

THREE BOROUGHES HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE

Repairs & Maintenance Policy

1. Introduction

Repairs and maintenance is one of the key areas where Three Boroughs Housing Co-operative believes that Members working together can provide a higher quality and more cost-effective service than can be achieved by a traditional landlord-tenant relationship. The Co-operative's aim is to maintain the properties to a consistently high standard by involving Members at every stage of the repairs and maintenance process.

2. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of our Repairs and Maintenance Policy are to ensure that:

- The repairs and maintenance service is of a high standard; fair, easily accessible and reactive to the needs of Members.
- The Co-operative meets its legal and contractual obligations as a managing agent and, where it has taken on this responsibility, also meets the legal obligation of the landlord.
- All the contractors, agents and consultants employed by the Co-operative are honest, reputable, competent, polite and considerate and they comply with the principles outlined in the Co-operative's Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity policies.
- The Co-operative obtains better value for money than the landlord, and is able to reinvest the savings in the running of the Co-operative and to its Members, in the form of skills training, additional services and other benefits.

3. Contents

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Objectives of the Policy	1
3. Contents.....	1
4. Legislation.....	2
5. Types of Repair and Responsibilities	2
5.1 Member's Repair and Maintenance Responsibilities	3
5.2 Gardens and outside spaces	3
5.3 Rechargeable Repairs	3
5.4 Emergency Repairs	3
5.5 Day to Day (or Responsive) Repairs.....	4
5.6 Gas and Electrical Safety.....	5
5.7 Void properties	5

5.8 Cyclical Works	6
5.9 Major and Planned Works.....	6
5.10 High Value Repairs.....	6
5.11 Insurance Repairs.....	6
5.12 Alterations and Improvements	7
6. Repairs & Maintenance sub-committee	7
7. Training.....	7
8. Monitoring and Reporting.....	7
9. Providing Access.....	7
10. Employment of Contractors	8
11. Complaints and Compensation.....	8
12. Policy Review.....	8

4. Legislation

The Co-operative will ensure all its homes are safe, healthy and free from things that could cause serious harm by maintaining homes in line with best practice and current legislation. This includes (but is not limited to) the following: Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Decent Homes Standard, Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) 2006 and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

References to statutes, bye-laws, regulations, orders and delegated legislation shall include any statutory modification or re-enactment of these.

5. Types of Repair and Responsibilities

For management purposes repairs are broken down into the following categories:

Member’s Repair and Maintenance Responsibilities

Gardens and outside spaces

Rechargeable repairs

Emergency Repairs

Day to Day (or Responsive) Repairs

Gas and Electrical Safety

End of Tenancy and Void Repairs

Cyclical Works

Major and Planned Works

High Value Repairs

Insurance Repairs

Alterations and Improvements

5.1 Members' Repair and Maintenance Responsibilities

5.1.1 Minor Repairs

The Co-operative actively encourages all its Members to maintain their homes in a good condition. This includes carrying out minor repairs and maintenance as set out in the tenancy agreement. The table lists examples of these repairs, but is not exhaustive:

Repairs and Maintenance we expect Members to do themselves
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal decorations generally• Repairing cracked or broken glass in doors and windows (unless due to criminal damage / storm damage)• Replacement of plugs, chains and tap washers in baths and sinks• Blocked sinks, baths and washbasins• Replacement of toilet seats, toilet roll holders, shower heads and hoses• Replacement of internal light bulbs, fluorescent strips, electric fuses and plugs• Testing smoke alarms in line with manufacturer's instructions and replacing batteries (if possible)• Repair and replacement of internal doors, door handles, cupboard catches and hinges• Replacing locks if keys lost (also copying keys)• Pest control of non-threatening pests such as mice, garden ants, bed bugs and beetles, but we may be able to assist with more serious pests• Filling minor cracks in plasterwork and gaps between skirting boards and floors• Plumbing in (and out) of washing machines, dishwashers and other appliances• Fitting draught exclusion to doors and windows• Repair of a Members own electrical appliances• Repairing anything a Member has fitted (inside and outside the property)• Repairing damage caused by a Member, anyone in their household or a visitor to the property

In limited circumstances, the Management Committee may use its discretion to authorise a repair we would normally expect a Member to carry out themselves. This may be because a Member is particularly vulnerable because of their age, a medical condition or because they have a disability. Such a repair may be treated as a rechargeable repair and the Member asked to repay the cost of the work.

5.1.2 Gardens and outside spaces

Members are responsible for maintaining their gardens in a good condition by cutting any lawn, trimming hedges, weeding, pruning shrubs and small trees and repairing paths/paving in back gardens.

Where a garden is shared between Members, each Member is jointly responsible for keeping the garden tidy.

Members must not erect structures such as sheds or fences anywhere on the property without first obtaining written agreement.

5.1.3 Rechargeable Repairs

If a repair is needed because of damage or neglect caused by a Member (or a member of their household, or a guest), the Co-operative will expect the Member to rectify the damage themselves. Please refer to the Rechargeable Repairs Policy for further details.

5.2 Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs will be given the highest priority and Members must report the issue immediately it occurs. Once an emergency repair has been reported, it is vital an adult is at home to provide access and allow the work to take place. If no-one is at home and there is a health and safety issue or there is likely to be considerable damage to the property or a neighbouring property, the Co-operative may gain access without notice.

The table lists examples of emergency repairs, but is not an exhaustive list.

Emergency Repairs (to be responded to within 24 hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gas leak within the property• Serious water leak• Blocked mains drains, soil pipe or the only toilet• Loss of heating or hot water of a vulnerable Member during cold weather• Total loss of electricity supply• Breaches of security (broken lock or broken ground floor window)• Risk of falling masonry or structural collapse• Anything that poses an immediate threat to the health, life or safety of Members or the general public

5.3 Day to Day (or Responsive) Repairs

The Co-operative is responsible for carrying out routine repairs to the structure and exterior of the property. As part of their tenancy conditions, Members have an obligation to immediately report anything in need of repair or maintenance. Day to day repairs should be reported to the Co-operative Housing Manager. The following are repairs for which the Co-operative is responsible (the list is not exhaustive).

- Drains, (unless the local authority or water company is responsible), gutters and external pipes
- the roof
- Outside walls, outside doors, window sills, window catches and frames
- Internal walls, floors and ceilings, doors including frames and hinges, skirting boards (but not painting or decorating)
- Chimneys, chimney stacks or flues, but not sweeping chimneys
- Front pathways, steps or other means of access
- Plaster work (excluding any minor cracks and decorating)
- Boundary walls and fences (if owned by the Housing Association)
- Integral garages and stores (but not sheds)

The Co-operative is also responsible for keeping in good repair and working order the systems that supply water, gas and electricity including:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes
- Electrical wiring, including sockets and switches, gas pipes and water pipes
- Any water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating systems

The supply of water, gas and electricity itself is the responsibility of the local supply company.

5.3.1 Day to Day Repair timescales

Day to Day repairs will be categorised as either urgent, routine or long term. The priority given will be based on the nature of the repair and the extent to which it is negatively affecting the Member. The aim of the Co-operative is to complete all repairs in one visit. The following categorisation will generally apply to all repairs. However, if a member of the household is deemed to be vulnerable because of their age, a medical condition or they have a disability, a repair may be given a higher priority.

Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of gas, heating or hot water supply• Minor water leaks	Within 3 days
Routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All other repairs (excluding planned works and improvements)	Within 28 days
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planned repairs not affecting a Members comfort or safety	As planned

5.3.2 The Repair Appointment

The Co-operative aims to offer repair appointments at times which are convenient for Members. The job order will be sent to both the contractor and Member in order for an appointment to be arranged.

The job order will include a request for the contractor to call or text the Member 30 minutes ahead of their anticipated arrival time.

If no-one is at the property when the contractor attends, every effort will be made to reach the Member using the contact information held on file. If no contact is made, a calling card will be left at the address. The repair will be cancelled if no response is received from the Member and the Member may be charged for the call out.

The Co-operative aims for repairs to be completed on one visit and Members are expected to facilitate this by:

- Providing as much information as possible when reporting a repair. Ideally this would include providing a photograph of the issue.
- Moving, or arranging to move, any furniture and belongings which would prevent the contractor from accessing the affected area. Members must contact the Housing Office at least 48 hours ahead of the arranged appointment time if assistance is required to move items.
- Ensuring someone is at home for all pre-arranged appointments.
- Checking the standard of work undertaken and reporting any concerns as soon as possible. If the Member does not feel competent to do this, they should inform the office.
- Providing feedback when requested on the quality of the repair and overall satisfaction with the repairs service. For example, by completing and returning feedback forms.

5.3.3 Member Repairs

Members are encouraged to carry out Day to Day repairs if they are confident they have the requisite skills. They should liaise with the Co-operative Housing Manager so a record can be kept of the Member's contribution and the cost of any materials reimbursed.

5.4 Gas and Electrical Safety

The Co-operative has a legal responsibility to arrange an annual inspection of every gas appliance as required by the Gas Safety Regulations. Members will be notified in advance of the engineer's visit and are expected to provide access at the pre-arranged time.

Continued failure to provide access will be considered a breach of tenancy and in such cases, the Co-operative may take legal action to enforce access.

It is the responsibility of the Co-operative or their Housing Association partners to carry out periodic electrical inspections of the properties. An inspection should take place at least once every five years and Members are expected to provide access at a pre-arranged appointment time.

5.5 End of Tenancy and Void Repairs

A property inspection will be carried out not less than three weeks prior to a Member moving out. Any repairs deemed to be the responsibility of the Member must be carried out before the property is vacated. Any repairs which remain outstanding, once the property is vacated, will be recharged to the outgoing Member.

The Co-operative will carry out all repairs and safety checks for which it is responsible prior to re-letting, including a gas and electrical test (for self-contained properties only). If a valid Energy Performance Certificate is not on file, a check will be commissioned. Void works do not include internal decorations, which are the responsibility of the incoming Member. Please refer to the Void Policy, Procedure and Standards for further details.

5.6 Cyclical Works

Cyclical works are the responsibility of the Housing Association and are carried out on a regular basis as part of a cycle of planned maintenance to keep the properties in good condition. Members will be informed in advance of any cyclical works. The following are examples of the most common cyclical works.

External painting	Painting of the exterior of the property and any associated maintenance works
Internal painting	Painting of the communal areas of the building, such as staircases, hallways and landings and any associated maintenance works

Members are expected to report any deterioration of painted or treated woodwork or surfaces, or any other defects that would normally be addressed during cyclical works, to the Co-operative Housing Manager.

The Co-operative will keep a record of all such reports and will ensure these are addressed as part of the next cycle of works. The Co-operative will also forward all such reports to the relevant Housing Association.

The Housing Association should carry out a survey prior to specifying cyclical works and will be expected to promptly provide a copy of the survey report to both the Co-operative and to the affected Members to ensure that all necessary works are included. The Members will also be given the opportunity to express a preference for any details e.g. colour schemes.

The Co-operative will keep a record of all cyclical works carried out and will work to ensure the Housing Association meets its obligations in this regard.

5.7 Major and Planned Works

The owning Housing Association is responsible for the replacement and renewal of the major component parts of the building. Components will be replaced according to their expected life cycle and following a survey of their condition. Members will be informed in advance of any planned works. The following are examples of the most common renewal works.

- Replacement of kitchen
- Replacement of bathroom
- Replacement of central heating boiler
- Rewire of the property
- Replacement of windows
- Renewal of the roof/guttering
- Replacement of water and gas pipes
- Structural repairs to the building, such as repointing external walls
- Removal of asbestos (where it is safe to do so)

Where appropriate, Members will be given choice over the design and style of any items to be replaced.

5.8 High Value Repairs

Where the cost of any single repair exceeds an agreed figure (e.g. £1500), this cost may be met by the Housing Association as per the terms of the relevant Management Agreement. The Co-operative will be required to seek prior approval from the Housing Association and to obtain the necessary quotes before undertaking any works for which reimbursement is sought.

Members should be aware these requirements may result in repairs or replacements taking longer than would normally be desirable.

5.9 Insurance Repairs

Each property managed by the Co-operative is covered by a buildings insurance policy held by the relevant Housing Association. Repairs that may be covered under the insurance policy include those needed following criminal damage, fire, flood, subsidence or storm damage. In such cases, the Co-operative will forward details of the repair to the relevant Housing Association in order for an insurance claim to be made.

It is a requirement of insurance policies that any such repairs are reported promptly and it is the responsibility of the Member to ensure this happens or the Member may be held liable.

Members should be aware that insurance repair timescales may be longer than the Co-operative's normal timescales.

Members are strongly advised to take out household contents insurance, as the building insurance policy does not cover Members' personal possessions.

5.10 Alterations and Improvements

Members have the right to carry out alterations or improvements to their homes, provided that any such alterations have first been approved by the relevant Housing Association in consultation with the Co-operative. Consent will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. This applies equally to the installation of aerials and satellite dishes. In certain circumstances, approval may also need to be sought from the Local Authority Planning Department, especially if the property is located in a conservation area.

It will be considered a breach of a Member's tenancy conditions if alterations are carried out without prior consent. Any unauthorised alterations which may cause a hazard, cause damage

to the interior or structure of the building or do not conform to building regulations will be remedied by the Co-operative and the Member will be recharged for the cost of putting things right as laid out in the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

Members themselves are responsible for the ongoing maintenance and repair of any improvements or alterations they have carried out. Please refer to the Independent Living Adaptations Policy for further details.

Members are strongly advised to take out insurance to cover any repairs to their alterations and adaptations as the Co-operative will only reinstate to the original condition e.g. the Co-operative will not repair laminate flooring laid by the Member and damaged by a water leak.

6. Requirement for Quotes

The Co-operative requires competitive quotes to be obtained for all works above a certain value, as amended from time to time and as stated in the Financial Procedures.

7. Repairs & Maintenance Sub-committee

The Co-operative will encourage Members to participate in a Repairs & Maintenance Sub-committee.

The task of the sub-committee will be to:

- Oversee the implementation of this policy.
- Review management reports of maintenance performance.
- Oversee the training of Members in maintenance skills.

8. Training

In order to facilitate the provision of a cost effective and efficient repairs and maintenance service, the Co-operative will aim to assist its Members with training in the following skills:

- Basic DIY skills required for Members' repairs & maintenance responsibilities.
- Building condition surveying.
- Assessment of damp and mould.
- Quality assessment of repair work.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

When a repair is completed, Members will be asked to comment on the quality of the repair and their satisfaction with all aspects of the service to help the Co-operative continually improve its service to Members.

Records will be kept of all repair orders raised and a maintenance report submitted to the Management Committee every quarter, including achievement against the target timescales and Members' satisfaction with the service. The overall performance of the repairs service will also form part of the Co-operative's Annual Report.

Records will also be kept of any repairs carried out by Members, as this demonstrates to the building owners that repairs are being carried out, and at a lower cost than they would achieve. This is critical in supporting the argument for Co-operative management and justifies any surpluses the Co-operative makes on Maintenance Allowances.

10. Providing Access

As a condition of their tenancy agreement or licence, every Member must allow the Co-operative and contractors access to their home at a reasonable time to carry out repairs, maintenance or improvements, and undertake inspections.

The Co-operative must provide a minimum of 24 hours' notice to Members informing them that access is required. In the majority of cases, a longer notice period will be given. If a Member fails or refuses to provide access after reasonable notification, the Co-operative may take legal action to gain access.

In an emergency situation, such as a fire, flood or gas leak, the Co-operative may access properties without notice.

11. Employment of Contractors

The Co-operative will maintain a list of approved contractors to help deliver the maintenance service, using the following standards:

- There will be a clear and transparent process for admitting contractors to the Approved list.
- Efforts will be made to source contractors from the local area and from under-represented groups.
- Each contractor will be subject to a trial period of three months before they are formally admitted to the list. Decisions to formally admit a contractor to the Approved list rests with the Management Committee.
- Contractors are expected to demonstrate honesty, reliability, value for money and to behave in a professional and courteous manner at all times when interacting with employees and Members.
- The performance of contractors will be monitored to ensure they are providing a good service. This will be based on inspections and information supplied on satisfaction reports.
- Each contractor is expected to submit their relevant company information to the Co-operative ahead of their inclusion on the Approved list, including a copy of their liability insurance, an Equal Opportunities statement and any relevant health and safety permits.

12. Complaints and Compensation

Initially Members should report any concerns about repairs to the Co-operative Housing Manager who will investigate the issue and provide feedback. Any Member who remains dissatisfied after reporting the matter to the Manager should follow the Co-operative's Service Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Members will have the right to claim compensation if their possessions have been damaged, or if they have lost the use of an amenity such as water, electricity or gas, provided the loss is due to neglect on the Co-operative's part. Compensation will also be payable if a Member is unable to use part of their home due to disrepair. Each claim for compensation will be considered on its merits using the principles outlined in the Local Authority 'Right to Repair' regulations. Please refer to the Compensation Policy for more details.

The Co-operative will encourage Members to take out adequate home contents insurance to cover consequential damage to their own property, as this is not covered by the owning landlord's buildings insurance policy.

13. Policy Review

This procedure will be regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects best practice and to address legislative, regulatory or operational changes.

Approved by the Management Committee on	5th May 2022
Signature	
Position of Signatory	
For review on	5th May 2025