

## Responsive Repairs Policy

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Approved By	CLT
Reviewed By (Relevant Group)	CLT

### 1. Policy

- 1.1. Cottsway Housing Association's (CHA) Tenancy Agreements and leases set out the mutual responsibilities of both landlord and customers for repairs.
- 1.2. This policy sets out these mutual responsibilities in more detail together with organisational context and should be considered in conjunction with the corresponding CHA Service Standards which have been considered by CHA customers through consultation.

### 2. Aims

- 2.1 CHA aims to provide a responsive repairs service to its customers that meets the landlord's obligations under the Tenancy Agreements, makes the best use of CHA's resources, maintains stock in an acceptable condition and meets customers' expectations in terms of service standards.
- 2.2 CHA aims to:
  - Effectively manage our repairs and maintenance obligations, ensuring an acceptable balance between service standards and cost.
  - Achieve value for money in everything we do by providing efficient services for people living in our homes, and releasing financial capacity to build more affordable housing for new customers.
  - Monitor and review repairs performance to ensure we understand our performance in key areas of service.
  - Comply with all relevant legislative and statutory requirements.
  - Ensure that all Cottsway customers live in a safe and habitable environment, and that our employees and subcontractors are provided with a safe working environment.
  - Provide a service which reflects our commitment to equality of access for all customers and to take account of the needs of vulnerable people. In applying this policy Cottsway will be fully committed to promoting the benefits of equality, diversity and social inclusion/cohesion.

- 2.3 Customer engagement is important to the development of the repairs service. CHA seeks feedback from customers through perception and transactional surveys and other forms of customer consultation are deployed as and when required.
- 2.4 Customers who are dissatisfied with the Repairs service are encouraged to follow the feedback and complaints procedure, and any appeals or complaints received relating to this policy will be managed under the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

### 3 Service Standards

- 3.1 **Reporting a repair:** Repairs can be reported to Cottsway Customer Service team on Monday to Thursday 0830-1730 and Friday 0830-1700 on 01993 890000, via email on [contact@cottsway.co.uk](mailto:contact@cottsway.co.uk), by logging a request on the Cottsway Customer Portal, or by completing a web-form on the Cottsway website. Phone calls may be made for Emergency repairs 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are managed by an out of hours call answering service provider.
- 3.2 If access inside the property is required, then an appointment will be offered for most routine and urgent repairs. Appointments are offered on the following basis: all day, morning, afternoon, or "avoiding school run." These slots provide the optimum balance between customer service and efficiency. 2 consecutive missed appointments caused by the customer or by CHA may result in a charge or compensation payment, in accordance with the Chargeable Works Policy.
- 3.3 **Routine repairs:** CHA generally will respond to routine repairs within 20 working days, although it may take longer if a programme of work covering the repair request has already been planned.
- 3.4 To improve operational efficiency, some less urgent routine repairs may be grouped together, to be completed within a longer "Non-routine" category, the timescale for completion of such repairs is usually within 90 days, although this will depend on the nature and extent of the work, and operational conditions at the time. This is explained to the customer at the time the repair is requested. This Non-routine category of repairs will often include more extensive works that constitute "improvement work" to a property rather than a repair.
- 3.5 **Urgent repairs:** CHA aims to respond to urgent repairs within five working days. Urgent repairs generally include work needed due to breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply, or any fault or damage that makes the premises unsafe or insecure.
- 3.6 **Emergency repairs:** CHA will complete the repair or fault or make the situation safe within 24 hours of the problem being reported. Appointments are not provided for emergency repairs and the customer, or a responsible person over the age of 16, will need to be

at home to facilitate access to the property. Emergency repairs are those that are needed to avoid serious health or safety risks or serious structural damage.

- 3.7 **Individual customer circumstances:** When prioritising repairs CHA will take into account any relevant customer circumstances e.g. medical conditions, mobility problems etc, which might impact on the urgency required.
- 3.8 **Planned repairs:** CHA has a programme of planned improvements. Customers will be contacted when planned works are being carried out.
- 3.9 **Emergency and significant hazards:** following the introduction of Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, commonly referred to as Awaab's Law, certain types of repairs are identified as "hazards" because a significant risk of harm is present. Many such hazards are identified by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), such as damp, mould, excess cold and excess heat, danger of trips and falls, structural collapse, explosions, fire, and electrical hazards.
- 3.10 There are specific requirements, including timescales, which must be met when dealing with such hazards. CHA must:
- Investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms emergency hazards, undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable. The investigation and the work must both take place within 24 hours of becoming aware of the hazard.
  - Investigate any potential significant hazards within 10 working days of becoming aware of them.
  - Produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.
  - Undertake relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard.
  - Begin, or take steps to begin, any supplementary preventative work to prevent a significant or emergency hazard recurring within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this must be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks.
  - Satisfactorily complete supplementary preventative works within a reasonable period of time.
  - Secure the provision of suitable alternative accommodation for the household, at the social landlord's expense, if relevant safety work cannot be completed within specified timeframes.
  - Keep the tenant updated throughout the process and provide information on how to keep safe.

- 3.11 **Cyclical works:** CHA has a requirement to carry out some types of work on a regular cyclical basis, e.g. Electrical Tests every 5 years, annual gas service. The Customer has a legal obligation to allow access for these works to be completed.
- 3.12 **New homes:** The housebuilder is responsible for faults due to material, construction or workmanship for 12 months from the date the property was completed. Before this date CHA will inspect the property to identify any outstanding work that needs to be carried out. If a Developer fails to attend to repairs during the defects period, the Cottsway Repairs Team or another appointed contractor may be utilised and, where appropriate, costs recharged to the Developer.
- 3.13 **Repairs to void properties:** Necessary essential repairs in line with the Cottsway Void Standard, will be carried out by CHA to ensure the property is safe, secure and in a habitable condition prior to the new customer moving in. Any non-urgent repairs can be completed after the customer has moved in. The customer will be informed of the timescale for completion of major works, such as bathroom and kitchen replacement.
- 3.14 **Access and inspection:** The Tenancy Agreements and leases require customers to allow access for repairs. In an emergency CHA may need to enter a home without a customer's prior consent, this will only be considered as the last resort and when all other means have been considered.

Some repairs may require pre-inspection before the repair can be scheduled. CHA aims to minimise such inspections and where possible these are attended by a Repairs Operative whose primary aim will be to complete the repair. Sometimes this will not be possible, and further works may need to be scheduled, or a specialist surveyor may need to attend.

- 3.15 **Repair responsibilities:** Some repairs are the responsibility of the customer and are defined within the Service Standards as well as the respective tenancy agreement or lease. Customers may be charged for the cost of a repair if it is found to be the fault of the customer through damage or neglect, or if a fault has been exaggerated to gain a faster response or repairs are required when a customer moves out of a property which are not considered to be the result of fair wear and tear.
- 3.16 **Alterations and improvements:** Before customers complete any alterations to a property, permission must be sought from CHA. Alterations may also be subject to planning permission or building regulations approval from the local council. Any electrical and gas work must be carried out by a qualified tradesperson who must supply an appropriate completion certificate. If the necessary permissions and certificates are not sought and supplied. CHA has the right to charge the customer to repair or restore the property to its original condition.

3.17 **Right to Repair Regulations (1994):** If a qualifying repair cannot be completed within an agreed timescale, the customer has the right to request a second contractor to complete the work. Where the second attempt or second contractor also fails to complete the work in the agreed time CHA may compensate the customer. The Right to Repair does not apply;

- If the resident has told CHA that they no longer want the qualifying repair carried out.
- If the resident fails to provide details for the contractor to gain access to their home.
- Access for an inspection for the repair to be carried out has not been provided.
- Where the contractor needs to order special parts to complete the repair.
- Where severe weather conditions prevent the contractor from completing the repair

3.18 **Performance monitoring and review:** The Head of Property is responsible for quarterly performance reporting against targets to the Corporate Leadership Team and to Board.

### 3.19 **Regulatory and Legal Framework**

As a registered provider of social housing, CHA is regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing.

The following legislation forms the legal framework within which the Repairs Service operates:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act (Section 20)
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environment Protection Act 1990
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Compensation for Improvements Regulations 1998
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006
- Housing Act 2004
- Equalities Act 2010
- Health and Safety
- HCA – The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012
- 2006 Decent Homes Standard
- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, commonly referred to as Awaab’s Law.

3.19 Stakeholder Consultation - Cottsway customers have been consulted in the creation of this policy. A survey was shared with a database of consenting customers. Cottsway received 79 responses to this survey and the comments were taken into consideration throughout the drafting of this policy.

## Other relevant policies

- Aids and adaptations policy
- Chargeable works policy
- Compensation policy
- Communal areas policy
- Complaints policy
- Customer involvement and empowerment policy
- Damp and mould policy
- Health and safety policy
- Landlord permissions policy
- Void policy

## List of changes

Date	Change
08/08/2021	Table amended to reflect shower head replacement is Cottsway responsibility.
09/03/2022	Non-routine category of repairs added (Internal Audit of Repairs recommendation, February 2022).
19/01/23	Damp & mould Policy added to "Other relevant policies"
24/10/25	A few minor amendments, reference to charges for missed appointments, addition of clauses 3.7 & 3.8 – Awaabs Law. In the Appendix - Responsibility for Repairs – responsibility for clearance of mould changed from customer to CHA, to reflect changes in the legal framework in this area.
24/10/25	Responsibility for repairs to patios noted to be customer's responsibility to provide clarity on existing working practice.
24/10/25	Reference to the customer consultation on the draft Repairs Policy added. Clause added about considering individual customers' circumstances when determining the priority of repairs. Clearer definition of "non-routine" repairs added.
28/1/26	Minor amendment to utilise alternative repairs service providers to cover non-attendance to repairs by developers during the defects period.

## Appendix 1 – Responsibility for Repairs

REPAIRS CATEGORY AND ITEM	Cottsway	You
Basin and sinks		
Leaking tap	✓	
Tap won't turn off	✓	
Blocked basin or sink waste		✓
Broken plug and/or chain, including missing ones		✓
Loose, cracked or broken basin	✓	
Bath and showers		
Leaking or faulty bath taps	✓	
Water leaking between the bath and the wall	✓	
Shower heads and hoses	✓	
Electric shower not working	✓	
Shower/bath waste blocked		✓
Communal areas		
Faulty phone entry system	✓	
Damaged paths	✓	
Communal lighting faults	✓	
Broken window handles	✓	
Damaged doors/locks	✓	
Damaged stair treads/banister rails	✓	
Damp, mould and condensation		
Damp and mould treatment. If you keep on having problems, we will visit your home to check them out. If the problem represents an emergency or is a significant issue, we will deal with it within the timescales set out in Awaabs Law. Other issues will be dealt with within the timescales set out in clause 3 of this policy.	✓	

REPAIRS CATEGORY AND ITEM	Cottsway	You
Doors		
Replacing keys or locks, including if you can't get into your home because you've lost the keys		✓
Doorbells		✓
Stiff or sticking door	✓	
Adjusting doors to allow for new floor coverings		✓
Water leaking between a door and the frame	✓	
Drainage		
Manhole cover loose or broken	✓	
Blocked gully waste, except where pipework is faulty		✓
Blocked toilet waste, except where pipework is faulty		✓
Blocked wastes up to your utility provider's boundary		✓
Electrics and lighting		
Mains-powered smoke detector or battery back-up ones	✓	
Loose electric socket	✓	
Replacing light bulbs, starters and motors are your responsibility (except in communal areas).		✓
LED fittings in kitchens and bathrooms - if the LED bulb is an integral part of an enclosed light fitting Cottsway is responsible for its replacement.	✓	
Fuse box or consumer unit faults	✓	
Appliances within the home		✓
Fencing		
Generally, we only provide privacy panels for the first three metres from your home and chain-link fencing for the rest of your boundary, except for areas with public access such as car parks or public alleyways.	✓	

REPAIRS CATEGORY AND ITEM	Cottsway	You
Floors, walls and ceilings		
Loose skirting boards	✓	
Loose floorboards	✓	
Loose wall tiles	✓	
Decorating, including after any repairs you or we carry out		✓
Small or hairline cracks in plaster on walls and/or ceilings		✓
Large repairs to plaster on walls and/or ceilings	✓	
Garages		
Replacing keys or locks, including if you can't get into your garage because you've lost the keys		✓
Loose or faulty garage door	✓	
Roof leak	✓	
Gutters and downpipes		
Loose plastic downpipe	✓	
Blocked gutter	✓	
Heating and hot water		
Storage heater not working	✓	
Gas fire not working	✓	
Radiator not heating up	✓	
Boiler faults	✓	
No hot water	✓	
Kitchen sink and units		
Broken or missing sink plugs		✓
Loose sink unit	✓	
Perished sink unit seals	✓	
Faulty door hinges on units	✓	
Loose drawer front	✓	
Loose or damaged worktop	✓	

REPAIRS CATEGORY AND ITEM	Cottsway	You
Outside the property		
Gate not opening or closing properly	✓	
Loose or broken step	✓	
Broken concrete path	✓	
Patio		✓
Garden maintenance		✓
Pest control		
Dealing with a pest infestation (Customer to check with Cottsway)	✓	✓
Blocking any entry points or general repairs once the infestation has been cleared	✓	
Roofing		
Broken or loose chimney stack or pot	✓	
Loose or missing roof tiles loose	✓	
TV aerials and satellite dishes, except communal services		✓
Stairs		
Loose handrail	✓	
Loose stair or tread	✓	
Toilets		
Faulty cistern, including the flush handle	✓	
Replacing toilet seats		✓
Locks, latches and fittings		
Broken door handle	✓	
Faulty door lock mechanism	✓	
Water systems		
Leaking pipe	✓	
Water tank leak or other fault	✓	

REPAIRS CATEGORY AND ITEM	Cottsway	You
Window units and glazing		
Loose or dropped window	✓	
Faulty window handle	✓	
Glass broken by vandalism, but you must get a police crime reference number	✓	
Glass broken by accident		✓