

Repairs Policy

October 2024

A Sovereign Network Homes Policy

Title: Repairs Policy

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02/02/2021	Service Quality Manager	Version 1.2	Policy Review
14/03/2021	Service Quality Manager and Customer Service Graduate	Version 1.3	To add a section about Mutual Exchanges and Recharges on Kitchen and Bathroom light bulbs
March	Service Quality Manager	Version 1.4	Amended to take account of changes in Mutual Exchanges and the rechargeable light project

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August 2022	Service Quality Manger	Version 1.5	Amended to take account of changes to completion targets
January 2024	Director of Repairs and Estate Services	Version 1.6	3 yearly Review Amends to Sections 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7
April 2024	Director of Repairs and Estate Services	Version 1.7	Policy review (3 yearly)
October 2024	Director of Repairs and Estate Services	Version 1.8	To update timescales

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy explains how Sovereign Network Homes will deliver our responsive repairs service in a way which provides value for money and meets the needs of our customers.
- 1.2 This policy covers all repairs and maintenance including responsive repairs and major responsive works. Other areas of maintenance such as Gas safety, Asbestos, Water Hygiene, Aids and Adaptations, Empty Homes, and Damp and Mould are covered in separate policies which can be found on our website.
- 1.3 This policy applies to residents regardless of tenancy type as well as applying to our communal areas. However, the full scope of this policy does not apply to leaseholders, shared owners and other customers whose management services are provided by Sovereign Network Homes. Details of what repairs we are responsible for tenants, leaseholders, shared owner, and blocks managed by managing agents will be set out in the lease, tenancy agreement or the managing agreement.
- 1.4 Definitions:

Item	Definition
Planned	Planned maintenance identifies components that require repairing or replacing on a set schedule as they reach end-of-life, anywhere between 25 & 30 years.
Cyclical	Cyclical work involves routine maintenance tasks that are conducted on a regular basis. Typically programmes are carried out on a 7-10 year cycle.
Stock reinvestment	Improvement / upgrades programmes undertaken to existing stock.
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund	Funding available to support the installation of energy performance measures to help deliver warm, energy efficient homes, reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty.
Legal Disrepair	If a resident chooses to instruct a solicitor in light of outstanding repairs to their home. The Pre Action-Protocol outlines specific procedures that must be followed before issued court proceedings.
Major Works	Building projects that aim to maintain and improve properties they may include fire

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	safety and compliance checks and or repairs. Major works should not be confused with routine repairs that may become complex.
Complex Works	Some repair works are larger repairs which take longer to arrange. For example, a repair where we need to use a specialist contractor, carry out surveys or do more investigation.
Customers	Customers include: Tenants, Leaseholders, and Shared Owners. The responsibilities of Sovereign Network Homes and customers is defined by their tenancy agreements and lease

- 1.5 We offer a variety of ways for customers to contact us, including by phone (0300 373 3000). For further contact methods, please follow the link below:

[Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

2. Aims and Objectives of this policy

We aim to:

- 2.1 Deliver an efficient, effective and value for money responsive repairs service that meets the needs of our customers and delivers meets our customer satisfaction targets.
- 2.2 Provision of a Handyperson service for specific rented stock, for example our persons homes. This team can undertake minor repairs, for example renewing a lock
- 2.3 Comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and meet our contractual obligations.
- 2.4 As per the terms of your tenancy agreement/lease/management agreement, we will communicate which repairs are our responsibility and which repairs are customer responsibility.
- 2.5 Measure resident satisfaction and make use of the information to continuously improve services.
- 2.6 Provide a range of ways to report repairs
- 2.7 Agree ways in which we can improve the value for money of the service including the delivery of more planned and programmed work to manage the demand for responsive repairs.
- 2.8 The Repairs Team review the performance and code of conduct for contractors who are contracted by us on a weekly and monthly basis.
- 2.9 If we need to move (decant) a customer as a result of a repair, we will manage this under the Decants Procedure. If we identify a customer needs a decant then this will be managed by our Voids and Lettings team who will provide regular progress updates to the tenant.

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3. Which repairs are our responsibility

Our repairing responsibilities are explained in the lease, tenancy agreement or management agreement. These include:

- **External**, for example keeping the structure of a resident's home in a good state of repair
- **Communal**, for example maintaining and decorating common halls and stairways.
- **Internal**, for example the maintenance of heating systems
- In the case of a mutual exchange, the incoming tenant is able to report repairs which are the landlord's responsibility from the date of the assignment.
- Where damage is caused by domestic abuse then Sovereign Network Homes will complete repairs as a matter of urgency and may seek to recover the costs from the perpetrator.

For more information, please see our website:

[Who is responsible for the repair? | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

[Your responsibilities as a leaseholder or shared owner | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

4. Which repairs are customer's responsibility

Information on who is responsible for repairs in a customer's home is in their tenancy or lease agreement. On occasion individual tenancy agreements may convey different responsibilities from those listed in the appendix and where they do then the tenancy agreement will take precedence. Further details of customer responsibilities are on our website:

[Who is responsible for the repair? | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

When a customer contacts us about a repair that may not be our responsibility, for example the changing of a lightbulb, we will take a deposit before the contractor attends. More information, including details of the charge, can be found in our Chargeable Repairs Policy.

Guidance for customers on how to perform some of these tasks are posted as videos on our website. Link: [Who is responsible for the repair? | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

4.1 For Tenants, these include:

- Fencing
- Internal decorations to a resident's home
- Adding extra security, for example fitting mortice locks or external lights
- Minor repairs such as small plaster cracks, door handles, locks, hinges and letterboxes

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- Replacing light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, electrical plugs, fuses and batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors*
- Ensuring extractor fans are kept clean *
- Repairing any damage caused by a member of the resident’s household or caused by a visitor.
- Repairing fixtures, fittings and equipment gifted to the tenant or not provided by us.
- Clearing blocked sinks, toilets and baths where the blockage is in the property or was caused by misuse or lack of care*
- Fitting waste and supply pipes for washing machines and dishwashers and vents for tumble driers (except where we have fitted the items).
- Replacing broken windows, except where we were responsible for the breakage or there is a police crime number.
- Arranging lock changes due to loss, damage or theft of keys unless there is a crime reference number for the theft.

Repairs marked with an asterisk are tenant responsibility. If Sovereign Network Homes decided to support a customer by completing their own repairs, there may be a charge for the works and a deposit required.

More information on who is responsible for repairs can be found on our website:

[Who is responsible for the repair? | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

For leaseholders and Shared Owners, their responsibilities are contained in their lease, more information can be found on our website:

[Your responsibilities as a leaseholder or shared owner | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

For those blocks with a managing agent, they should contact us if they are unsure of the managing agents responsibilities and contact details:

[Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

5. Contractor Code of Conduct

We expect all our contractors to follow our code of conduct. Our code of conduct can be found on our website: [Our contractors | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#).

In the unlikely event of a contractor not following our code of conduct, please contact us. [Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#).

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6. Contractor Performance Management

Sovereign Network Homes manages the performance of our contractors and ensures they are meeting the requirements of our contract with them.

Checks are made as part of our procurement processes to ensure contractors have the necessary policies in place and that they're supportive of our own policies.

We hold both weekly and monthly performance meetings with our contractors. More information on what we discuss is contained in the table below:

Every week:	Once a month:
Number of open repair cases, repairs orders or work in progress (WIP)	Time taken to complete repairs
Number of repairs orders in target versus out of target, broken down by trade	Number of repairs completed per day
Number of repairs raised and completed within that week. We specifically focus on emergencies, appointments where MCP couldn't get access into the resident's home to complete the repair and repeated repairs within 12 months.	Number of repairs fixed first time
Any recruitment and resource updates covering plans to address any outstanding vacancies Recording o reported of H&S Incidents and action taken	Review of reported health and safety incidents and action taken in contract meeting and H&S meeting

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Financial activity including work which has to be quoted for, and invoices or payments due	Compensation paid to residents as a result of complaints and missed appointments. We reclaim this from our contractors for not delivering the service we expect.
The number of open complaints and lessons learned.	Satisfaction figures, feedback and lessons learned from our feedback surveys conducted by independent research company IFF Research
Statistics provided by our contact centre including number of calls made for new repair enquiries, follow up calls and missed appointments.	

7. How to report a repair

There is a variety of ways customers can contact us. This link to our website provides these details:

[Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

8. Vulnerabilities

8.1 Sovereign Network Homes recognises that some customers may need services adjusted to make services more accessible. Where a customer needs additional support we have developed a Reasonable Adjustment Policy and our Customer Service Team Leaders and Repairs Manager can consider on case by case basis:

[Document Preview - Reasonable Adjustments Policy October 2023 \(networkhomes.org.uk\)](#)

8.2 In addition, we have developed a Slipping Through the Net Toolkit with colleagues and customer which covers how we should help customers when they discuss vulnerability information to us, where it should be recorded and how we should use this information to help customers. All customer facing staff have received training on the Slipping Through the Net Toolkit and we will ensure that new starters also receive training.

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To safeguard a survivor of domestic abuse, we may undertake additional repairs or adaptations that may fall outside our normal repairs service standard. Such measures might include security lights, extra locks, and fireproof letter boxes. In some cases, we will work with partner agencies to deliver these. We will treat any security related repairs that are related to a case of domestic abuse as emergency repairs.

Our operatives and contractors have a duty of care to report any signs of domestic abuse they might encounter while visiting a home to carry out a repair.

9. Record Keeping

We will keep our housing management systems up to date, ensuring that customer contacts, vulnerabilities and repairs information and actions is added to our Housing Management Systems, which are NEC and Customer Hub.

10. Out of hours service

If a resident needs to report a routine repair outside of our office opening hours, please see our Policy section on how to report a repair.

If there is an emergency repair when our offices are closed, customers can call us on **0300 373 3000**, and they will be directed to our out of hours repairs service.

11 Repairs Priorities

When a resident reports a repair, we use the information they give us to classify our speed of response. We will provide regular updates on the progress of the repair. When reporting a repair that is not responded to as an emergency, the resident will be offered the next available appointment that our contractor can attend. The appointment will be for a morning or an afternoon and will take account of any domestic commitments such as school pickups as far as reasonably possible. The repairs priorities are as follows:

Category	Definition	Response period
Emergency	Emergency repairs are situations where there is a risk to someone's health or safety, a home is not secure, or there is damage that is rapidly getting worse. An example of an	Maximum of 24 hours

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	emergency repair would be no power in a home or an uncontrollable flood.	
Routine	Routine repairs are repairs which are unlikely to cause serious health and safety problems or serious damage if they are not fixed straight away. For example, repairs to taps, gutters, doors and windows.	<p>Most repairs will be completed within one month, with a visit within two weeks. This is subject to if specialist parts are required that need to be customised e.g., made to measure. Contact will be made to arrange appointments and to provide updates as necessary whilst the job progresses</p> <p>During busier periods we may need to extend our timescales, however, we will always keep our tenants updated and update our website.</p>
Complex works	Some planned repair works are larger repairs which take longer to arrange. For example, a repair where we need to use a specialist contractor, carry out surveys or do more investigation.	<p>Most repairs will be completed within 90 days. Updates will be provided as to progression and appointments.</p> <p>During busier periods we may need to extend our timescales, however, we will always keep our tenants updated and update our website.</p>

There are times when need to get more than one quote to ensure value for money for customers before any repair work to contractor can start. Potential contractors drawn from our procurement framework would need to attend the site first and offer us a quote before we consider the best option.

There are other occasions when we need to complete a section 20 consultation with customers before high value work can begin. In both situations, the time from when the repair work is requested to when it's completed may exceed the 90-day timeframe. We would always try to inform customers of progress where possible.

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We will refer to the Homes and Place standard when carrying out complex works. For more information, see here: [Homes and Place | SNG](#)

12. Defects on a newly built homes

With repairs in a newly built home, it is normally necessary for the contractor who built the property to investigate and remedy the defect. Occasionally, in an emergency situation, we may complete the repair without treating it like a defect. Defect response timetables are separate to timescales outlined in this policy.

If a customer has a defect in their newly built home, they should contact us as detailed on our website:

[Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes.](#)

13. Customer missed appointments

Having made an agreed appointment, we expect our customers to keep the appointment and provide access. We recognise that sometimes situations change, and they may not be able to keep the appointment. If this happens, customers should contact us before the appointment to rearrange the appointment. They can contact us by:

[Contact Sovereign Network Group | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

Where our contractor cannot gain access, they will leave a contact card. The customer should respond as per the information on the card. If the customer does not respond after 3 attempts to contact them then the job will be closed.

14. Contractor Missed Appointments

We acknowledge it's frustrating when a contractor doesn't keep their appointment with you. Missed appointments can cost time and money for both customers and Sovereign Network Homes. We will work to ensure missed appointments are minimised and to keep customers informed throughout the repairs process to assist in this.

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We will pay compensation where an appointment is missed by our contractor. Current levels are detailed in our Compensation Policy:

[Compensation Policy V6.2 June 2023.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

15. Chargeable repairs

Sovereign Network Homes is committed to providing and maintaining safe affordable homes while achieving value for money in our housing management services. We have a duty to ensure that our maintenance expenditure is utilised for legitimate repairs that we are contracted to provide. This policy ensure that there is a consistent and transparent approach to recharging, ensuring the fair treatment of all our residents and the legitimate and appropriate use of social housing funds and resources. For a full breakdown of where this policy would be applied, please see link: [Document Preview - Recharging Repairs Policy \(networkhomes.org.uk\)](#)

16. Legal disrepair claims

We understand from our customers that they are sometimes approached by companies asking them if they want to raise a disrepair. We would always ask you contact us first before deciding to raise a disrepair. We have a specialist team who oversee and manage legal disrepair claims brought to us by customers and / or their Solicitors acting under the Pre-Action Protocol. We acknowledge that there are times where customers are not satisfied with this approach and may seek legal assistance in resolving their repairs.

We're committed to providing a good quality repairs service to our customers. If a customer lives in a home managed by Sovereign Network Homes and have concerns about their property, or an unresolved repair issue, they should get in touch with us so we can get it resolved as soon as possible.

There is a link to the protocol below, which also encourages alternative dispute resolution in place of legal action:

[Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims \(England\) - Civil Procedure Rules \(justice.gov.uk\)](#)

17. Alterations and Improvements

Our customers have the right to carry out improvements and alterations to their home.

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.Before they start any work, they must ask for our permission in writing outlining what the alteration / improvement is, where in the property it will be, any drawings to support the application and details of the competent installer and all certificates that they will have in place for insurance, indemnities, gas or electric. We will only give our permission if the works do not create any hazards, future maintenance difficulties or an impact on others.

We have a separate Alterations and Improvements Policy.

18. Insurance

Whilst we insure the building where our customers live, it is their responsibility to insure their personal possessions.

18.1 Home Contents Insurance - Why does a Customer Need it?

Whilst we insure the building, we don't insure a resident's contents. It's a good idea for a customer to consider what home contents insurance policy would cover them for.

[Home contents insurance | SNG, formerly Network Homes](#)

18.2 We have a buildings insurance which covering our responsibilities as a landlord for Leaseholders. Details of your responsibilities and our responsibilities have been covered in section 3 and 4, and further details can be found in your lease.

[Document Preview - Leasehold water incident handling procedure \(networkhomes.org.uk\)](#)

19. Sustainability

At Sovereign Network Homes, we recognise the critical importance of sustainability in our operations and services. We are committed to embracing sustainable practices that contribute to environmental protection, social equity, and economic viability.

We have and will continue to seek and secure funding to enable the delivery of warm, energy efficient homes, reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty.

20. Complaints

20.1 Any customer or other stakeholder who is dissatisfied with how we have managed their repairs is able to submit a complaint using our Complaints process. Once our Complaints policy is complete and if they remain dissatisfied then they can contact the Housing Ombudsman.

21. Compensation

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A compensation payment is usually designed to put the customer in the position they would have been had the matter being complained about not happened. Our Compensation Policy can be found here [Document Preview - Compensation Policy V6.2 June 2023 \(networkhomes.org.uk\)](https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/Document-Preview-Compensation-Policy-V6.2-June-2023).

22 Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring ensures we are providing a good service. As part of our performance monitoring, we review certain measures. These are:

- Repairs received & completed
- Averages attendance
- End to end times
- Productivity by trade
- Overdue repairs orders
- First time fix
- No access
- Customer satisfactions, complaints & compensations
- Health & Safety incidents/near misses.

22.1 Day to day contractor management review is covered under Section 6 of this policy.

In addition, monthly performance reports are considered by our Sovereign Network Ops Team and Executive Board, where required.

23. Related Documents

Asset Management Strategy 2021- 2024.

- Voids Policy
- Gas servicing Policy
- Gas Servicing Procedure
- Tenancy and Leasehold Agreements
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire safety Policy
- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Recharge Policy
- Electrical safety Procedure
- Water Hygiene Policy
- Asbestos Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- Slipping Through the Net Toolkit

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- Resident Engagement Strategy
- Customer Care Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Compensation Policy

24. Legislation and regulation

24.1 The legislation listed in this policy is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy.

24.2 This policy is written in the context of the legal and regulatory requirements Sovereign Network Homes is required to work within. The main legislation is as follows:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Localism Act 2011
- Equalities Act 2010
- Common hold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Party Wall Act 1996
- Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993
- Housing Acts 1985,1988 and 2004
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Sections 2, 3 and 4
- Occupiers Liability Acts of 1957 and 1984.
- Regulator of Social Housing Framework including Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Housing Act 2004
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

25 Equality and diversity

We will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any protected characteristics, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010.

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26 Review

All policies should be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum, or sooner if there is a specific legislative, regulatory or service requirement or change in guidance, law or practice.

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