

# Repairs Policy

Our approach to delivering repairs

<b>Department</b>	Asset Management
<b>Policy Owner</b>	David Armstrong
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<b>Approving Body</b>	Flagship Group Board
<b>Associated Legislation/Regulation</b>	RSH Consumer Standards; Landlord & Tenant Act 1985; Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002; Party Wall Act 1996; Housing Act 2004; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994; Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair; Defective Premises Act 1972; Environmental Protection Act 1990; Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018; Construction Design Management Regulations 2015
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## 1.0 Purpose

We want our tenants to have decent, safe, and secure homes to live in, and key to achieving that is the delivery of a timely, effective, and efficient repairs service

## 2.0 Strategic Overview

Our asset management strategy overarches all aspects of repairs and maintenance at Flagship, positioning front and centre the key objective of ensuring our homes are well maintained, regulatory and legally compliant and always meeting the needs of our tenants and other customers

This repairs policy is complimentary to the asset management strategy and provides the framework to position a service for our tenants and other customers that is accessible, responsive, consistent, cost effective and reliable

## 3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all Flagship Group employees, our contractors, our tenants, and other customers

## 4.0 Legislative and Regulatory Environment

There are legislative and regulatory requirements setting out the minimum standards of a dwelling that need to be maintained to deliver a decent home

The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) has published a range of Consumer Standards that Registered Providers (RPs) must always comply with. This policy most specifically aligns to the Safety and Quality Standard 2024 which requires RPs to:

- Have accurate and up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs the provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes
- ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard
- provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service to homes and communal areas for which we are responsible, informed by the needs of tenants and provides value for money. tenants,
- must take all reasonable steps to ensure health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas, and safety is considered in the design and delivery of services.
- must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services, including co-operating with other relevant bodies

The Decent Homes Standard updated in 2007 to include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) further sets out that tenants' homes must always:

- meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- be in a reasonable state of repair
- have reasonably modern facilities and services, and

- provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

In addition to these regulatory requirements, this policy also incorporates the requirement to comply with the following legal framework:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Party Wall Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Construction Design Management Regulations 2015

This policy will enact any other agreed standard, such as a Board approved Flagship Home Quality Standard as may be published from time to time

### **Landlord Compliance**

Flagship are purposeful in establishing and maintaining an effective system to plan and deliver Landlord Compliance activities, to manage risk to our tenants and other customers, our staff, contractors and third parties in residential premises owned or managed by Flagship Housing Group

Our Landlord Compliance Policy ensures compliance with the statutory, legislative, and regulatory responsibilities of Flagship Housing Group as a landlord and employer and for which the Flagship Board is the 'Duty Holder'

This Landlord Compliance Policy and its supporting management plans are applicable to:

- all domestic properties, including General Need Housing, Market Rented Housing and Supported Living Housing
- all non-domestic properties within the asset portfolio which consists of internal and external communal areas, playgrounds, garage sites and, boiler/plant rooms
- all Extra Care Homes including ex-sheltered schemes and their associated common rooms
- all Student Accommodation blocks

Landlord compliance Specific technical and operational detail relating to the management and delivery of landlord compliance is set out in our Landlord Compliance Policy and its associated management plans

### **Health and Safety**

The delivery of maintenance services brings risk whether in occupied or empty homes and whether through an external contractor or our directly employed trade teams

We will always comply with our statutory duties regarding the management of health and safety and our Health and Safety Policy sets out the key requirements across the Flagship Group

## 5.0 Repair and Maintenance

### Aims of the Service

The effective repair and maintenance of our homes is essential for providing outstanding customer service, and the proper management of our housing assets

It is our aim to provide appointments at a time that suits, to all tenants and other customers when reporting a repair request

### Responsive Repair Service Standards

Our responsive repair service standards go beyond our legal obligations

We'll offer tenants an easy to access multi-channel repairs reporting service via which they can raise an emergency call or receive an appointment for less urgent repairs

A responsive repair is work that is:

- generated from contact with a tenant, or other interested party, identifying an issue with their home
- usually of a minor nature to an existing feature, or element of the home, to make sure it continues to work or function
- in some cases, a task to replace a feature or element, will still be undertaken within our responsive repair service.

We'll aim to provide appointments for all responsive repairs and give tenants details of the appointment and the name of the contractor who'll be attending (if this isn't Flagship Services)

Our service hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm.

We'll offer tenants an appointment 'slot' to suit them and we broadly define these as:

- Morning (am) - 8am to 1pm
- Afternoon (pm) - 1.00pm to 5.00pm
- Avoid school run - 9.30am to 2.30pm
- All day slot - 8am to 5.00pm

Our approach is to arrive at our tenants home well within the appointment 'slot' and we aim to complete the repair work within the appointment allocated

We'll prioritise appointments by recognising the following:

- the health and safety of tenants and other customers or members of the public
- the urgency of the work or nature of the accommodation affected
- the availability of the tenant to provide access

An emergency repair will be attended to make safe as a priority and will in most cases be fully resolved during the one emergency visit, or at least within 24-hours of the report. Where it is

not practicable to fully make good during the first visit due to the extent of any consequential damage caused, a follow-on repair will be raised to be completed within the appropriate priority. We'll stay in touch, updating tenants on the progress of their repairs, including any changes required to an agreed appointment.

Our trade colleagues or contractors will also be able to contact the tenant if something happens which means there's an unplanned change to when they're arriving.

**Table 1 - Repair Priority Timescales and Performance Measures**

Category of Repair/Metric	Expectation	Timescale	Service Measure
Emergency repairs (including Out of Hours)	Complete and restore service	24-hrs	99%
Routine repairs (incl non-urgent communal repairs)	Attend, complete, and restore service	28-calendar days	95%
Planned repairs	Attend, complete, and restore service	90-calendar days	100%
Repairs Completed Right First Time	Identified, diagnosed, and remedied using van stock including making good	Within Repair Priority	85%
Void turnaround time	Repair period 'key to key' for standard operational Voids	12-calendar days	90%
	Repair period 'key to key' for major Voids	28-calendar days	90%
TSM TPO2 - Tenant Satisfaction with their last Repair	Satisfied with the end-to-end overall process – reporting, timescale, communication, and quality	-	95%
TSM TPO4 - Tenant Satisfaction that the Home is Well Maintained	Satisfied with the quality of the components, services, and overall home condition	-	90%

### Discretionary Service

In addition to the general repair service and scope outlined in section 7.0 we'll aim to respond the same day for vulnerable and disabled tenants, or at a household with a child under the age of three, for the following issues:

- **heating failure:** between end of March and 1 November (as a minimum this will mean providing temporary heating)
- **hot water failure:** where there's no suitable alternative means of heating water (an immersion heater is considered as suitable)
- **total home electrical failure:** where this is an isolated incident and doesn't involve lack of credit on a meter or wide scale power cut

- where a home is insecure and it's unreasonable to expect the tenant to maintain their security until the next working day (for example, an elderly resident) or where the police have asked us to attend, or because of other safeguarding issues
- where a resident can't gain access due to a fault with their home

In addition, we'll always support Flagship staff where they've made a discretionary decision in unusual circumstances, which is aimed at providing excellent customer care

### Typical Timescales for Completing Key Repairs

Flagship's approach to the delivery of repairs to tenants' homes, underpinned by this policy, reflects industry best practice and the spirit of the provisions contained within Section 96 of the Housing Act 1985 as reformed by section 121 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 in that minor repairs will be completed within set timescales as set out in table 2 below:

Table 2 - Timescales

Repair Type	Working Days
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31st October and 1st May	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30th April and 1st November	3
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack, or (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house) toilet pan	1
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house)	1
Blocked sink, bath, or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned off	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank, or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door, or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7

Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7
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### Flagship Repair Responsibilities

We are responsible for keeping the structure and outside of the property in a good state of repair, including:

- foundations, roof, external walls, external doors, window frames and sills
- drains, gutters, external pipes
- access paths, steps and other types of entry or egress, and paving around the perimeter on the building where constructed
- boundary walls, and fences and gates which have been installed by Flagship and are our responsibility to maintain (such as abutting a public highway or pathway or other third-party land)
- external decoration
- outbuildings which form part of the original, upgraded or adapted structure

We are also responsible for the internal structure and all fixed components such as kitchens and bathrooms etc., and the repair and improvement to common and communal areas

We are responsible for keeping in good repair and proper working order:

- installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity, and sanitation (noting that services up to and including the meter and in some instances foul drainage in the garden remain the responsibility of the service or utility provider)
- installations for room and water heating fitted by Flagship (attended to as an emergency or urgent repair in the winter months (November to March) and as a routine repair in the summer months (April to October))
- lifts and shared lighting serving the building or estate, where these are not adopted by the council or in other private ownership
- floor coverings that we have installed in kitchens, bathrooms, and toilets, and where there is a potential trip hazard caused by defect
- repairs to sanitary fittings (for example, sinks, washbasins, baths, showers, and toilets)
- fittings which supply water, gas, and electricity
- fire and central heating systems which we have installed or have agreed to maintain

Where Service Charge agreements are in place to repair and maintain communal areas, this will include:

- cleaning of common areas, including access stairs
- lighting and fuel where appropriate
- lifts and door entry systems
- grounds maintenance of open spaces
- undertake regular external and common landscaping

## Repairs to Empty Homes

We'll turn around empty homes as quickly as possible and in line with the performance measures set out in table 1 of this document, while making sure that the work we complete meets our published Empty Homes Standard

When our homes become empty at change of tenancy, we'll review and carry out any repairs and maintenance that are planned within the next year and/or any that were refused by the previous tenant

Our ongoing stock appraisal process will flag those homes that should be further assessed for their social and financial value when they become void, and ascertained to confirm whether:

- the home should re-let within the existing tenure or client group
  - it is more appropriate for relet for an alternative tenure or client group, such as older people
  - the property meets our lettable standard
  - it meets the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)
  - it delivers ongoing financial and social value
  - it should be placed on the open market, based on our assessment and options appraisal
- This offers some consistency within our standards and set a level of expectations for our customers

At the end of the tenancy, we expect the property to be returned by the tenant in the same standard as originally let. In the event it is not, Flagship will recharge the outgoing tenant

## Mutual Exchange Properties

In support of our Mutual Exchange process, we will undertake a general building safety inspection and a gas and electric safety check

## Cyclical Work

These are works and servicing that are completed on a 'cyclical' basis on a pre-prescribed timescale. Examples include (list not exhaustive):

- external and internal redecorations
- servicing automated doors/gates
- communal TV aerials
- electrical testing
- servicing fire alarms
- servicing lifts
- servicing boilers (gas, oil, and solid fuel)
- smoke and carbon monoxide detector checks
- legionella/water hygiene checks
- Surveys for asbestos containing materials
- play equipment inspections
- servicing septic tanks and pumping stations



## Complex Routine Repairs

From time to time, mainly falling out of our responsive repair activity, we'll identify responsive complex works to homes that will be individually ordered for completion within 90-days, such as:

- building components identified for responsive replacement which haven't necessarily reached the end of their theoretical life, and are therefore not included in any planned programme but have failed on a one-off basis and need to be replaced in the short term (for example boilers or windows)
- building components that repeatedly need to be repaired (for example, flat roofs, chimneys, external walls, and internal whole wall plastering)

Some more complex, or large-scale maintenance works that are outside the scope of responsive and planned repairs (such as multiple fire compartmentation defects, extensive external environmental work and fire damage properties or other structural work) we'll agree specific completion targets for these sorts of major work, which we'll communicate and agree with affected tenants

Such work may on occasions require the temporary decanting of tenants or permanent rehousing where agreed with the tenant

## Planned repairs

Planned repairs covers work designed to update and replace worn-out parts of our tenant's home, which can include replacing or repairing:

- kitchens and bathrooms
- external doors
- windows
- boilers
- heating systems
- roofing

## Neighbourhood standard

Our Neighbourhood Standard ensures that the area where tenants live is kept clean, safe, and well-maintained. This includes play areas, car parks, communal areas and facilities, and any land owned by Flagship

Communal areas include interior spaces such as hallways, stairs, landings, lifts, and laundry rooms.

## 6.0 Temporary Suspension of Normal Service

During exceptional circumstances (such as extreme weather conditions, or a disaster recovery scenario) we may suspend our normal repair regime for up to 10 working days, in line with our Business Continuity Plan.

The Chief Operating Officer, or in their absence the Deputy Chief Executive, can initiate this and will notify all parties, including employees

We will make tenants aware that our normal arrangements have been suspended and the reasons why

We'll immediately introduce a system of call backs for non-emergency work to make future appointments for repairs reported and this may mean that we arrange appointments for non-emergency work beyond our usual 28 calendar day standard

We may also re-schedule previously arranged non-urgent appointments and agree this with the tenant

Suspending normal service could be initiated for a particular region of operation or across everywhere we have homes

## **7.0 Tenants' Own Improvements**

We'll generally seek to support tenants who'd like to make their own home improvements. But it's important that such work is carried out in accordance with appropriate health and safety guidance, planning restrictions and other legislation and good practice

We'll offer our advice on products and specifications and provide an asbestos survey for the property where this is relevant

At the end of a tenancy, we'll consider paying compensation for any qualifying improvements that tenants have carried out, bearing in mind the cost and age of the installation

The Right to Compensation Procedure gives more details

Where tenants have carried out authorised and approved alterations or improvements to a property, Flagship will not be responsible for carrying out repairs unless this has been previously agreed and in writing

Unauthorised work or improvement carried out by tenants may be removed with services or components reinstated to Flagship standards. All costs in so doing will be re-charged to the tenant

## **8.0 Rechargeable Works**

If we identify any abuse or malicious damage to our property, wherever possible we'll offer the tenant the opportunity to repair the damage and reinstate the service or component themselves

If the work isn't undertaken to our satisfaction, we'll carry out the repairs and charge the tenant for completing the work

Lost keys are generally an item that we'll recharge tenants for, but we'll offer an enhanced service to vulnerable tenants in some circumstances

The Recharge Procedure gives more details

## **9.0 Insurance**

We'll insure the structure of the properties we own but not tenants' contents and we strongly advise tenants to arrange their own home contents insurance

We'll record all insurable repairs appropriately, even if the individual repair isn't the subject of an insurance claim

## 10.0 New Homes

This policy and the service standards set out apply equally to tenants that have moved into a newly built home

The exception is that a newly built home carries with it a 'guarantee' whereby certain repairs arising within the first 12-months from handover are classified as 'Defects' and are usually the responsibility of the builder to remedy

At the end of the defect's liability period, Flagship will carry out a review of the tenants home jointly with the builder and draw up a list of any minor defects that have occurred, such as hairline plaster shrinkage cracks etc

On receiving the repair request, we'll review and confirm whether it's:

- a 'work in defect' repair - and therefore the responsibility of the builder to rectify
- a defect period snagging issue (for example, hairline plaster cracks which are best addressed through the end of year snagging review done by the builder)
- a 'latent defect' (which may also arise after the initial 12-month defect period) and so needs to be referred to the original builder
- a repair that Flagship are responsible for as landlord
- a repair which should be recharged to the tenant

Throughout the defect's liability period, tenants will continue report repairs via the normal Flagship multi-channel access points and will be given details of how the repair is to be managed and who will be attending to complete the repair and within which priority time scale

## 11.0 Disabled Adaptations

We're committed to providing high-quality and efficient disabled adaptations that address the key needs of our tenants and the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

## 12.0 Shared ownership and leaseholder work

Alongside repair and improvement work planned under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, we'll also offer leaseholders the opportunity to take part in any servicing, repair and maintenance work offered by Flagship Services on a chargeable basis

## 13.0 Monitoring and reporting

Regular reporting on repairs and maintenance will be made through the Asset Management Committee, Local Housing Boards, Group Board, and other compliance reports

We measure several key performance indicators that assess our performance and ensure that we are operating responsibly and efficiently

## **14.0 Equality Impact**

We recognise the diversity of our customers and ensure a culture of respect and understanding through regular training. We have developed a range of toolbox talks that specifically highlight and address the everyday needs of our tenants and other customers

The training programme is supported by our Code of Conduct which is a mandatory document to be followed by all contractors and trade staff, setting out expected behaviours to ensure that we offer a consistent service and level of respect for our tenants and other customers

A strict protocol around flags and vulnerability is set out to avoid any discrimination or data protection breach

## **15.0 Policy Review**

This Policy will be reviewed every three years and/or as required by changes in legislation, regulation, or our own internal organisation