

Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

Purpose

This policy outlines how Liver Care and Housing Ltd (LCH) will maintain its properties to ensure they remain safe, functional and of a high standard. It defines our commitment to providing an efficient repairs service that meets the requirements of the Safety and Quality Standard and ensures the longevity of our housing assets.

This policy applies to all service users. Service users will be responsible for some repairs and maintenance as set out in their tenancy agreements or licence agreements.

Policy Statement

We believe that every service user deserves a home that is safe, warm and in a good state of repair. We will manage our repairs and maintenance program proactively, ensuring that all homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and that all HMO-specific management regulations are strictly followed.

Principles

Our repairs and maintenance policy aims are to ensure that we prioritise the health and safety of our service users and provide them with an efficient repairs service. We will do this through:

- Prioritising repairs that impact the health and safety of tenants
- Have a proactive asset management approach, using data to plan future replacements rather than just reacting to breakages
- Maintaining clear records of repair requests, completion times and costs
- Communicating clearly with service users regarding access and timescales
- Seeking feedback on our service from service users

Definitions

Emergency repair: A defect that puts the health, safety, or security of a service user at immediate risk (e.g. total loss of water, gas leak, or fire alarm failure).

Urgent repair: A defect that affects the comfort or convenience of the service user (e.g. partial loss of heating or a broken fridge in an HMO).

Routine repair: Minor maintenance issues that do not pose an immediate risk (e.g. dripping taps or cupboard door repairs).

Planned maintenance: Replacing high-value items (boilers, roofs, kitchens) before they fail.

Cyclical maintenance: Regular "servicing" of the building, including annual gas safety checks, five-yearly electrical checks, and annual gutter cleaning.

Decent Homes Standard (DHS): A technical standard for public housing that requires homes to be free of hazards, in a reasonable state of repair, and equipped with modern facilities.

Our approach

We will repair and maintain the rooms and communal areas that we're responsible for in accordance with our legal, regulatory and contractual obligations.

We aim to provide an accessible, efficient and responsive service that considers individual circumstances and needs. We use contractors to deliver our repairs service and are committed to continuously improving the service we offer.

We understand that having to stay at home so that a repair can be carried out can

be inconvenient. We aim to provide a 'right first time' repair service, which means that the repair is completed on the first visit, with minimal disruption. We'll work with and monitor our contractors to achieve this. We'll use like for like components and, when this isn't possible, we'll provide a similar suitable part.

Reporting a repair

If a repair is needed that is our responsibility, service users should report this to us as soon possible. If a service user is not sure if a repair is our responsibility or theirs, they should contact us to check (information about which repairs are whose responsibility are included in tenancy agreements). This applies to repairs needed in homes, private rooms or communal areas.

Service users can report the need for a repair to us by:

- Email: ray@liver-care.org.uk
- Visiting our office: 68 Walton Vale, L9 2BU
- Telephone: 0151 474 1090/ 07834164505
- Face to face to any staff member

If the repair is something that a service user considers to be an emergency, they should call us or speak to a member of staff if they can.

If a service user gives us their permission for someone else to speak to us about the repair, and for us to speak to them about it, we will. We can liaise with them about all aspects of the repair, including agreeing the appointment and completing the repair.

We will carry out monthly inspections of all communal areas to identify any "hidden" repairs or damage to fire-stopping equipment.

We expect our service users to be proactive in reporting repair issues, in accordance with the terms of their tenancy agreement. Where a service user fails to report repair issues or fails to give us access, we may take appropriate legal action which could include seeking an injunction for access. We reserve the right to recover costs from the service user.

In cases of damage caused by a service user, including damage caused by neglect, a service user's failure to maintain their home in accordance with their tenancy agreement, or a service user's visitor: We'll:

- give the service user a clear and comprehensive schedule of works that need to be completed, with timescales
- give them the opportunity to rectify the issues themselves using an appropriately qualified contractor, giving clear timescales for completion of works. Any contractor appointed by the service user must be pre-approved by LCH and provide proof of relevant qualifications and public liability insurance.

If the works aren't completed within the given timescales, we'll appoint our own contractor and recharge the cost of the works to the service user.

Note: For any smell of gas, service users should please evacuate the building immediately and call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111999 and then contact LCH.

Repair appointments

We have a three-tier approach for categorising repair priorities. Wherever possible, we'll book an appointment at a time that works for the service user. Sometimes this won't be possible – for example, if the repair is an emergency. Sometimes, it may be more efficient for a contractor to schedule several repairs in the same area on the same day. We'll work with the service user to arrange the appointment for a day and time that's convenient to the service user and the contractor.

- **Emergency repair** – we will respond and make safe within 24 hours
If another appointment is needed to fully complete the repair, the person who attends the first appointment will, where possible, arrange the additional appointment before leaving the property. Another appointment may be needed where, for example, parts or materials need to be ordered or a different tradesperson is needed.
- **Urgent repair** – we will complete the repair within 7 calendar days
- **Routine repair** – we will complete the repair within 28 calendar days

Any repair affecting a fire door set, smoke detection, or emergency lighting will be treated as an Emergency (24h) or Urgent (7-day) priority depending on the risk to the building.

When scheduling repairs, LCH will consider the specific support needs or anxieties of the service user, offer morning/afternoon slots or allow a support worker to be present where requested.

Complex / Major Repairs

Some repairs may be larger than first thought and as such may need to be treated as a complex or major repair. Generally complex or major repairs are larger, more significant repairs requiring extensive investigation work and in some cases several specialisms.

These repairs usually incur more cost and have extended completion times when compared to routine repairs. Some examples of complex/major repairs are:

- Specialist work, materials or trades - For example windows and doors may only be supplied by a specific manufacturer with a long delivery period.
- The repair is required to a major component - For example, a property's roof covering requires extensive repairs and/or replacement
- Major heating system failures
- Severe cases of damp and mould - For reports of damp and mould, we will undertake a professional assessment within 7 calendar days of the report

Once a repair has been deemed a complex/major repair, arrangements will be made for a surveyor to visit within 5 working days. This will allow for the surveyor to compile a schedule of works along with expected timescales for completion.

The surveyor will assign an appropriate contractor to carry out the works and will oversee the works until completion. We will also agree a communication plan with affected service users to ensure they're kept updated throughout the process.

Wherever possible, we'll aim to complete complex/major repairs within 28 calendar days, which is our target timescale for completing routine repairs.

Planned and Cyclical Maintenance
We'll maintain rooms and any communal areas that we're

responsible for through a programme of planned maintenance and cyclical work to ensure our properties meet the DHS and, as far as possible, service users' expectations. To help us do this, we'll aim to carry out a Home Improvement Survey every five years to check the physical condition and energy efficiency of our properties.

We'll replace components that have reached, or are reaching, the end of their useful life. The table below sets out the estimated lifecycle of a property's main components. This is a guideline and we may extend the lifecycle of components in accordance with the DHS and professional judgements of the people who complete Home Improvement Surveys for us.

Component	Estimated lifecycle
Kitchen	20 years
Bathroom	30 years
External doors	30 years
Windows	30 years
Roofs	60 years
Gas boiler	12-15 years
Fixed electrical wiring	30 years

Other planned maintenance includes:

- External decorations and decorations of communal areas
- Fencing and paving
- Energy efficiency works
- The provision of door entry systems and additional lighting
- Works needed due to Fire Risk Assessment recommendations

Access for Repairs – HMOs only

To ensure the property remains safe and well-maintained, we require periodic access to service users' private rooms, and communal areas.

For routine maintenance & inspections, we will provide at least 24 hours' written notice before entering a service users' private room for routine inspections, planned maintenance, or viewings.

Notice may be given via email, text or letter and we will attempt to schedule a time that is convenient for the service user.

In the event of an emergency (e.g. a suspected fire, gas leak, or a major water burst that risks the safety of the building or occupants), we reserve the right to enter the property and individual rooms immediately and without prior notice.

As a supported housing provider, staff may enter communal areas at any time. Access to your private room for support-related purposes will be conducted as per your individual Support Agreement.

Service users have the right to be present during any repair or inspection, but the work may proceed in their absence if notice was correctly given and they are not available.

Disrepair and legal claims

We aim to resolve all repair issues through our standard responsive repairs process to avoid the need for legal action. We aim to minimise legal Housing Conditions claims within our homes and communal areas by ensuring that they're safe and well-maintained and that we comply with our landlord obligations including following the Pre-Action Protocol.

We operate a programme of surveys to understand the state and condition of properties and communal areas that we're responsible for. We hold a central register which contains comprehensive information regarding our stock to help us determine which properties in which areas will require attention.

Training

All staff involved in property oversight will receive training on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Staff will also be trained on identifying damp and mould and the legal requirements of Awaab's law.

Contractors must also demonstrate competence and receive an induction on HMO safety standards before commencing work.

All staff, during induction, are made aware of the organisation's policies and procedures, all of which are used for training updates. All policies and procedures are reviewed and amended where necessary and staff are made aware of any changes.

Review and Update of Policy

This Repairs and Maintenance Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

Related Policies

Health and Safety
Complaints

Related Legislation

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11 regarding repair obligations)
- The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006
- Housing Act 2004 (HHSRS)
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Decent Homes Standard
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims (England)
- The Building Safety Act 2022

Appendix – Repair & Maintenance Responsibilities

This guide outlines who is responsible for specific repairs and maintenance tasks within the property. Our goal is to ensure a safe, comfortable and well-maintained living environment.

Landlord / Provider Responsibilities

As the provider, we are responsible for the "big stuff" – the structure, the exterior, and the essential installations for water, gas, electricity, and sanitation.

- **Structure & Exterior:** Roof, walls, floors, ceilings, external doors, and windows.
- **Systems & Utilities:**
 - o Boilers, radiators, and space heating.
 - o Electrical wiring, sockets, and light fittings (excluding bulbs).
 - o Water pipes, tanks, and stopcocks.
- **Sanitary Installations:** Toilets, baths, showers, and sinks (including leaks and major blockages not caused by misuse).
- **Shared and Communal Areas:** Maintenance of hallways, communal kitchens, shared bathrooms, and stairways.
- **Pest Control:** Managing infestations that are a result of structural defects or were present at the start of the residency
- **Health & Safety:**
 - o Annual Gas Safety Checks.
 - o Periodic Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR).
 - o Maintenance and testing of fire alarms, extinguishers, and emergency lighting.
 - o Legionella risk assessments.

Service User Responsibilities

Service users are expected to use the property in a tenant-like manner. This essentially means basic upkeep and taking care of the home.

- **General Cleanliness:** Keeping their home or own room and shared areas (after use) clean and hygienic.
- **Reporting:** Promptly notifying LCH of any damage or required repairs.
- **Minor Tasks*:** Replacing light bulbs in their homes or own rooms, changing batteries in small personal items, bleeding radiators in their homes or own rooms.
- **Waste Management:** Putting rubbish in the correct bins and ensuring bins are put out for collection.
- **Internal Damage:** Repairing or paying for the repair of any damage caused by the tenant, their guests, or through negligence (e.g. a broken window or a hole in a door).
- **Ventilation:** Using extractor fans or opening windows to prevent condensation and mould growth.
- **Fire Safety:**
 - o Keeping communal areas and fire exits completely clear of personal belongs
 - o Strictly no wedging open of fire doors
 - o Ensuring any personal electrical items (e.g. heaters, chargers, or kettles) are in safe working order and do not overload sockets.
- **Furniture / Smoking:** Not bringing upholstered furniture into the property without prior written consent (to ensure it meets Fire Safety Regulations) and adhering to the no-smoking policy inside the building.

* If a service user is unable to perform minor task due to their specific support needs, they should contact their support worker for assistance.