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Responsive Repairs policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The responsive repairs service is the one service that virtually all residents will use at some point during their tenancy. We wish to ensure residents receive an efficient and reliable service and that residents have confidence that Sutton Housing Society (SHS) acts following repairs being reported and that residents are confident that, as their landlord, SHS will ensure your home is safe, secure, and warm.
- 1.2 Responsive repairs are day-to-day repairs / maintenance work that is carried out in response to a request made by you / other residents to your home and / or building. It is also known as a day-to-day repair.
- 1.3 The repairs service is delivered by external contractors. Our contractors work to our specific timescales to ensure repairs are carried out to homes quickly and that they are *right first time*, minimising disruption to you, as much as possible. The *right first time* approach in respect of housing repairs refers to completing the repair correctly on the first attempt without the need for reworking or corrections, minimising wasted time and resources.
- 1.4 For new homes, there will be an initial 24 months defects period and alternative contractors may be involved in carrying out repairs and maintenance.
- 1.5 As your landlord, we have a statutory duty to carry out repairs to your home. Generally, this includes, but is not limited to:
 - the structure and exterior of homes including the roof, walls, windows, hard surfaces, external doors and loft and cavity insulation
 - heating systems including central heating, gas boilers, flues, and ventilation
 - water including pipes, basins, sinks, toilets, baths, drains and guttering
 - services for utilities including gas pipes, electrical wiring, and any appliances provided
 - communal areas such as hallways, stairs, lifts, communal entrances, and some specified external areas, which we own
 - other external areas (such as paths) where the landlord has responsibility
- 1.6 Residents are responsible for taking care of the inside of their homes and for certain repairs, including:

- the repair and / or replacement of their own appliances, including those gifted within new homes
- carrying out or paying for any repairs that are caused by accidental damage, misuse, or neglect, including any damage caused by friends and visitors to the property
- carrying out routine household maintenance, like replacing light bulbs, fuses, fluorescent tubes, batteries in smoke or heat detectors, replacing plugs and chains on sinks, baths, and basins, unblocking a sink (where they have caused the blockage)

2 The aims of this policy

2.1 The key aims are to:

- ensure that residents are listened to and that we meet expectations with repairs carried out quickly and to a good standard
- provide a positive, responsive service, offering a variety of ways to report repairs
- ensure residents are treated with respect by SHS and contractors
- meet our legal and statutory standards, together with all health and safety standards
- deliver value for money and quality
- involve residents and learn from feedback
- comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Regulatory Standards, specifically, the Safety and Quality Standard

2.2 The aim of this policy is to also ensure that we comply with new regulations relating to heat networks; these are our communal heating systems which are located within some of our older people's housing schemes.

2.2.1 There are communal heating systems (heat networks) at the following schemes:

- Dorothy Pettingell House
- Griffiths Close
- Margaret House
- Norman House
- Old Brewery House
- Thomas House
- Trickett House

2.2.2 The government is transferring responsibility for heat networks to OfGem. OfGem is introducing new heat network regulations that housing associations must comply with. In effect, OfGem is treating housing associations in the same way as British Gas.

2.2.3 Any reference in this policy to heating and hot water applies to both independent and communal (heat network) systems within SHS homes.

2.2.4 We can monitor performance of our heat networks via our repairs and maintenance work and from our complaints log, where we can easily identify any issues that occur.

3 Reporting responsive repairs

3.1 You can report responsive repairs in the following ways:

- During normal working hours (9.00am – 5.00pm): call 020 8642 1500 and select option 1 or call 020 8661 5891
- Emergency repair (outside 9.00am – 5.00pm): call 0300 369 0586; or use the telecare alarm in your home, if you have one
- Resident App: our app can be used to send repair details including photos 24/7
- In writing: Via email to hello@repairs.org.uk or hello@shsoc.org.uk or by letter to the head office at Pat shaw house, 13 – 19 Ventnor Road, Sutton SM2 6AQ (non-emergency only)
- In person: During office hours (9.00am – 5.00pm Mon-Fri)
- In person: To a member of the SHS team on site.

4 Responsive repairs categories

4.1 We split responsive repairs into two categories and assign target times for the repairs to be completed. The two categories are emergency and non-emergency. (The non-emergency category comprises urgent and routine repairs).

4.2 Emergency repairs

4.2.1 The target time to complete an emergency repair is 24 hours. We do rely on residents to enable access to their home to carry out these repairs.

4.2.2 Emergency repairs are those that pose an immediate risk to health and safety or security of an occupant / visitor and / or may cause damage to the property. Sometimes the immediate emergency is dealt with, and other associated repairs are needed. If this occurs, we (or the contractor) will arrange further appointments with you as either an urgent or a routine repair.

4.2.3 Typical examples of emergency repairs include:

- Loss of heating year round in all homes occupied by residents of pensionable age and in homes occupied by seriously ill people, or those who are registered disabled between October and March
- Loss of hot water in homes occupied by frail, elderly, seriously ill people, or those who are registered disabled
- Gas leaks (this may be the responsibility of your gas company)
- Blocked toilet (if there is no alternative toilet)
- Leaking soil pipe
- Collapsed or bulging ceilings

- Major water leaks that cannot be contained in a bucket overnight. If the water leak is from the flat above, we cannot gain access without the consent of the resident, their next of kin or without the police/fire brigade in attendance
- Loss of power and / or lighting
- Total loss of electricity or water (please note that this may be under the control of the National Grid or your utilities company)
- Forced entry and lock replacements where a person is locked in or out of their home (this item is chargeable unless a crime reference number is provided, or the resident is living with dementia in which case it will not incur a charge for the first two occasions)
- Resecuring doors and windows where the property is not secure (chargeable unless a crime reference number is provided)
- Trapped people in a broken-down lift
- Partial loss of water supply or a continuous overflow for residents with sight and mobility issues
- Taps which will not turn off
- Broken or damaged banister rails for residents with mobility issues, are partially sighted and / or have had a stroke

This is not an exhaustive list.

4.3 Non-emergency (urgent) repairs

4.3.1 Urgent repairs are those that are inconvenient, affect residents' comfort and may cause damage to the home if left unattended. Urgent repairs are carried out within 7 calendar days. Typical examples include:

- Loss of heating or hot water
- Repair / replacement of defective locks and fobs to external doors
- Loss of lighting
- Repairs to immersion heaters with heating and hot water
- Defective wired in smoke or carbon monoxide alarms (to be carried out as soon as possible for residents in housing for older people)
- Rotten timber floorboards or stair treads
- Internal leaks that can be controlled using a bucket or bowl
- Partial loss of water supply or a continuous overflow
- Toilet not flushing or a defective toilet, toilet seat, sink, bath, or basin
- Rain penetration from roof or guttering
- Badly cracked glass
- Broken or damaged banister rails
- Loss of lighting in external communal areas (to be carried out as soon as possible for security / safety reasons)
- Pest infestations in communal areas
- Broken paths or paved areas

- Broken extractor fans for homes with internal bathrooms / kitchens
- Repair / replacement of communal TV aerials and cables for residents in housing for older people
- Repair / replacement of window catches, mechanisms, handles and stays for ground floor properties

This is not an exhaustive list.

4.4 Non-emergency (routine) repairs

4.4.1 Routine repairs are those that are inconvenient, that cause inconvenience but do not pose an immediate risk. Routine repairs are carried out within 28 calendar days. Typical examples include:

- Replacement of doors, locks, handles and architrave (to be carried out as soon as possible)
- Repairs to doors, drawers, shelves, worktops, curtain rails and battens
- Internal plastering repairs
- Chimney repairs
- Broken extractor fans
- Replacement of kitchen doors, drawers, and worktops
- Re-fix or replace wall tiles and splash backs including mastic seal around fittings
- Repair/replacement of bath panels
- Repair/replacement of dripping taps
- Re-fix or replace roof tiles, slates, flashings, etc. which are not causing water ingress
- Clearance, repair or replacement of blocked gutter or rainwater down pipes
- Repair / replacement of communal TV aerials and cables
- Repair / replacement of window catches, mechanisms, handles and stays

This is not an exhaustive list.

5 Appointments

5.1 When a responsive repair is reported, it is allocated a category as outlined above. This determines the timescale. If the repair is an emergency, the repair will be telephoned to our relevant contractor who will contact you and arrange to visit within a few hours.

5.1.1 If the repair is given an “urgent” or “routine” classification, you will receive a copy of the repair order issued to the contractor. The contractor will contact you to make a suitable appointment within the assigned timescale. Sometimes, the contractor may be on site and may knock on your door to see if it is convenient to carry out the repair there and then. In most cases this is fine but sometimes it is

not convenient – and as this is not an appointment, residents are free to say “no”. An appointment will always be made where a resident is classed as vulnerable (except in an emergency situation).

- 5.2 Before carrying out a repair, it may be necessary for you to move some belongings to ensure an area is clear for the contractor to carry out work. Sometimes the contractor can move furniture for you, but residents’ need to remove personal belongings such as clothing etc.
- 5.2.1 SHS and contractors visit many of our homes and we recognise that people have different lifestyles and priorities. Please note that we are not being judgemental if we ask you to clear / clean an area of your home before contractors carry out work. We simply need to ensure the health and safety of our contractors and ensure that they have a reasonable and safe working environment.
- 5.3 All SHS colleagues and contractors carry ID. Contractors should always show their ID, but please feel free to request to see this if it is not offered when visiting you. We expect our colleagues and contractors to treat you, and your home, with respect and we ask contractors to take reasonable precautions to avoid damage to your home and possessions, such as laying down dust sheets in their work area, and to tidy up after themselves. We do expect our employees and contractors to politely refer to you by your name e.g. Mrs Smith, or by your first name, if you have given permission for this.
- 5.4 If you miss an appointment with a contractor, they will leave a card with date and time noted of their visit. We ask residents to respond within 5-working days to rearrange the appointment. If we or the contractor does not hear within 5-working days, the repair order is likely to be cancelled. If this happens, you will be contacted by a SHS colleague.

6 Communications

- 6.1 As outlined in the appointments section, when you report a non-emergency repair, you will receive a copy of the repair order issued to the contractor.
- 6.2 For routine repairs you may also receive a telephone call from a member of the SHS team to reassure you that the work is within the 28-day timescale (and that you have not been forgotten) and to check with you to ensure the contractor has arranged an appointment with you. If they have not, then we will chase this up with the contractor.
- 6.3 Once the repair is completed, the contractor advises us accordingly. You are requested to complete the mini survey on the back of the repair order and to return this to the office. We record all survey responses and use the feedback to monitor SHS and contractor performance and to address any issues where residents indicate they are not satisfied.

7 Rechargeable repairs

- 7.1 When repairs are requested that would otherwise be your responsibility, we will act to prevent properties deteriorating by undertaking the repair and recovering the cost from you.
- 7.2 Recharge repairs are defined as repairs that are caused by damage to fixtures and fittings internally or externally (garden / garage) by a resident, a member of the resident's household or visitors, that cannot be attributed to fair wear and tear through the duration of their tenancy.
- 7.3 Where damage has been caused due to crime, and there is a crime reference number, a recharge may not be applied.
- 7.4 Below are examples of rechargeable works. Please note that this list is not exhaustive:
- Request by resident to be let into their home because they are locked out (if an employee is on site and can enable access, this charge may be waived)
 - Cost for replacement lock together with two keys / fobs should you lose your keys
 - Broken windowpanes (resulting from resident damage)
 - Repairs to resident's improvements e.g. shower installations
 - Reinstatement resulting from unauthorised alterations / DIY including any external works
 - Removing rubbish from property or fly tipped outside
 - Eradication of wasp / bees and other household pests (not including squirrels, rodents and cockroaches)
 - Court costs, injunctions and legal fees incurred by SHS
 - Cost of repairs that are due to wilful damage, abuse, and / or neglect
 - Call out to reset an electrical fuse box tripped by faulty appliance
 - Call outs in connection with smoke alarms (general needs properties only)
 - Costs of storing, removing, and disposing of household contents including furniture
 - TV reception problems if resident equipment found to be faulty (there will be no charge for the first visit but any subsequent visits will be chargeable)
 - Any other costs, or tenant responsible items as defined under the terms of the tenancy agreement
- 7.5 When resident's report repairs, SHS will advise you if the repair is a potential recharge, the approximate guide cost and agree a payment method. Payment methods available are in line with current rent payment methods. Payment may also be spread over time (payment plan). The charge will be invoiced at cost once the invoice is received from the contractor.

7.6 SHS encourages residents to take out home contents insurance as some recharge items may be covered under the insurance policy.

8. Decants to carry out repairs

8.1 On the rare occasion that it is not safe for you to remain in your home until a repair is carried out, we will ensure that you have suitable alternative temporary accommodation. Please see our decant policy for further information.

9. Communal repairs

9.1 Where we are responsible for repairs to the communal areas and facilities in your building, we aim to complete these repairs as quickly as possible and in line with our approach to emergency and non-emergency responsive repair times.

9.2 Communal repairs include repairs to entrance ways, stairwells, corridors, rubbish chutes, footpaths, parking areas etc. This is not an exhaustive list.

9.3 Communal repairs can be reported in the same way as your property repairs, as outlined in section 3 above.

10. Right to repair

10.1 The right to repair gives you the right to compensation, and the right to carry out certain qualifying repairs which are our responsibility, where we have failed to carry out our obligations. This may apply where repairs are not completed within the initial target time, and we then fail to meet a second target date. The sums payable is £10 + £2 per day after missing the second target date, up to a maximum of £50. A list of qualifying repairs is outlined below:

Repairs type	SHS response time in calendar days
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	5
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	5
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to or boiler	1
Heating or hot water not working between 31/10 - 01/05	5
Heating or hot water not working between 01/05 – 31/10	5
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	5
Blocked sink, bath, or basin	5
Tap cannot be turned	5
Leak from a water pipe, tank, or cistern	1

Leaking roof	5
Insecure external window, door, or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	5
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	5
Mechanical extractor fan not working	5

11 Monitoring and review of responsive repairs

- 11.1 We routinely review all feedback received from the works order surveys and investigate any issues of dissatisfaction.
- 11.2 We share all compliments and any complaints with the relevant contractor / colleagues in line with data protection.
- 11.3 The Property Services Manager post inspects 10% of responsive repairs. In addition, a quarterly audit is carried out with a Board Member randomly selecting works orders to check from the previous quarter.
- 11.4 The residents' charter group regularly reviews satisfaction results relating specifically to responsive repairs, whilst the Housing Operations Committee, where residents are in the majority, receive the performance results for all service areas, including responsible repairs.