



## Repairs Policy

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This policy sets out One Manchester's approach to repairing, maintaining and improving its properties.

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Version 2

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## Introduction

This policy sets out One Manchester's approach to repairing, maintaining and improving its properties. This includes the delivery of the responsive repairs service which complements our Asset Management Strategy and planned and cyclical maintenance programmes.

## Purpose

The principles underlying this policy are to:

- Ensure homes are efficiently and effectively maintained to an acceptable standard
- Comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements
- Monitor and control performance on responsive repairs
- Continuously improve the responsive repairs service
- Reduce the need and cost of undertaking demand driven repairs by having regular regimes of planned and cyclical maintenance in place
- Make best use of our resources in achieving value for money
- Ensure customers and stakeholders are involved and consulted in the improvement of the service and its operational procedures
- Empower customers to carry out their own low level repairs and encourage positive tenancy behaviour
- Ensure equality of access to the service for all customers and to take into account the needs of vulnerable people
- Adopt an approach to maintenance that aligns to our place strategy in terms of investment, growth, neighbourhood management and community development

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- Provide a modern, efficient and accessible service offer for repairing, maintaining and improving our properties
- Provide a reliable and cost-effective repairs, maintenance and improvement services
- Keep in repair and proper working order all installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity, for sanitation and for space and water heating
- Keep in repair the structure and exterior of our property and its fixtures
- Maintain all communal facilities, installations & protection systems.
- Ensure customers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities for minor repairs
- Ensure that appropriate response times are set
- Ensure customer feedback is obtained and high levels of customer satisfaction are achieved
- Leaseholders and other individuals or partner organisations can buy into the service. Where we carry out work for others we offer the same standards of service as we do for OM customers unless agreed otherwise
- To achieve social value benefits for all areas of the service

## Scope

The policy applies to all premises where One Manchester and subsidiary companies have responsibility for responsive repairs, maintenance and improvements.

Customers who make an application to buy their home will only receive basic emergency repairs prior to purchase but will be reinstated if the application is withdrawn.

## Customer and Landlord responsibilities

Tenancy and leasehold agreements set out the contractual responsibilities for One Manchester, our subsidiaries and our customers.

We expect customers to:

- Keep the inside of their home clean and in good condition and keep gardens and communal areas clean and tidy
- Undertake minor repairs (see Appendix 2) and avoid doing anything which may result in damage including blockages to pipes and drains
- Make a formal request and receive our consent before carrying out any work that involves removal or alteration of any fixtures and fittings within the property including flooring or other fittings that will preclude access for maintenance. Consent is also required for extensions or conversions or structural alterations. Failure to secure consent may lead to a recharge for the cost of subsequent rectification
- Take out home contents insurance as One Manchester is not responsible for insuring customers' furniture and possessions. Customers may also be responsible for damage caused to another property, for example, caused by flooding from their property

As part of our Value for Money Strategy we will seek to reduce the number of responsive repairs in order to maximise planned and cyclical investment which is a more efficient use of resources. As part of this strategy we will regularly identify those properties where the number or cost of repairs is disproportionately greater than the average of all properties. In such instances inspections may be undertaken before further work is raised with a view to assessing requirements for preventative maintenance, major repairs or improvements. Where necessary, advice will be given to customers, recharges issued and/or tenancy enforcement action may be taken.

One Manchester will follow the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair Cases when dealing with claims for disrepair.

## Reporting Repairs

One Manchester will provide a number of ways for customers to report repairs. These include on-line via our website, by phone, by letter, e-mail or by reporting directly to members of staff. Other ways of reporting repairs and accessing the service will be developed as part of our Digital Transformation Strategy.

## Repair Categories

We will diagnose and order repairs under three categories;

- **Emergency repairs** - are those where there is an immediate or potential danger to a person or a serious risk of damage to a property. The response time to a daytime emergency repair is 24 hours but with some types of repair being made safe within 4 hours. Whilst every effort will be made to undertake a full repair when responding to a daytime emergency this may not always be possible and follow on work may be required.

We offer a 365 days a year access to an emergency repairs service.

- **Appointable repairs** - are those where the nature of the repair does not cause or have the potential to cause immediate danger to a person or serious damage to a property. We aim to complete appointable repairs within 20 working days at the convenience of the customer.
- **Major Repairs** - This category is for major repairs which may require longer lead in times for supply of specialist items or where statutory consents and approvals may be required (such as Building Regulation approval.). In these cases works would be carried out at a date and time agreed with the customer outside of the 20 day appointable repair category. For reasons of economy or efficiency, these repairs may be grouped together in programmes of work.

The vast majority of repairs will be ordered under the appointable repair category.

## Repair Appointments

We will offer an appointment for the majority of repairs at the time the repair is reported and, where possible, this will be at a date and time convenient for the customer. A range of appointment times will be available as detailed on the One Manchester website.

Customers will be informed about progress with their repairs through text messaging and other digital channels as they are developed. If for any reason a repair appointment cannot be kept the customer will be contacted to offer an alternative arrangement.

We expect customers to provide access for repairs at the appointed time, to remove belongings to enable the work to be undertaken and to provide a clean, smoke free environment for our employees and contractors to work in. If customers fail, on 2 or more occasions, to allow access for pre-arranged appointments or emergency repairs a 'no access' fee of £20 may be charged.

Some repairs, including communal repairs, may require an inspection before a repair is raised. Examples include where previous repairs have not resolved the problem or where the scale of the work indicated suggests it may be appropriate to include it in a programme of repairs. Inspections will also be necessary for other reasons including stock condition surveys and where the number or cost of repairs for a property is disproportionately high.

## Out of Hours Emergency Service

Outside normal working hours, the emergency repairs service will be restricted to make safe only, for repairs for which One Manchester is responsible, other than in the case of a total loss of heating during the winter period for customers who have serious medical conditions that require 24 hour heating. All follow on work will be raised during the next working day.

We may need to gain emergency access to a property. This may be in order to carry out emergency repairs, to remedy a serious health and safety risk, or where there are concerns for a customer's welfare.

## Vulnerability

We recognise that our customers have different needs and that in some circumstances customers may require extra assistance. Where a customer has a disability or other need that requires a prioritised response or directly impacts on their ability to carry out a minor repair they are responsible for, we will assess each case on its merits and may prioritise the repair or agree to carry out the repair on their behalf at no cost.

## Value for Money and Repairs Reduction Strategy

One Manchester aims to reduce the number and average cost of responsive repairs in order to maximise investment in planned and cyclical works. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Development and delivery of a property MOT approach in places where it will achieve long term benefits.
- Sensitive intelligent analysis to identify and respond to areas of high repairs demand/property neglect.
- Effective tenancy enforcement to ensure customers fulfil their obligations in relation to their property.
- Where appropriate, recharging customers where they cause damage or neglect their properties.
- DIY training and provision of a toolkit and guidance for new customers as well as on line help and support and access to the One Manchester Handyman Service.
- Sale or redevelopment of properties where maintenance costs exceed their value or do not meet the needs of customers, linked to our wider asset management and masterplanning strategies.

## Communal Repairs

Communal repairs are those carried out to entrances, halls, lifts, stairways, passageways, lighting, door entry systems and other areas provided for common use. They may also be carried out to boundaries and to other external structures which are our responsibility. Some communal repairs may be programmed i.e. grouped together to be completed as a scheme at a later date as this is more cost effective.

## **Adaptations**

One Manchester is committed to the provision of adaptations to restore or enable independent living where feasible. We will consider requests for adaptations through our Service Level Agreement with Manchester City Council/Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership and in accordance with our Adaptations Policy.

## **Customer Improvements**

An assured tenancy creates the legal right for a customer to make alterations and improvements to their homes provided they obtain our written permission before they carry out any works and seek all relevant permissions with regard to planning and building control.

We will not unreasonably withhold consent when customers make a request to carry out improvements or alterations. If customers later decide to move they may be required to reinstate the property to the condition it was in before they carried out the work. All authorised work must be completed to a sufficiently high standard and by qualified and competent persons. Work undertaken on gas and electrical installations must be carried out by appropriately qualified persons and copies of certificates must be provided to One Manchester.

We are not liable for any loss or damage to, caused by or associated with any improvements or alterations carried out by customers with or without permission. Customers are responsible for any repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement or alteration that may be necessary.

Customers may be recharged for any unauthorised improvements or alterations identified at the end of their tenancy.

## **Fixed Wall and Floor Coverings**

It is not advisable for customers to lay fixed floor coverings (tiles, hard wood or laminate) in their homes. This is due to the difficulty in removing them to carry out essential works such as under floor pipe work, without damaging the fixed covering. One Manchester does not advocate the installation of fixed floor coverings. Where residents have installed fixed wall or floor coverings they are responsible for obtaining the correct noise insulation, contents insurance cover and for removing them for works which One Manchester deem essential. One Manchester retains the right to recover costs of removing fixed floor or wall coverings from customers who have installed them, on their departure from the tenancy.

## **Minimising Loss**

Customers have a responsibility to inform One Manchester as soon as they become aware that a repair is required that does not fall under their responsibility and to minimise or avoid loss that may be suffered as a result of any outstanding repair. For example, if experiencing water penetration or dampness we would expect customers to move items of furniture and possessions away from the affected areas so they do not get damaged.



## Leaseholder Obligations

Leaseholders should refer to their lease for details of repair and maintenance responsibilities.

Leaseholders are responsible for repairing any damage due to neglect or carelessness caused by them, a member of their family, customer or visitor.

We will recharge leaseholders if there is evidence that damage is the fault of a leaseholder or their household or visitors.

Leaseholders will have access to the One Manchester's Handyman service.

## Rechargeable Repairs

We expect customers to keep their homes in good condition, undertake minor repairs and avoid actions or omissions that result in damage to fixtures and fittings or blockages to pipes and drains.

Where damage or neglect has occurred for which the customer is responsible, we expect the customer to undertake the repairs or remedial work required or to repay the cost of such work in advance.

Where customers choose to complete the work themselves or arrange for the repair to be completed by a competent contractor, depending on the nature of the repair, we may seek to inspect the work afterwards. Such repairs include but are not limited to:

- Shower curtains and rails
- External doors
- External glazing/glazing in doors
- Internal doors
- Toilets and cisterns
- Sinks, basins, baths and showers

All works involving gas or electrical installations must be undertaken by a Gas Safe or NICEIC registered contractor. We must be provided with the original certificate/s issued by the contractor.

Customers who misrepresent the urgency of a repair to obtain an emergency response during normal working hours or out of hours may be charged an emergency call out fee.

If the required work is left incomplete we may decide to carry out the repair and recharge the customer for the repair and for any other work required as a result of the repair not being completed.

Unpaid debt due to recharges may result in legal action being taken for breach of tenancy.

Where it can be demonstrated that due to lifestyle or neglect a customer has had a disproportionately negative impact on the condition of a key component of their property such as the kitchen or bathroom, compared to when the customer first occupied that property, the property may be excluded from planned improvement programmes.

Where damage is due to vandalism or criminal activity, customers should report this to the police and obtain a crime reference number. We may accept responsibility for repairs where a crime reference number is provided dependent upon the circumstances.

One Manchester will take a robust stance in instances of criminal damage against its property. Dependant on the circumstances and evidence available, reports will be made to the Police and criminal proceedings pursued when appropriate. Compensation will be sought to cover the cost of repair.

## **Domestic Abuse**

In a domestic violence or crime situation we will provide the customer with extra assistance e.g. change door locks or secure windows at no charge. Verification will be required.

## **Handyman Service**

One Manchester offers a handyman service, paid for in advance, for repairs that are customer responsibility. This is available to all OM tenants and leaseholders.

Information on a range of basic maintenance issues will be available within the One Manchester's repairs guide and on the OM website.

## **Void Properties and Relets**

We aim to inspect all properties prior to a property being vacated. Advice will be given to outgoing customers on their obligations and any rechargeable repairs that are considered necessary.

Work will be carried out to bring the property up to One Manchester's lettable standard whilst it is empty with works prioritised to minimise the length of time the property is vacant. Planned improvements may not always be undertaken prior to occupancy but new customers will be given the timescale for any outstanding work.

## **Servicing and Cyclical Works**

One Manchester will ensure that all gas central heating systems and gas appliances that we are responsible for are serviced annually. One Manchester has a Gas Safety Policy that sets out our approach to gas servicing.

We have other cyclical maintenance programmes, or planned servicing, that we undertake on a regular basis including the servicing of fire alarms, smoke alarms and emergency lighting where they are provided by us. Our owned electrical equipment will be regularly safety tested and, where provided, fire fighting equipment will be maintained. Other programmes include domestic electrical testing and water safety tests.

## **Improvements**

Improvement works are those involved in replacing and renewing parts of the building fabric and components of the building. They are defined by our Asset Management Strategy.

Improvement programmes are planned in advance and include such work as central heating replacement, new kitchens and bathrooms, re-roofing and re-wiring. Programmes are developed

using stock condition data held in our Asset Management database. Generally we will not replace items via the repairs service where planned improvement works are imminent.

Properties may not be included in the improvement programme in the following circumstances:

- Where access has not been allowed to carry out a stock condition survey
- Where customers are more than 8 weeks in rent arrears unless a repayment plan is in place (except where failure to carry out the improvement would constitute a health and safety risk)
- Where it can be shown that the customer's lifestyle or neglect has had a disproportionate impact on the condition of the property compared to when they first occupied it

## Service Quality and Complaints

We will actively seek feedback from customers on the quality of the service they receive to help us continually improve service performance, quality and efficiency.

All One Manchester customers may pursue a complaint in accordance with the complaints policy in respect of any aspect of the repairs service. Complaints will also be used to improve our services and highlight reoccurring problems.

We will post inspect a sample of all repairs undertaken as part of our quality assurance of the service.

In order to provide minimum inconvenience to our customers we aim to complete non-emergency repairs on the first visit and will monitor our performance against this measure.

More information and guidance regarding the repairs service is available on the One Manchester website.

One Manchester operates a code of conduct for our own operatives and external contractors who carry out work on our behalf.

We take seriously any actions by customers that harass or threaten our staff, agents or contractors. One Manchester has an Unacceptable Actions and Behaviour Policy that sets out our approach to managing those customers whose actions or behaviour is considered unacceptable.

## Equality and Diversity

We recognise that all customers regardless of age, disability, gender identity including transgender and non binary, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, whether they are pregnant (or on maternity) or other grounds, should be treated equally and fairly.

When applying this policy we will recognise the specific needs of vulnerable groups and that their individual needs are taken into account.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and no issues were identified which have not already been addressed by the policy.

## **Responsibility**

The Group Director of Assets and Growth has responsibility for reviewing the Policy.

Responsibility for implementation of this policy is with the Group's Head of Maintenance.

## **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

Operations Committee will monitor performance relating to delivery of the repairs service.

Complaints and customer feedback are also used as an additional means of monitoring and improving the quality of the service.

This policy will be reconsidered against any legislative changes annually and reviewed every three years.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other One Manchester policies that can be accessed via our website.

## **Legislation**

This policy and any subsequent procedures have been written in the context of the various legal and regulatory requirements within which One Manchester is required to work and will be updated as legislation changes.

## Appendix 1

**One Manchester responsibilities – any may be recharged if the cause is found to be damage, inaction or neglect.**

<p><b>Structure of building and exterior of property</b></p> <p>We are responsible for keeping in repair the structure and exterior of our properties. This includes the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations</li> <li>• Roof</li> <li>• External and internal walls</li> <li>• External decoration</li> <li>• External doors excluding locks</li> <li>• Internal doors including reglazing, handles, hinges and latches</li> <li>• External windows excluding reglazing unless a crime reference number is provided</li> <li>• Internal walls</li> <li>• Ceilings and plasterwork excluding minor cracks, painting and decorating</li> <li>• Floors but not floor coverings</li> <li>• Drains</li> <li>• Gutters &amp; rainwater goods</li> <li>• External pipes</li> <li>• Chimneys</li> <li>• Pathways, steps or other means of access</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gas, water and electricity</b></p> <p>We are responsible for the repair and working order of the installations for the supply of services including water, sanitation, gas, electricity, space heating and hot water. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaks</li> <li>• Basins</li> <li>• Sinks</li> <li>• Baths</li> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• Water and gas pipework</li> <li>• Electrical wiring</li> <li>• Sockets</li> <li>• Water tanks</li> <li>• Boilers</li> <li>• Water heaters</li> <li>• Radiators</li> <li>• Gas fires</li> <li>• Fitted electric fires or other fitted heaters</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional responsibilities</b></p> <p>We will also undertake the following repairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sealant including baths, basins, sinks and showers (not for cosmetic reasons)</li> <li>• Tap washers</li> <li>• Faulty kitchen unit hinges</li> <li>• Door latches, knobs and closers</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Communal areas</b></p> <p>We will ensure that communal areas are kept in reasonable repair and are fit for use. This includes keeping communal area lighting and entry phones in working order.</p>	<p><b>Insurance</b></p> <p>We are responsible for insuring the properties which we own. Any works that One Manchester is obliged to carry out as the landlord may be covered by buildings insurance.</p>

## Appendix 2

**Tenant repairs responsibilities** – (there may be exceptions due to vulnerability or other need)

### General provisions

**Some of the repairs below may be carried out by One Manchester as part of planned Improvement Programmes e.g. fencing, external painting, kitchen and bathroom renewals but are otherwise customer responsibility.**

We generally expect our customers to:

- Be responsible for any repair that was caused due to damage, inaction or neglect
- Keep the inside of their home clean and in good condition including internal decoration
- Obtain our written permission before carrying out any alteration or improvement to their home
- Keep gardens and communal areas clean and tidy. This includes maintaining grass, plants and tree branches within the property boundaries
- Avoid doing anything which may result in blockages to pipes and drains (e.g. disposing of fat, oil, sanitary products, nappies etc. down toilets or in sinks)
- Use fixtures and fittings for the purpose for which they were intended (e.g. not use worktops as chopping boards)
- Make the lifestyle changes necessary to resolve instances of condensation such as opening windows regularly, not drying washing on radiators or leaving extractor fans switched off. Where condensation is the likely cause of reported dampness, One Manchester will advise customers of the action they need to take to deal with the problem and prevent further incidences in the first instance
- Pay for (as a recharge or handyman repair) or undertake minor repairs including:
  - The replacement of lost or damaged keys and fobs, and the replacement of locks caused by the loss of keys (unless as a result of crime and a crime reference number is provided) and the provision of additional keys
  - Bolts, catches, security chains and spy holes
  - Wardrobe and airing cupboard doors
  - Internal door adjustments after carpet/flooring fitting
  - Floor coverings not fitted by One Manchester
  - Keeping grids and gullies clear
  - Plastering of small cracks, small holes and shrinkage (new builds) on internal walls/ceilings
  - Tile grouting due to mould and mildew issues
  - Toilet seats and lids
  - Bathroom cabinets, towel rails, toilet roll holders and other ancillary fittings
  - Chains, plugs and pull cords
  - Light bulbs and fluorescent tubes including low energy bulbs
  - Fuses and starters
  - Resetting trip switches and circuit breakers
  - Additional sockets and power sources
  - Electrical safety checks following customer alterations or use of faulty appliances
  - Blockages to waste pipes to sinks, showers, basins, baths and toilets (One Manchester will only attend a blockage if tenants have taken reasonable steps to clear the blockage and it cannot be dislodged)
  - Existing shower curtains and rails
  - Shower head
  - Kitchen unit handles, knobs, edging, catches and child locks
  - Tightening screws in kitchen cupboards and doors
  - Alteration of kitchen units to fit appliances
  - Shelving and picture rails
  - Metal gates to front doors

- Doorbells, batteries and bulbs (not communal or entry phones)
- House numbers, finger plates, door chains, name plates, door knockers and stoppers
- Tenants own white goods
- Telephone points, TV sockets, aerials and dishes including removal for repairs
- Garage keys, bolts, padlocks, locks including forced entry
- Fencing and gates (other than make safe) including preservative and paint, hinges, catches and latches
- Washing machine connection and plumbing
- Dishwasher pipework, connection and plumbing
- Tumble drier installation and vents
- Provision and installation of cookers and cooker connection (cookers must be installed by qualified tradespeople)
- Batteries in thermostats
- Cleaning and testing of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors other than at gas servicing
- External glazing in doors and windows including board ups, (unless as a result of crime and a crime reference number is provided)
- Curtain rails, tracks, battens and coat hooks
- Maintenance of any fixtures, fittings and appliances, including gas appliances, not fitted by One Manchester
- Relighting pilot lights and resetting heating controls
- Bleeding radiators
- Refixing radiators after decoration
- Renewing fire fronts if painted or damaged
- Tidy driers, washing lines, posts and rotary driers.
- Water butts, greenhouses and sheds including locks, keys, bolts and padlocks
- Car ports unless dangerous where they will be dismantled
- Boxing of internal pipework
- Rubbish clearance
- Any items accepted under a signed disclaimer at the start of a tenancy

### **Insurance**

Customers are responsible for insuring their own home contents. An insurance policy can be purchased through One Manchester.

## Related documents

- Adaptations Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Recharge Policy
- Income Recovery Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Adults at Risk of Harm Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Unacceptable Actions and Behaviour Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Governance and Financial Viability Standard
- Value for Money Standard
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- Home Standard

## Change history

Version no	Date	Change made by	Brief details of change
1	25/1/17	LJ	Removed carbon monoxide battery replacement from list on appendix 2
1	29/6/17	LJ	Amended internal door responsibility and removed reference to smoke alarm batteries as all mains supplied
2	7/9/18	LJ	V1 of policy reviewed in entirety - specifically repair responsibilities and a number of amendments were made to the policy and Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 following EMT approval.