

# Repairs Policy

<b>1.</b>	<b>SCOPE</b>
	<b>Purpose</b>
1.1	This document sets out whg's policy towards our commitment to deliver high quality homes and services for our customers and ensure we keep our homes and communal areas in good condition.
1.2	We will protect the value of our housing stock and ensure that the service delivers value for money as well as customer excellence.
1.3	We will deliver an efficient Home Maintenance Service that meets the needs of our customers.
	<b>Legal and regulatory framework</b>
1.4	Both under the terms of our tenancies and under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, we have an obligation to "keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling and keep in repair and in proper working order the installations in the dwelling for the supply of water, gas, electricity, sanitation, space heating and heating water."
1.5	whg are not responsible for all aspects of maintenance therefore this policy should be read in conjunction with customers' individual tenancy, licence and leaseholder agreements and our Repairs and Home Maintenance Guide, which further define responsibilities.
1.6	Under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 we also have an obligation to ensure that our homes are "fit for human habitation" at the start of the tenancy and remain that way. Our homes must be safe, healthy and free from things that could cause serious harm.
1.7	These two provisions mean that where we are aware of a home that is "in disrepair", or which is not fit for human habitation, we have a legal obligation to address the problem.
1.8	We may become aware of a problem because a customer reports it, or because a whg colleague sees it or knows about it during an inspection, or where we have simply had an opportunity to discover the problem (for example, during an unrelated appointment at the customer's home).
1.9	As soon as we become aware of a maintenance issue with a customer's home, we are under a duty to rectify it within a "reasonable time". How long is reasonable will depend on the nature and severity of the problem. For example, a home that is dangerous requires immediate attention, whilst it might be reasonable to carry out temporary repairs to a roof for example, pending the replacement of the roof as part of a planned re-roofing programme.
1.10	Where whg has failed to meet its contractual or statutory obligations, the customer may have a legal right to recompense. This can be best managed by the customer raising a

	<p>formal complaint with whg's complaints team but may also arise where the customer commences a formal legal claim against whg.</p>
1.11	<p>The Corporate Director of Strategy, Assets and Transformation is the 'responsible person' at whg for ensuring compliance with statutory obligations.</p>
1.12	<p>The Governance and Financial Viability Standard of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) states that Registered Providers, like whg, shall 'adhere to all relevant law'.</p>
1.13	<p>Registered Providers are subject to regulatory intervention and enforcement action if found to have not complied with the Consumer Standards 2024. With the 'Safety and Quality Standard' specifically relating to this policy. It requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>POLICY STATEMENT</b></p>
2.1	<p>We will diagnose repairs as they are reported to us and prioritise repairs according to the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency - These are repairs which pose an immediate risk to safety, security or health. We respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, every day of the year. We will aim to attend the same day of the report, to make safe and will try to complete the full repair within 24 hours. Where this isn't possible, the repair will be attended to within one of the following categories and timescales.</li> <li>• Urgent - These are repairs which are not classed as an emergency, but which result in the loss of a basic facility, or where further damage will be caused if the problem is not dealt with. We will make an appointment and complete the repair within three working days.</li> <li>• Routine - These are day to day repairs which do not cause immediate inconvenience. We will make an appointment and complete the repair within a maximum of 45 days.</li> <li>• Programmed - These are repairs which can be scheduled for a later date and carried out with other similar repairs in the area. We will make an appointment for an inspection, if required, within one month and complete the respective repair/s within 90 days.</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>whg offers a wide range of ways in which customers can report repairs. Repairs can be reported via our website, our portal, email or by telephone. Repairs can also be reported in person at our whg offices during normal office hours. All contact will be logged on whg's information management systems, so that a clear audit trail is available.</p>
2.3	<p>The following repair appointments, during Monday-Friday will be available to customers, when requesting repairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Morning Appointment)</li> <li>• 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Afternoon Appointment)</li> <li>• 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Avoid School Run Appointment)</li> <li>• 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (All Day Appointment)</li> </ul>

2.4	Confirmation text messages will be sent to customers during the reporting process and on the day of the agreed appointment. Customers may also receive telephone contact from the trade colleague when they are on their way to the appointment.
2.5	We operate an emergency only, out of hours repairs service covering repairs which pose an immediate risk to safety, security or health. We will aim to attend the same day of the report to make safe and will try to complete the full repair within 24 hours. Where this isn't possible, the repair will be attended in line with our Urgent, Routine or Programmed priorities.
2.6	Sometimes it will be necessary to arrange for a diagnostic appointment to take place before works can be arranged, for example if the scope of the repair cannot be clearly defined. A diagnostic appointment will be offered, and any follow up appointments attended in line with priorities set out in section 2.1.
2.7	Individually agreed appointments will be made with customers for all repairs within the home and where individual customers have exclusive access to external areas. Customers will be advised of the relevant response time and offered the next suitable appointment to undertake the repair. However, appointments will not be offered for repairs to shared communal parts of a building.
2.8	Our aim is to keep all the appointments made and where practicable, complete repairs on the first visit. Where the completion of repairs at the first visit is not practicable, a mutually agreed follow up appointment will be arranged.
2.9	whg colleagues and contractors will respect customers' homes, be polite and courteous and be sensitive to individual needs. They will explain the nature of the work they are undertaking and advise of any delays. All trade colleagues / contractors will wear corporate uniforms and present verifiable identification. More detailed information on our service standards are available on request or via our website.
2.10	Our Chargeable Repairs Policy sets out how whg manages repairs that customers are responsible for as a result of negligence or deliberate acts of damage. In addition to this, whg may recharge customers who falsely report a repair as an emergency. This will include both normal working hours and during the out of hours service.
2.11	In the event of a no-access repair, where whg trades colleagues or contractors are unable to access the property to complete repairs, whg will close the job with a no access status and attempt further contact with the customer to encourage them to re-raise the repair and book another appointment. This will be subject to change, if whg feels the repair is of an urgent nature, presents a risk to safety or the customer is elderly and/or vulnerable.
2.12	We will only carry out repairs for leaseholders and shared ownership customers where the terms of the lease states it is our responsibility, such as the fabric of the building and communal areas.
2.13	There may, however, be instances where a 'shared ownership' lease contains a repairing obligation for whg. In this instance whg may either take full ownership of completing the repair or the shared owner may arrange completion of the repair by an independent competent contractor.

2.14	Where qualifying essential repairs to eligible shared ownership homes are required within the initial repair period, shared owners may submit a claim for reimbursement subject to applicable limits. Details of these arrangements will be contained within the individual lease, supporting shared ownership guidance and specific Shared Ownership Policies.
2.15	As part of whg's corporate growth aspiration, advanced / modern methods of construction options are continually explored with an option to implement. We will therefore ensure that the delivery of repairs and maintenance services will meet the construction type of the property.
2.16	Our service offer with regards to fencing and garden maintenance is detailed within the Appendix – whg Fencing and Garden Maintenance Guide.
2.17	<b>Complaints</b> – whg is committed to delivering high quality homes and services for our customers, we will deal with any concerns or complaints in line with our Complaints Policy.
2.18	<b>Respect</b> - whg expects customers and their visitors to behave appropriately towards colleagues and contractors. Any incidents will be dealt with in line with our Acceptable Behaviour Policy.
<b>3.</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
3.1	We will benchmark our performance and customer satisfaction levels with peers via HouseMark and set annual targets for improvement.
3.2	The Customer Service Oversight Committee (CSOC) will monitor repairs performance on a quarterly basis.
3.3	We will carry out regular performance monitoring of our contractors and in-house services relating to contract compliance, customer care, quality standards, health and safety, timescales and costs. Performance against targets will be reported monthly to the Group Executive and quarterly to CSOC and Board. The following Key Performance Indicators are measured and reported on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homes with a gas safety check (%)</li> <li>• Compliance with gas regulations.</li> <li>• Homes with Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) (%)</li> <li>• Void rent loss (%)</li> <li>• Average days to complete a repair by priority.</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction with repairs (%).</li> <li>• Appointments made and kept (%).</li> <li>• Repairs completed within timescales (%).</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b>	<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b>
4.1	This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. Colleagues working across whg have considered the impact of this policy on different groups and communities we work with. In framing this policy, our colleagues are committed to not discriminating adversely against any group and will respect the diversity of the communities we are working within.

<b>5.</b>	<b>TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION</b>
5.1	Current processes ensure the delivery of the repairs and maintenance services outlined in the policy are disseminated to appropriate colleagues. We also incorporate policy awareness and training within induction sessions with new starters.
<b>6.</b>	<b>MONITOR AND REVIEW</b>
6.1	This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Home Maintenance Service and reviewed every three years, unless legislation, service delivery or sector developments require otherwise ensuring the policy continues to meet its objectives and takes account of good practice developments. The policy will be reviewed by the Policy Group and approved by the Customer Service Oversight Committee.
<b>7.</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>
7.1	<p>whg policies and strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aids and Adaptation Policy</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• Asbestos Policy</li> <li>• Asset Management Strategy</li> <li>• Customer Complaints Policy</li> <li>• Data Protection Policy</li> <li>• Electrical Safety Policy</li> <li>• Environmental Policy</li> <li>• Fire Risk Assessment Policy</li> <li>• Gas Safety Policy</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Chargeable Repairs Policy</li> <li>• Repairs and Home Maintenance Guide.</li> <li>• Tenancy Agreement</li> <li>• Home Improvement Policy</li> </ul>
7.2	<p>Legislation, national policy and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSH Safety and Quality Standard</li> <li>• BS-7671: 2019 (wiring regulations)</li> <li>• Decent Homes Standard</li> <li>• Electricity at Work Regulations 1989</li> <li>• Gas Safety (installations and use) regulations 1998, amended 2018</li> <li>• Health and Safety at Work Act 1974</li> <li>• Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018</li> <li>• Housing Act 2004</li> <li>• The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007</li> <li>• ISO-14001 Environmental Management System</li> <li>• Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended)</li> <li>• Water Regulations 1999</li> <li>• Awaab's Law as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX

### whg Fencing and Garden Maintenance Guide

whg will maintain fencing and walls in communal areas. As the landlord, we are also responsible for repairs to boundary fences, gates and walls (owned by us) which divide a whg property from a road, public footpath, open public space, open water source or rail line. whg will not carry out repairs to dividing fences between neighbours, as these are the residents' responsibility. whg will however, provide and maintain a privacy panel (usually x 1 close board or similar panel) to de-mark the garden boundaries. whg will be responsible to de-mark the boundary between neighbours where no existing structure or clear division exists. Where appropriate, whg will install a low-level 'chestnut type fence' to define this boundary.

#### Dividing Fences

The maintenance of dividing garden fences beyond the privacy panel is the resident's responsibility.

- If the fence / gate is located between two whg owned properties, both residents share equal responsibility for replacing or repairing the fence and will need to come to an agreement to get the work done.
- If the fence / gate is between a whg owned home and a privately owned residential property, residents will need to speak to the private owner and come to an arrangement on who is responsible for the fence and ongoing maintenance.
- If the fence / gate is between a whg owned home and a commercial business (e.g. shop, public house, industrial unit etc.), then whg will assist our resident in establishing a point of contact for the commercial business so both parties can come to an arrangement on who is responsible for the fence and ongoing maintenance.
- If the dividing fence belongs to the private owner or tenant, then it is their responsibility to repair it.
- If the fence or gate is located at the side of the property and separates the front and rear gardens, the resident is responsible.

#### Boundary Walls

If a property has a boundary wall instead of a fence and this becomes damaged, whg will inspect the wall prior to undertaking any work. Remedial work may involve removing the wall and replacing it with fencing

#### Empty Property Lettable Standard – Fences and gates

If required during the re-letting stage, fencing boundary lines between properties will be re-established and reinstated if they have been altered.

Rear garden boundary lines will be marked out by round top post and wire chestnut fencing/stake.

All fencing and gates will be inspected, brought up to an overall good condition and shall be repaired or replaced if necessary.

Where post and panel fencing has already been installed and requires repair or replacement, whg may replace posts or panels where practicable to do so.

Secure fencing (owned by whg) will be provided where fences border a road, public footpath, open public space, open water source or rail line.

Gated access to the rear of the home will be provided where appropriate.

At the property viewing stage, whg is responsible for ensuring all prospective customers are made aware of the specific fences, gates and other garden features for which they have either full or shared responsibility.

### **Paths, Paved areas and Sheds**

Not all paths and paved areas belong to whg, some remain the responsibility of the Local Authority.

Individual homes - whg will maintain access paths from the pavement to the front and rear door of individual homes. Should there be separate rear access to the home, any existing path will also be maintained. Any other path, steps, patio, garden feature, shed, driveway or paved area within the footprint of the home is the responsibility of residents.

Communal areas – whg will maintain all access paths, paved areas and communal gardens for which we are responsible

### **Lawns, hedges and shrubbed areas**

Individual homes – The maintenance of lawns, hedges and shrubbed areas is the responsibility of residents.

Communal areas – whg is responsible for the maintenance of lawns, hedges and shrubbed areas.

### **Manholes and Gullies**

Individual homes - Should a manhole within your garden become blocked and/or overflow, responsibility for its clearance lies with your water supplier. Residents are responsible for unblocking individual gullies within the footprint of the home.

Communal blocks – Responsibility for unblocking manholes and gullies within communal areas lies with the water supplier.

### **Garages**

whg are responsible for the maintenance of garages either within the footprint of your home or with a block of garages. Responsibility for gaining access to a garage (should keys be lost) and/or changing locks is the responsibility of residents.

<b>Document author</b>	Repairs Manager
<b>Document owner</b>	Director of Home Maintenance Services
<b>Version and status</b>	V2.0 LIVE
<b>Legal advice</b>	Legal advice was sought from the Housing Litigation Manager.
<b>Consultation</b>	Proposals for the revisions to the repairs policy were shared with the Community Engagement & Inclusion Manager whose team during 2025 consulted customers on the proposed changes.
<b>Approved by</b>	Customer Service and Oversight Committee – January 2026
<b>Review Date</b>	January 2029
<b>Transformational Programme</b>	Making Places
<b>Equality Assessment</b>	7 August 2024
<b>Key changes made</b>	<p>2.1 &amp; 2.5 We will aim to attend the same day of the report, to make safe and will try to complete the full repair within 24 hours.</p> <p>2.16 The key revision made to the policy involves the adoption by whg of the following statement with regards to fencing, gates and boundary wall repair:</p> <p><b><i>whg will maintain fencing and walls in communal areas. As the landlord, we are also responsible for repairs to boundary fences, gates and walls (owned by us) which divide a whg property from a road, public footpath, open public space, open water source or rail line. whg will not carry out repairs to dividing fences between neighbours, as these are the residents' responsibility. whg will however, provide and maintain a privacy panel (usually x 1 close board or similar panel) to de-mark the garden boundaries. Whg will be responsible to de-mark the boundary between neighbours where no existing structure or clear division exists. Where appropriate, whg will install a low-level 'chestnut type fence' to define this boundary.</i></b></p> <p>The change will require customers to take full or shared responsibility for dividing fences as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the fence / gate is located between two whg properties, both residents share equal responsibility for replacing or repairing the fence and will need to come to an agreement to get the work done.</li> <li>• If the fence / gate is between a whg owned and a privately owned property, residents will need to speak to the private owner and come to an arrangement on who is responsible for the fence and ongoing maintenance.</li> <li>• If the fence / gate is between a whg owned and a publicly owned property, then whg will assist our resident in establishing a point of contact for the publicly owned property so both parties can come to an arrangement on who is responsible for the fence and ongoing maintenance.</li> <li>• If the dividing fence belongs to the private owner or tenant, then it is their responsibility to repair it.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the fence or gate is located at the side of the property and separates the front and rear gardens, the resident is responsible.</li></ul> <p>Full details are contained within the Appendix - whg Fencing &amp; Garden Maintenance Guide.</p>
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