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Responsive Repairs policy

1 Introduction

1.1 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.

1.2 Responsive repairs also known as day-to-day repairs are carried out in response to a request about a resident's home, building or communal area.

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 wherever possible *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-month defects period and alternative contractors may be involved in carrying out these repairs. SHS remains responsible for meeting its legal duties, including Awaab's Law timescales, regardless of warranty or defects arrangements.

1.5 As your landlord, we have a statutory duty to carry out repairs to your home and 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
- addressing issues of condensation, damp and mould
- water including pipes, basins, sinks, toilets, baths, showers, drains and guttering
- services for utilities including gas pipes, electrical wiring, and any appliances provided by Sutton Housing Society that are not gifted to the resident
- 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, wiping away small amounts of condensation from windows, tiles, mirrors etc, replacing plugs and chains on sinks, baths, and basins, replacing toilet seats, unblocking a sink (where they have caused the blockage)

1.7 SHS will not delay any urgent safety issues while deciding responsibility or recharge. Where resident actions may have contributed to a situation, SHS will still consider its wider safety and legal duties and offer appropriate support.

2 Policy aims

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 and their homes 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 Safety and Quality Standard
- meet Awaab's Law Phase 1 and Phase 2 duties and continue to meet wider repairing, safety and fitness obligations
- provide clear, accessible, timely and appropriate information in line with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- work with residents to remove access barriers and make reasonable adjustments

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 transferred responsibility for heat networks to OfGem from 27 January 2026. 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 Legal and regulatory framework

3.1 SHS will have regard to and comply with relevant requirements, including, but not limited to:

- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 and the Phase 2 amendment regulations from 30 November 2026
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Regulator of Social Housing consumer standards, particularly the Safety and Quality Standard and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and relevant gas, electrical, fire, asbestos, lift, water hygiene and building safety duties.

3.2 Where requirements overlap, SHS will follow the shortest applicable timescale.

4 Reporting repairs and potential hazards

4.1 Residents can report repairs through the following routes:

- during normal working hours (9am – 5pm): call 020 8642 1500 and select option 1 or call 020 8661 5891
- emergency repair (outside 9am – 5pm): 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 (9am – 5pm Mon-Fri)
- in person: to a member of the SHS team on site.

4.2 Residents do not need to use the words "Awaab's Law", "hazard" or "complaint" for them to be treated appropriately. SHS will identify potential hazards from the information given and act accordingly.

5 Responsive repair categories

5.1 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). These targets do not replace those covered by Awaab's Law. If a report involves an emergency or significant hazard, section 6 of this policy applies and the shortest relevant timescale will be used.

5.2 Emergency repairs

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. Emergency repairs are those posing an immediate risk to health, safety or security, or likely to cause serious damage. Further repairs may be arranged after the immediate risk is controlled. Examples include:

- total loss of power or unsafe electrical installations
- a collapsed or dangerously bulging ceiling
- a home that cannot be secured
- people trapped in a lift
- a sole toilet that is unusable
- a serious heating failure where household circumstances or weather create an immediate health risk
- a serious fire, explosion, structural collapse or fall risk
- loss of heating year-round in all homes occupied by residents of pensionable age and in homes occupied by seriously ill people
- 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) or suspected carbon monoxide risk
- leaking soil pipe
- 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)

- 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)
- 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.

5.3 **Non-emergency (urgent) repairs**

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, unless a shorter legal or safety timescale applies. Typical examples include:

- loss of heating or hot water that is not an emergency
- 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
- sink, bath, shower 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.

5.4 **Non-emergency (routine) repairs**

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 fitments
- 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.

6 Awaab's Law

6.1 *Awaab's Law Phase 1* (in place from 27 October 2025) requires social housing landlords to take reports of damp and mould seriously and act within strict legal timescales. Emergency hazards must be investigated and made safe within 24 hours, significant damp and mould problems must be investigated within 10 working days, residents must receive written findings within 3 working days, and any necessary repair work must begin promptly.

6.2 *Awaab's Law Phase 2* (in place from 30 November 2026) extends the phase 1 legal requirements to a wider range of serious housing hazards, including excess cold, excess heat, falls, structural collapse, fire and explosion risks, electrical hazards, and domestic hygiene hazards. Landlords must investigate, communicate with residents, and carry out remedial works within the same strict timescales that apply under Phase 1.

6.3 Timescales

Once SHS is aware of a potential hazard, or of a material change in a known hazard, the Awaab's Law timescales apply. For working-day deadlines, day 1 is

normally the next working day after the event is reported. The 24-hour emergency period starts immediately when SHS becomes aware.

The table below outlines the statutory timescales:

Trigger / action	Maximum timescale	SHS requirement
Potential emergency hazard	Within 24 hours of awareness	Investigate and complete relevant safety work within the same 24-hour period
Potential significant hazard	Within 10 working days of awareness	Complete an investigation to decide whether a significant hazard exists
Written summary	Within 3 working days after investigation ends	Give the resident the findings, decision, planned action and timescales in a suitable format
Relevant safety work for confirmed significant hazard	Within 5 working days after investigation ends	Complete work needed to make the hazard safe
Supplementary preventative work	Begin or take steps to begin within 5 working days	If work cannot begin in 5 working days, begin as possible practicable and within 12 weeks
Completion of supplementary preventative work	Within a reasonable period	Complete root-cause works, taking account of risk and household circumstances.
Alternative accommodation	Before a legal safety deadline is missed	Secure suitable accommodation at SHS expense where the home cannot be made safe in time.

These are maximum legal timescales. SHS will act sooner where risk, another law, this policy or the household's circumstances require it.

6.4 Access in Awaab's law cases

SHS will work proactively to gain access, offer reasonable appointment choices, explain why access is needed and provide reasonable adjustments. Every attempt and contact will be recorded.

If access is not gained, SHS will take appropriate and proportionate action. One missed appointment will not automatically close an Awaab's Law case. Potential hazard cases will not be cancelled solely because contact or access has been difficult. They will be risk reviewed and escalated where necessary.

7 Appointments

7.1 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.

7.1.1 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). Please note that contractors carry ID and must show this to you. They must also take care within your home and lay dust sheets, clean up after themselves etc.

7.2 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.

7.2.1 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

8 Communications

8.1 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.

8.2 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.

8.3 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.

9 Rechargeable repairs

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 Where damage has been caused due to crime, and there is a crime reference number, a recharge may not be applied.

9.4 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

9.5 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.

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

10 Decants to carry out repairs

10.1 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.

11 Communal repairs and heat networks

11.1 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.

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

11.3 Repairs to communal heating and hot water systems share the same timescales for repair as individual homes e.g. no heating / hot water is an emergency repair.

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

12 Right to repair

12.1 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

Repairs type	SHS response time in calendar days
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	1
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)	1
Blocked sink, bath, or basin	5
Tap cannot be turned off	1
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

13 Complaints

13.1 Residents can complain if they are unhappy with the repair service, communication, decision or outcome. SHS will follow its Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

14 Monitoring and review

14.1 We will routinely review all feedback received from the works order surveys and investigate any issues of 'dissatisfaction'.

14.2 We share all compliments and any complaints with the relevant contractor / colleagues in line with data protection.

14.3 The Property Services Manager post inspects 10% of responsive repairs to ensure that works are carried out to an appropriate standard. In addition, a quarterly audit is carried out with a Board Member randomly selecting works orders to check from the previous quarter.

14.4 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.

14.5 The Board, employees and contractors receive role-appropriate training on repairs, Awaab's Law, Phase 2 hazards and HHSRS awareness

14.6 This policy will be reviewed at least annually during the phased introduction of Awaab's Law, and sooner if there is a regulatory change.