you a choice on items such as the colour of kitchen units and wall coverings.

Your tenancy agreement includes your right to make improvements to your home with our permission. We have to make sure that any work on our property is done by professionally qualified people and to a good standard. Please tell us what improvements you want to make and get our written permission before the work starts. We will not withhold permission unreasonably and we may wish to inspect the work when it is finished. You are responsible for maintenance (and any repairs required) arising from improvements you make to your property.

**For further details contact our customer service centre.**

## Home contents insurance

Customers often think Home Group insures their furniture, belongings and decorations against fire, theft, vandalism or water damage such as burst pipes. This is not the case. We only insure our buildings and any contents that we provide, for example, the central heating system.

We advise all customers to take out some kind of home contents insurance. Home contents insurance should cover you against:

- burglaries
- damage caused to your belongings in a fire or other accident
- damage caused to other people's property, for example your washing machine flooding a flat below you

You can also insure your belongings against accidental damage.

# Contact us

There are many ways to find answers to your queries, report repairs and make the most of being a Home Group customer.



## Download the Home Group app

The best way to report non-emergency repairs. Search for Home Group in your app store.



## Website

Visit us online to view your rent statement, make a payment, view and update your personal details, or use live chat to report a repair.

[www.homegroup.org.uk](http://www.homegroup.org.uk)

## Call us on 0345 141 4663

To report a repair, make a payment, or to make any other enquiries.

## Let's get social

