

Grosvenor Hart Homes: Repairs and Maintenance Policy



GROSVENOR

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Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Introduction

Grosvenor Hart Homes (GHH) recognises that its customers consider the delivery of an excellent repairs service to be very important to them. As such, GHH aims to provide a high-quality service, on time and with the highest standards of customer care. This is achieved through ensuring flexibility, consideration for individuals and continuous monitoring of the cost-effectiveness of the repairs service to meet the expectations of GHH customers.

This policy sets out how GHH will deliver responsive and cyclical repairs and maintenance services to its customers. It describes our aims, outlines the approach we will take to specific aspects of the service, and details our service standards.

GHH aims to deliver best in sector services and recognise this will only be achieved by working closely with tenants and ensuring their feedback shapes all aspects of what we do. Within twelve months of our becoming registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, we will formally consult our tenants on this policy and will revise our approach as required.

We always welcome feedback on any of our policies, procedures or services at any time. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints about this policy, please let us know. Feedback may be made in one of the following ways:

- by telephone on 01244 563777 (core office hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
- in person at any of our offices
- via our website [Hart Homes \(grosvenor.com\)](https://www.grosvenor.com)
- in writing to any of our offices
- by email to tenantsupport@grosvenorhart.com

Separate policies set out our approaches to:

- Planned repairs (asset management policy, once agreed)
- Property health & safety (property health & safety policy)
- Adaptations (aids & adaptations policy)
- Work on empty/void properties (voids policy once agreed)

Policy aims and objectives

We aim to deliver a high-quality repairs service, which helps to keep our properties in a safe and good quality condition, minimises disruption to customers, and delivers good value for money.

To ensure these aims are met, we will:

- Set clear expectations with staff and contractors around approaches to our repairs service
- Ensure statutory and regulatory obligations are met
- Ensure repairs can be reported at any time of day through a variety of channels, and that emergencies are attended to at any time of day
- Communicate customers' rights and responsibilities clearly
- Offer choice and flexibility to customers around delivery of individual repairs

- Maintain accurate records on our properties, reported repairs, repairs service costs, and contact with customers and delivery partners
- Have in place effective quality control and compliance processes
- Monitor and report on service delivery and performance regularly, and use insights gained to inform our processes, contract management, training etc as well as to ensure repairs targets are met
- Contact customers in planned ways to gather feedback on their experiences, perceptions and expectations of our services
- Consider formal and informal feedback provided through complaints and compliments alongside performance information and customer survey data
- Ensure clear links are made with our asset management strategy and associated budgets/projects, with emphasis placed on finding an appropriate balance between responsive and planned maintenance
- Ensure procurement of materials and suppliers is through suitable supply chains that can deliver an appropriate balance on quality, durability and price.

Policy detail

Reporting Repairs

GHH is committed to making access to its services as simple as possible. In view of this there are a number of ways for tenants to report repairs:

- At our offices
- By telephone
- By email
- Via the internet /self-service portal
- By letter

Operating Hours

The GHH repairs service via our agent(s) will operate within core hours unless arrangements are made to specifically work outside of these hours. Core hours are:

Monday to Friday 0900 to 1700

In order to ensure the correct repair is scheduled, GHH or its agent(s) will confirm the exact nature and extent of the repair with the customer, including:

- Any associated repairs, required or previously reported
- Access arrangements
- Customer communication preference
- An appropriate appointment for undertaking the works
- Describing the extent of the works including approximate duration; Requesting customers to clear the area ready for repair
- Any vulnerability-related or other special arrangements required to facilitate the repair
- An Out of Hours service will be provided every day of the year for Emergency Repairs only. This means that unless the repair creates a danger to life or may cause serious damage to property or possessions it may not be dealt with until the next working day.

Appointments

In order to ensure flexibility and maximise access to carry out repairs GHH aim to maximise the use of customer appointments.

Customers will be offered appointments for all repairs other than Emergency Repairs. As far as possible appointments will be arranged at a specific time which is convenient to the customer.

Landlord responsibilities

GHH will respond to repairs required in tenanted properties and associated communal areas for which we have responsibility, when they are reported to us by customers and stakeholders. Our repairs responsibilities cover:

- Ensuring homes are secure, structurally sound and weather-tight
- Fixtures and fittings we have installed, including those relating to health and safety (such as carbon monoxide alarms)
- Hot and cold water supply systems
- Windows and doors, gutters and drains
- All gas pipes, heating systems, electric wiring, power and light fittings
- Any items provided in the home that are not listed as the customer's responsibility

We will aim to deliver 'right first time' repairs within our published timescales, and will ensure our systems, processes, contracts and communications support achievement of this. However, some repairs may require further visits due to the availability of materials or the nature of the work required.

We will take account of individual customers' needs and preferences by offering a choice of appointment times and ensuring we are aware of any requirements relating to access and delivery that arise from protected characteristics, medical conditions, language and communication needs etc. We will make reasonable adjustments to our service, in discussion with individual customers, to remove barriers to using our repairs service and to ensure our service is effective.

GHH's data protection policy must be followed during operation of this policy and in delivery of our repairs service.

Customer responsibilities

Customers are asked to report repairs as soon as possible after noticing them, to minimise damage, cost and deterioration of property condition.

Customers are responsible for keeping their homes clean and tidy and for some basic day to day maintenance activities.

GHH will clearly state the types of repairs that it will not undertake, and for which customers are responsible. These are listed in Appendix 1. Where we are aware that customers are unable to undertake basic maintenance tasks themselves, we will offer advice on how these might be arranged.

Communal areas

GHH will keep communal parts of tenanted properties in a good state of repair and decoration. This includes:

- Shared entrances, hallways, stairways
- Lifts

- Lighting and security systems
- Fire safety systems and equipment

Where we are responsible for common areas and building parts that are external to tenanted properties e.g., shared gardens, drying areas, bin stores, guttering and exterior walls, GHH will keep these in a good state of repair.

Service standards

Tenants will have the ability to report and manage repairs online at any time of day.

Repairs can also be reported by phone, email or letter, with emergency out of hours repairs to be reported by telephone.

Contact details for all methods of reporting repairs will be provided to all customers at tenancy sign up and displayed clearly online.

Repairs will be categorised and delivered within stated timescales as follows:

Category	Definition	Timescale
Emergency	Issues where there is an immediate risk of harm to people or property e.g. an uncontained leak, loss of power, toilet not functioning, inability to secure the property	As soon as is practicable- we will prioritise the most urgent matters and will always respond within 24 hours. In some cases, it may not be possible to permanently fix the issue immediately, but we will ensure the issue is contained/made safe within 24 hours until the repair can be completed.
Urgent	No immediate risk but if not addressed in the short term could worsen.	Within 3 working days of the report
Routine	Smaller projects where there is no immediate risk of harm to people or property e.g. dripping tap, leaky guttering, pointing brickwork. Where necessary, this may involve more than one visit.	Within 10 working days of the report

When we respond to an emergency, we will always ensure that the immediate risk of harm is addressed. Work required to fully resolve the issue may take place at another time. 24-hour emergency contact numbers and guidance on what constitutes an emergency repair are provided in our Tenant Handbook and on our website. If a customer has difficulty contacting one of the out of hours contractors, they may call a contractor of their choice and if the repair carried out is the landlord's responsibility, then the customer will be reimbursed for costs incurred.

Where work required to rectify a reported routine repair is already included in a planned works programme (covered by our asset management strategy) we will advise customers when work is scheduled for. We may undertake a temporary repair in the meantime e.g., to patch guttering whilst waiting for full replacement.

Customers will be contacted by telephone and/or text to notify them of appointment times, and a reminder will be sent in advance of repair colleagues' arrival.

We will endeavour to offer the facility for customers to specify an appointment day and time that is convenient to them. Emergency repairs appointments are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If our repairs team cannot gain access to a property for an agreed repairs appointment, they will leave a card advising the customer to arrange another appointment. Customers will also be contacted via text and online system where possible in such circumstances.

Repairs requests may be cancelled if our repairs team cannot gain access to the property for an agreed appointment.

Inspections

From time to time due to the nature of the repair, some jobs will require a technical inspection prior to an order being issued to the repair's contractor.

GHH will arrange for a surveyor to visit via an arrangement that is mutually convenient, except in the case of an emergency. Once the surveyor has visited the property, the customer will be advised if a repair is required, and if so, what priority the repair will be given.

GHH will also carry out a sample of post repair inspections to check the quality of the repairs.

Contractors

Initially GHH has appointed a third party to act as an agent to appoint suitable contractors who will have appropriately trained and skilled staff to carry out the repairs. All contractors have been vetted to check that they have liability insurance, and relevant accreditations/registrations, and an HMRC company check and DBS check is carried out. Contractors will be asked to sign a GHH contractor agreement in respect of confidentiality, data protection, Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity and code of conduct. As the portfolio grows, GHH will look to partner with other RPs or directly procure contractors and will work within the principles of partnering with all its contractors to explore innovative and best practice initiatives such as standardisation, value for money and joint procurement methods.

On attending a property all operatives will:

- Show identification
- Be polite and courteous at all times
- Take care not to damage customers' possessions, or property by using dust sheets/covers as required
- Ensure tools and materials are not left in a dangerous position
- Clear and take away all rubbish resulting from the job
- Ensure services affected by the repair are working before leaving
- Keep appointments made or make contact if they are going to be delayed or have to rearrange and give an explanation if the repair is going to be delayed.

Decants

From time-to-time customers may have to move out of their home on either a temporary or permanent basis to enable work to be undertaken. GHH staff will make arrangements for the relocation and will keep customers informed on the progress of the works.

If a property is considered 'unsustainable' GHH will work with customers to arrange permanent relocation from the property.

Damage caused by police

Occasionally the Police may need to effect entry to a home to detect or prevent a crime. If it is found that the Police have lawfully entered the property, the cost of any resultant repairs will be the customer's responsibility. If the customer fails to make good the damage, GHH reserves the right to do the work and charge the customer. GHH at their discretion may also pursue the Police for recompense.

Insurance

GHH will insure the fabric and structure and landlord's fixtures and fittings but will not insure the customer's contents unless it is a furnished tenancy. In the case of furnished tenancies, it is only GHH's fixtures and fittings that will be insured, and the customer remains responsible for the insurance of their own belongings. Therefore, in the event of any major accident such as fire or flood GHH will repair the building fabric, but it is a customer's responsibility to replace any home contents and for any consequential loss. In the circumstances where GHH deem it is uneconomical to repair or re-instate a property, which has been seriously affected by fire or other causes, GHH reserves the right to offer suitable alternative accommodation. GHH advises customers that it would be in their best interest to take out content insurance. GHH will provide customers with information on low cost "Home Contents Insurance".

Vulnerable people

GHH will know all of its tenants' needs and recognises that some customers are vulnerable and may require an enhanced repairs service either on a permanent or temporary basis. GHH will strive to provide this enhanced service and work with external agencies and its repairs contractor to ensure those customers' needs are known and acted upon.

Defects

New properties and homes where planned maintenance has been carried out (e.g. new kitchen, central heating etc) may be within a 'defects liability period'. This means that the developer that built the property, or the contractor that carried out the planned works, is responsible for rectifying emergency and routine repairs. These should be reported to GHH using the reporting channels set out above unless separate arrangements have been agreed with the developer or contractor.

GHH will keep property records in a way that means defects liability can immediately be identified. The developer/contractor responsible will be notified immediately a defect is reported to GHH, and the customer will be advised of the timescales applicable within this liability period. GHH will monitor to ensure these timescales are adhered to, and customer feedback will be collected as with other repairs.

Home improvements

Customers may make home improvements only if they get written permission from us and GHH's interest in the property enables us to give consent. Where the nature of GHH's interest in the property does not enable us to give consent e.g. lease terms do not permit then we will confirm this to the customer.

A detailed description of the intended work should be provided to GHH. Consent should be requested via letter, email or online – it cannot be requested by phone. Customers will be provided with a decision within 20 working days.

We reserve the right to decline certain applications for improvements, including where the requested works would:

- Be out of keeping with the rest of the property or neighbourhood
- Increase health and safety risks at the property
- Make the property difficult to let in future
- Be unsuitable for possible future occupants
- Duplicate works planned to be undertaken by us within 12 months under planned maintenance programmes
- Replace like for like and therefore not be a genuine improvement.

We will give a clear written explanation for any refusal, making reference to the tenancy agreement where appropriate.

We may attach conditions to consent e.g., that the improvement is removed, and the property made good at the end of the tenancy.

Improvement works should not be undertaken until the customer has our written consent, and has provided us with any necessary approvals e.g., local authority planning consent. Any compliance certification should be provided once works are complete. GHH will request to inspect the work on completion so we can check quality and compliance requirements and ensure our property records are up to date.

Future maintenance of all agreed improvements is usually the responsibility of the customer. However, we will comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements regarding repairs and maintenance.

Statutory rights

Where a customer has applied to exercise their Right to Acquire or Voluntary Right to Buy, we will:

- Only complete emergency repairs to ensure a building is safe
- Undertake gas servicing and other health & safety checks in line with statutory requirements
- Not undertake planned internal or external works where the customer would become a freeholder
- Undertake planned external works but not internal works where the customer would become a leaseholder. We may take the cost of these works into account when the property is valued.

If an application is subsequently withdrawn, a full repairs service will once again be available to the customer.

Rechargeable repairs

We may recharge customers for damage that is not due to wear and tear. GHH will carry out the required repairs but seek to recover the cost from the customer where:

- Damage to the home is caused accidentally or deliberately by the tenant, family or friends
- Damage to communal areas results from neglect or inappropriate use
- Damage is caused by the police when executing a warrant.

Where a customer repairs damage themselves but the repair is of poor quality GHH may seek to recover the costs of rectifying the repair.

We will not recharge for damage caused by vandalism where a crime reference number is provided.

We will recharge for gaining replacement locks and keys and/or gaining access where we are called to an emergency repair due to a customer being locked out.

Customers may be recharged if GHH has to undertake any work associated with the failure of customer approved improvement works.

Customers may be recharged at the end of their tenancy for any improvements or alterations identified that have been undertaken without consent.

Compensation

When ending their tenancy customers may have a right to claim compensation for any qualifying improvements made to their homes. Any compensation given at the end of the tenancy will allow for depreciation i.e. it will be less than the customer paid for the work.

Customer feedback and complaints

Customer complaints about repairs services, and any disputes about rechargeable repairs, will be handled in line with our complaints policy.

Complaints relating to repairs will be monitored and used, individually and in aggregate, to refine and improve our services and performance.

Equality diversity & inclusion

A key aim of the GHH approach to diversity and inclusion is to ensure that it is embedded in service delivery policies and procedures. In recognition of this GHH aim to deliver services that are:

- relevant and fully accessible to all
- tailored to meet both the specific needs of the individual, including those with additional support needs, and the diverse needs of the wider community compliant with all aspects of equality and diversity legislation

Monitoring & compliance

We will monitor the delivery of our responsive repairs service and report to operational staff, senior leadership team, the board, and our customers. Key performance indicators will be used to monitor and

report performance, as well as complaints & compliments received. This allows us to be accountable for our service delivery, identify any trends which require intervention, and focus on delivery of the objectives stated above.

We will report against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures prescribed by the Regulator of Social Housing, as well as indicators developed for internal use by staff in conjunction with customers.

Performance indicators that will be reported to board and customers are detailed at Appendix 2. This is not an exhaustive list.

Review schedule

This policy will be reviewed in our first year of operation and then every three years or more frequently as a result of an incident occurring, feedback obtained, internal/external audits and change in legislation/regulatory requirements. This process ensures the policy’s continuing suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness.

The Housing Director has responsibility for this policy, and ultimate responsibility for performance and compliance sits with the board.

Current version	Date approved	Date for review	Document owner
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1.3	06.11.24	31.11.25	Karl Dean

Appendix 1 – Customer responsibilities

Customers of rented homes are responsible for:

- Keeping homes and gardens clean and tidy
- Repairing, maintaining and fitting an appliance they have installed
- Allowing us into the home to carry out repairs, safety checks and inspections (e.g., annual gas, solid fuel and oil servicing and safety checks)
- All painting and decorating inside the home
- Preventing pipes from freezing or bursting
- Preventing and controlling condensation
- Draught proofing
- Curtain rails, washing lines and door bells
- Minor adjustments to kitchen units, cupboards and drawers
- Cleaning extractor fans
- Wall and floor tiles
- Fixing toilet seats
- Bleeding radiators
- Replacing glass in windows and doors unless the damage was vandalism reported to the police (a crime number should be requested)
- Resetting electrical trip switches
- Replacing plugs and chains on baths, basins and sinks
- Replacing keys or locks
- Replacing light bulbs, plugs and fuses to appliances
- Dealing with pests (local councils may be able to help with this)
- Clearing blockages in basins, sinks, baths and toilets
- Adjustment to doors to clear floor covering
- Any damage caused by forced entry at the tenant's request
- Fencing repairs including the application of timber preserves
- Washing lines and posts
- Floor coverings including laminate flooring
- Door bells
- Curtain battens, coat hooks and rails
- Satellite dishes

Appendix 2 – Performance monitoring

We will monitor and report on the following:

Management information

Repairs completed within target timescale

Emergency repairs – number in timescale, total number reported, % in timescale

Routine repairs - number in timescale, total number reported, % in timescale

Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

Number of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard, total number of homes to which the standard applies, % that do not meet the Standard

Average time to complete a repair

Emergency repairs – average time for all jobs reported (hours)

Routine repairs - average time for all jobs reported (days)

Complaints received relating to the repairs service

Repairs complaints as a % of all complaints, total number of each

Customer satisfaction

% of tenants who say they are satisfied that their landlord provides a home that is well maintained

% of tenants who had a repair in the last 12 months and say they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair after they reported it

% of tenants who had a repair in the last 12 months and say they are satisfied with the overall repairs service from the landlord in the last 12 months