

Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Version control

Avoid referring to printed versions of this document. Printed versions may be out of date.

Owner/responsibility for compliance		Head of Housing Technical Services	
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1.1	September 2024	Cabinet	New policy
2.1	October 2026	Cabinet	Includes Awaab's Law

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is to support Swindon Borough Council ('the Council') in its function as a landlord to provide safe and effective housing management.
- 1.2 The Council is responsible for repairs and maintenance to the homes, communal blocks and other properties it owns and manages, and for ensuring tenants are safe in their homes. This policy outlines the Council's approach to managing repairs and maintenance services for our tenants, including emergency repairs outside of regular operating hours.
- 1.3 This policy is to ensure our Cabinet, Corporate Management Team, colleagues, partners and tenants are clear on our legal and regulatory safety obligations. This policy provides the framework our colleagues and partners will operate to meet these obligations.
- 1.4 In developing this policy tenants' and partnering agencies' views and feedback have been considered. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and there are no adverse implications.
- 1.5 The results of the Equalities Impact Assessment have been considered and there are no adverse implications or if there were these have been considered and mitigated.

2 Equality and diversity statement

- 2.1 Swindon Borough Council is intent on ensuring people or communities do not face discrimination or social exclusion due to socio-economic deprivation or any of the following protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability

- Sex
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy & maternity

3 Legislation and guidance

3.1 The legislation and guidance applicable to this policy includes the following:

- Awaab's Law - The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
- Decent Homes standards
- Defective Premises Act 1972 Page 5 of 29
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Act 1985 & 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994 (for secure tenants of Local Housing Authorities)
- The Regulator of Social Housing Safety Quality Standards
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- Equality Act 2010

4 Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all assets where the freehold is owned by the Housing Revenue Account and managed by Swindon Borough Council's Housing department.
- 4.2 The policy is restricted to the Council's tenants; whose rights and responsibilities are set out in the tenant handbook. Tenants who are not Swindon Borough Council tenants are outside of the scope of this policy.
- 4.3 The aim of this policy is to outline the Council's approach to providing responsive repair services. While individual tenancies, occupancy agreements, and leases specify contractual responsibilities, this document details general landlord and tenant responsibilities and expectations regarding the completion of repairs. This policy should be read alongside the tenancy agreement, and the Council's other housing policies.

5 Approach

- 5.1 This policy outlines the Council's approach to:
- Providing tenants with a straightforward and efficient process for reporting repairs

and maintenance issues that meets their needs and expectations.

- Enhancing tenant satisfaction through transparent communication, realistic timelines, and high-quality repairs.
- Preserving and improving the condition of homes through proactive and planned maintenance.
- Ensuring homes are safe, secure, and compliant with relevant legislation, regulations, and best practices, including building safety, health and environmental standards.
- Regularly reviewing the repairs service to promote continuous improvement.
- Encouraging collaboration by engaging tenants in decision-making, consultations, and feedback to ensure the service meets their priorities.
- Clearly defining repairs and maintenance responsibilities for both the landlord and tenants to ensure accountability and efficient service delivery.

5.2 The Council aims to provide a reliable and efficient repair service that addresses our responsibilities correctly the first time, and at a mutually agreeable appointment. A Repair is the process of restoring something that is damaged, broken, or not functioning properly to a good or working condition.

5.3 When a repair report is received the Council will triage the repair. This is the process of determining the priority of the repair request. This is a risk assessment that reviews the vulnerabilities in the home as well as the hazard. Triage follows the guidance provided within Awaab's Law

5.4 If a repair cannot be completed during one visit, the Council will explain the reasons, outline the next steps, and schedule a follow-up appointment.

Responsive repairs

5.5 These are minor repairs to our tenants' homes to keep essential features functional. These repairs are referred to as responsive repairs. In certain situations, we may replace these features as needed

Emergency repairs

5.6 An emergency repair is any problem that could be a security risk or cause harm to the tenant, family members, another person, or the property. Some examples of emergency repairs are:

- A health and safety risk, like smashed glass or an electrical hazard.
- A security risk, like a problem with the main entrance to your property such as insecure external window, door or lock.
- Total or partial loss of electric power.
- Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting.
- Total loss of water supply (not partial loss).
- Total or partial loss of gas supply.
- A blocked flue to open fire or boiler.

- No heating or hot water.
- A blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet.
- Toilet not flushing, if there is only one toilet in property.
- An uncontrollable leak from a water pipe, tank or cistern.

6 Landlord responsibilities

6.1 The Council will ensure that homes are structurally sound, safe and weatherproof; and will maintain:

- Electrical installations and ensure they are safe and in good working order.
- All council owned gas appliances and service these regularly.
- Windows, drains, guttering, roofs and external pipes.
- The plumbing of hot and cold water.
- Adequate heating and ventilation.
- External walls, outside doors, windowsills, soffits, fascias, window catches and window frames (not including internal painting and decoration).
- Garages (if owned by the Housing Revenue Account).
- Fencing as well as any communal boundary walls and fences or those bordering on public land.
- Installations for heating water.
- Kitchen fixtures and fittings.
- Plasterwork (Except cracks 8mm in width or less).
- Pathways, steps and hardstanding providing direct access to your home.
- Basins, sinks, baths, electric showers, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes.
- Common entrances, lifts, rubbish chutes and any other communal parts.

6.2 The Council will review major repairs for external buildings, paths or extended parts of the property; for example, outhouses, sheds, concrete paths, outbuildings, canopies, conservatories and where outbuildings have been built over to become part of the home.

6.3 The Council may remove these components/buildings instead of repairing them. For example, an aged and failing brick outbuilding will be removed rather than repaired.

6.4 To ensure safety, annual checks are required on gas, electrical, and solid fuel appliances, as well as fire detection systems and fire doors where applicable. The Council will contact tenants to arrange these checks, and it is essential that access is provided and failure to do so may result in legal action.

7 Expectations of Council colleagues

7.1 The Council has specific expectations for our repairs colleagues and contractors when completing a repair, these state that they should:

- Treat tenants with consideration and respect.
- Come prepared for every appointment with the necessary tools and materials.

- Schedule appointments and communicate them to tenants, avoiding unannounced visits.
- Be considerate of tenant's personal circumstances, such as mobility or hearing difficulties.
- Arrive punctually for appointments.
- Maintain cleanliness, tidiness, and demonstrate consideration and respect.
- Park vehicles considerately and responsibly.
- Refrain from entering a tenant's home unless an adult is present.
- Introduce themselves, state who they work for, and show identification.
- Explain the purpose of their visit, estimated duration, and areas requiring access.
- Inquire about the issue and request tenants to show the problem area if necessary.
- Seek permission before moving any furniture or personal belongings.
- Notify neighbours or affected parties if work might impact them or communal areas.
- Minimize disruption to services; if utilities need to be shut off, provide explanations and reconnect by the end of the day.
- Maintain security by not leaving communal or fire doors open.
- Aim to complete the job in one visit whenever possible; inform tenants and relevant parties if work extends beyond normal hours.
- Obtain permission before using tenants' facilities (toilets, water, electricity, gas).
- Obtain agreement from the tenant before leaving equipment overnight.
- Provide an explanation of completed repairs to the tenant and ensure satisfaction.
- If new equipment is installed, explain its operation and leave instructions.
- Report any additional defects or issues found during the visit.
- If the repair cannot be completed in one visit, explain the next steps and arrange a convenient follow-up appointment.

8 Tenant Responsibilities

8.1 Tenants must:

- Meet the cost of repairs or replacement items listed in Appendix A as the tenant's responsibility.
- Keep the inside of the home clean, tidy and decorated and to carry out minor repairs, for example unblocking sink and basin wastes and repairing minor cracks up to 8mm in width.
- Maintain gardens and keep them clear of rubbish. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, reducing the height and pruning of trees and hedges. As well as regularly cutting lawns and grass areas so the garden does not become overgrown.
- Keep communal areas clean, tidy and free from all personal items.
- Report repairs quickly to prevent on-going damage.
- Keep the property in such a way that it does not attract pests or vermin.
- Install and maintain own household appliances such as cookers and washing

machines using an appropriately qualified engineer.

- Seek permission to install a gas appliance, which must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Seek permission to make improvements and to maintain those improvements if required.
- Seek Permission to plant trees or hedges within the boundary of the property.
- Provide access to the property so that repairs, maintenance and inspections such as routine gas and electrical checks and stock condition surveys can be carried out.
- Ensure pets are kept under control and away from the area of work, to ensure their safety and that of our workforce and tenants.
- Ensure areas are cleared and free of debris where work is required to be undertaken, including lofts.
- Treat the council's property with respect and care, avoiding deliberate damage or neglect.
- Ventilate and heat the property, wiping down and removing excess condensation.

- 8.2 The Council will provide insurance coverage for the building itself, but not for the contents inside. It is the tenant's responsibility to arrange insurance for their personal belongings (contents).
- 8.3 Tenants are responsible for using their homes, including all fixtures and fittings, in a safe and respectful manner that does not put themselves or others at risk. The Council asks that tenants report any repairs to us as soon as reasonably possible.
- 8.4 As part of the tenancy agreement, tenants are required to allow our colleagues or contractors access to your home so that we can carry out necessary repairs, inspections, or improvement works. The Council will always aim to arrange appointments at times that are convenient, and if tenants are unable to keep an appointment, they must contact 01793 445 500 to let the Council know.
- 8.5 Tenants must ensure that an adult (person over the age of 18) is present at the property for the duration of any repairs visit. If an adult is not available, then the repair visit will not be undertaken.
- 8.6 In some cases, issues in one property can affect neighbouring properties, so your cooperation is especially important. For certain types of work, such as in gardens or communal areas, the Council may not require tenants to be present but will always inform tenants in advance and seek permission where needed.
- 8.7 Tenants are also expected to report any incidents of criminal damage or vandalism to the police.

Breaches of tenancy conditions

- 8.8 Most tenants take care of their homes, pay rent on time, and respect their neighbours. However, for tenants who damage property, fail to pay rent, or breach tenancy rules, the Repairs Service may be restricted to emergency, health and safety, or Right to

Repair works only.

- 8.9 Restrictions may apply if tenants miss repair appointments, have unpaid rent or arrears without a repayment plan, breach tenancy rules (for example engage in antisocial behaviour), misuse the repair service, or behave abusively toward Council colleagues or contractors.
- 8.10 These limits also apply if the tenant has begun the right-to-buy process, or an abandonment notice has been issued.

9 Vulnerability

- 9.1 The Council will utilise the data it holds regarding the diverse needs of tenants to make sure services are appropriate and proportionate.
- 9.2 For vulnerable tenants the Council may make suitable adjustments such as prioritising repairs or arrange special accommodations, such as louder knocking, extended wait times for door answering, or coordination through a third party such as a support worker.
- 9.3 The Council may also make reasonable adjustments when damage has been caused due to incidents of domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- 9.4 Council colleagues will undergo training to recognise indicators of domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour and to determine when it is appropriate for us to adjust how and when we carry out repairs. All decisions will be documented and monitored to ensure fairness.
- 9.5 Tenants should ensure that any disability, such as a hearing impairment or mobility restriction, is communicated to the Council.
- 9.6 Your personal information will be stored securely and handled in accordance with data protection law.

10 Reporting a repair

- 10.1 Tenants can report or enquire about a repair, or planned maintenance works in the following ways:
- Via our website using the link
<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/services/housing/council-housing/repairs>
 - By telephoning 01793 445 500
 - Office hours are 9am to 5pm Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
 - Office hours on a Tuesday are 9am to 4pm.
- 10.2 To raise a repair that Swindon Borough Council is responsible for you must provide:
- Details of the problem
 - Your availability
 - Any other access issues

- Up to date contact details including mobile phone numbers and email addresses
- Information on vulnerabilities or anything else that may help us complete the repair in the best way.

10.3 Please have this information ready when requesting a repair or making an enquiry. For further assistance, tenants can use the website to search for a specific repair to see who is responsible (also see appendix A).

11 Appointments

11.1 Appointments are agreed with tenants and are usually morning or afternoon slots, tailored slots to avoid school runs or all-day appointments for more involved work.

11.2 Tenants may be sent reminder text messages 24 hours prior to their appointment time.

11.3 If an appointment for a routine repair is missed, the job will be closed on the system and a “We missed you” card put through the door requiring the tenant to re-raise the repair.

11.4 If the repair is urgent, the Council will make further attempts to contact the tenant to agree a suitable appointment. If the Council are still unable to gain access to the property, and it is necessary to protect tenants’ health and safety or to prevent deterioration of the property, the Council may apply to the courts for an injunction to gain entry. If legal action is required, the tenant may be liable for court costs and the cost of missed appointments. See the Housing Access Policy for more details.

12 Repair priorities and timescales

12.1 All repair requests are reviewed against this Policy. If the repair request is reviewed and defined as a ‘tenant responsibility’ the Council will close the repair and notify the tenant.

12.2 The Council will triage all repair requests to determine the risk to health or life, accounting for all occupants in the home. This helps the Council to understand how quickly it needs to attend the home.

12.3 Triage will be undertaken when a repair request is raised. To ensure the Council raises the repair with the correct priority tenants may be called back for more information. This is to ensure the Council attends within the correct statutory timescale where Awaab’s Law applies.

12.4 For damp and mould investigations, see the Damp and Mould Policy.

12.5 Timescales are as follows:

Repair category	Timescale	Definition
Immediate (R1) (potential Emergency Hazard under Awaab’s	24 Hours – attend as soon as possible and make safe within 24	Issues which pose an immediate health and safety risk.

Law)	hours	
Right to Repair (R2)	2 working days	Right to Repair – Partial loss of power.
Right to Repair (R3)	3 working days	Right to repair – for example partial loss of water, loose banister or rotten flooring.
Right to Repair (R7)	7 Working days	Right to Repair – for example leaking roof, Door entry system not working or mechanical fan not working
Routine Repair (R10) (Potential Significant Hazard under Awaab's Law)	10 Working days	Issues which pose a health and safety risk.
Routine Repair (R40)	40 working days	Work that poses a low or zero risk to occupants.
Preventative Repairs (R60)	60 working days	Work required to prevent hazards from returning to homes post Awaab's Law investigation.
Major/Planned works (M90)	90 Working days	Major repair examples - partial roof replacement or structural works. Planned works examples; fencing replacement, installation of an extractor fan or de-misting of double-glazed units.

12.6 During periods of high demand, the Council may not meet the 40 working day target. If this is likely to happen, colleagues will communicate this to affected tenants.

12.7 Some major/planned works may extend past 90 working days, due to the complexity of works or the requirement to seek approvals or consent. If this is likely to happen colleagues will communicate with affected tenants.

13 Out of hours repairs

13.1 For out of hours emergency repairs, tenants must call 01793 445 500 between the hours of 5pm and 9am, and at weekends or bank holidays.

13.2 All repair requests will be triaged to ensure the request is an emergency.

- 13.3 Tenants cannot raise emergency repairs via email or the tenant portal.
- 13.4 There may be a charge if the Council attends and the repair is not deemed to have been an emergency.
- 13.5 The Council runs an out-of-hours emergency repair service for tenants and leaseholders. This is an emergency make safe service only, for issues such as:
- Gas or carbon monoxide leaks
 - Inoperable boiler (November – April, winter period only)
 - Uncontrollable water leaks
 - Total loss of water supply
 - Total loss of electrics (tenants should check the consumer unit and pre-pay meter - where applicable - before calling)
 - Electrical hazards (for example, sparking/smoking electrical items or exposed wiring)
 - Insecure property (for example, an external door that will not lock closed)
 - Prevalent mould where vulnerable tenants are suffering symptoms (confirmed during repairs triage)
 - Significant/emergency structural defects.

14 Right First Time

- 14.1 Right First Time is the Council's commitment to completing repairs or maintenance correctly on the first visit, without the need for repeat visits or extra work due to errors.
- 14.2 The aim is to provide a high-quality service efficiently, saving time, reducing costs and giving tenants a better experience. It is a key part of good housing maintenance, ensuring repairs are completed safely and properly, site visits are efficient with minimal disruption, resources are used effectively, and tenants receive a reliable, high-quality service.
- 14.3 There are times when 'Right First Time' cannot be achieved, for example:
- When multiple trades are required for a single job.
 - When materials are not readily available.
 - When unforeseen issues cause jobs to take longer than expected.
- 14.4 To improve 'Right First Time' performance, the Council focuses on:
- Planning and preparation - making sure colleagues have all the information and tools needed to complete the job.
 - Learning from past work - reviewing previous jobs to prevent repeat issue.
 - Assigning skilled operatives - sending the most experienced and suitable worker for each job.
 - Strong communication - keeping clear guidance between office colleagues and field workers.
 - Continuous improvement - regularly reviewing processes to maintain high

standards.

15 Right to Repair scheme for secure tenants

- 15.1 The Government's Right to Repair scheme identifies 20 common repairs that must be completed within a specified number of working days. To qualify, the repair must cost less than £250, must not result from misuse and must be classed as an immediate or urgent repair.
- 15.2 This scheme applies only to secure tenants.
- 15.3 If an inspection is needed, the Council is allowed additional time. Should the inspection determine that more extensive works are required, costing over £250, the repair will no longer qualify under the Right to Repair scheme and tenants will be notified of the new target completion date.
- 15.4 Similarly, if the tenant chooses to schedule the repair beyond the target date or fails to provide access for inspection or repair, the repair will no longer fall under the scheme.
- 15.5 If a qualifying repair cannot be completed within an agreed timescale, the tenant has the right to request the Council instructs a second contractor to complete the work. If the second contractor also fails to complete the work within the agreed time, the Council will pay compensation to the tenant.
- 15.6 The council will not undertake repairs which are the responsibility of the tenant.

16 Repairing components during their lifecycle

- 16.1 Components will be repaired and maintained during their lifecycle, repairs will be carried out in line with the outlined repair priority and timescale.
- 16.2 Due to parts not always being available it may be necessary to replace or repair items with parts that do not match the original component items. For example, a replacement kitchen cabinet door will be the nearest match but may not be the exact size, texture or colour.
- 16.3 It may be necessary to remove the kitchen cabinet door and leave the floor or wall cabinet without a door as there are no near matches or available parts. Or the Council may have to adjust the replacement item causing marks or damage to its finish. If this is necessary, it will be completed so the finished item does not pose a safety risk.

17 Rechargeable repairs

- 17.1 The Council will charge tenants for repairs caused either by damage which is not the result of fair wear and tear, or by unauthorised alterations to the property (see appendix A for indicative costs). Examples include if:
- A member of the household or a visitor has caused the damage.
 - Damage has been caused over time because the property or an appliance has not been looked after.

- Tenants provide deliberately incorrect information when raising a repair that meant the Council incurred additional costs by attending out of hours.
 - The Council attends an out of hours job and the tenant unreasonably does not provide access.
 - The repair is related to something the tenant has installed without the Council's permission
 - The repair is related to the way something has been installed either by the tenant or someone they have hired.
- 17.2 It is important that the council recovers these costs to ensure the available repairs and maintenance budget is spent fairly and that other tenants are not effectively subsidising the costs of those who have caused damage or neglected their responsibilities.
- 17.3 Where a reported repair is deemed to be the responsibility of the tenant, they will be informed that they are responsible for that repair under the terms of their tenancy or licence agreement. Any repairs or maintenance works carried out by tenants must be to the Council's standard and if not, the Council reserves the right to rectify the works and recharge tenants for the costs incurred.
- 17.4 Payment will be required in full before any chargeable repairs work is carried out by the council, except where:
- An emergency response is required.
 - Repairs are needed to make the property secure.
 - The health and safety of the household is a concern (for example a blocked toilet).
 - The disrepair could cause or is causing damage to other parts of the property or to other properties.
 - The Council considers that the disrepair could lead to deterioration in the appearance of the area.
- 17.5 Where the exceptions outlined above apply, an invoice will be raised and payment required within 28 days. In exceptional circumstances, the Council may agree an affordable repayment plan.
- 17.6 The Council may waive charges for repairs caused by criminal damage or theft, but we will require written confirmation with a crime reference number provided by the police (an incident number is not sufficient). Charges will still apply if the criminal damage was caused by the tenant, a member of their household or a visitor to their home.
- 17.7 Where damage is caused by the police whilst executing an arrest or search warrant, the tenant will be held responsible for the cost of the repairs. This applies irrespective of whether the tenant is charged with a crime. We will carry out any essential repairs needed to make the property safe and secure and recharge the tenant for these. However, any non-essential repairs must be paid for before they are carried out.
- 17.8 Tenants may be able to claim compensation for repairs from the police if they acted unlawfully or in error, for example by searching the wrong address.

- 17.9 The Council will not recharge for damage caused by the police forcing access to a property for welfare reasons.

18 Compliance and cyclical maintenance

- 18.1 As a landlord, the Council must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas. Cyclical maintenance is work undertaken on regular planned cycles for servicing, inspection and testing of equipment, often required by law and regulations, to maintain the condition and safety of Council properties.
- 18.2 The key areas of health and safety legislation and regulation with which the Council must comply are gas, electrical, water, fire, asbestos and lift safety. The Council must have comprehensive management plans in place for each of these key compliance areas, setting out the legal and regulatory requirements and our approach, including roles and responsibilities, training, and processes.
- 18.3 To help ensure our homes remain safe and in good condition, we will undertake a variety of cyclical maintenance using suitably qualified and competent engineers. This includes but is not restricted to the following:

Work Programme	Frequency
Landlord Gas Safety Record Inspection	Annual
Smoke and carbon monoxide detector testing	Annual (tenants should test frequently)
Solid fuel flue checks (non-Swindon Borough Council Provided)	Tenants' responsibility
Air Source Heat Pump testing	As per manufacturers instruction
Fire detection systems to blocks and schemes	Weekly fire alarm test and annual fire alarm service
Emergency lighting in blocks and schemes	Monthly test/annual drain down of emergency battery back-up
Fire Safety (sprinklers, dry risers, smoke ventilation etc.)	Annually
Fire doors	As per the Fire Safety Policy
Electrical safety inspections – homes and communal areas	Every 5 years
Water hygiene/Legionella testing on sheltered schemes and relevant flat blocks	Monthly
Lifts – passenger, through floor and stairlifts	As per the lifts Policy
Asbestos inspections	As per the Asbestos Policy

19 Consent for alterations and improvements

- 19.1 All tenants, except those on introductory tenancies or in temporary accommodation, have the right to carry out alterations and improvements to their homes at their own cost, on condition that they first obtain written consent from the Council.
- 19.2 On receipt of a completed “modification Request Form” the tenant will receive a written response from the Council within 30 working days. They may be visited in their home by one of the Councils’ surveyors. The tenant will be notified whether consent has been granted within 30 working days of the surveyor’s visit. This may be extended in complex cases where more detailed plans are required from the tenant.
- 19.3 Permission will not be unreasonably withheld, but may be withheld if the requested improvement is deemed to:
- Be too expensive for the council to maintain (including after the tenant moves out).
 - Make the home unsuitable for future tenants or more difficult to let in the future.
 - Breach planning, building regulations, health and safety, council policy or other relevant legislation.
 - Be detrimental to the surrounding area.
 - Decrease the overall value of the property.
- 19.4 Where building control or planning permission is required, tenants will be responsible for obtaining this.
- 19.5 It is likely that the Council will specify conditions to any consent given and we will inspect the completed works to ensure this is fully complied with. If the Councils’ conditions are not met, the tenant will get adequate opportunity to correct this or else hold them liable for costs in making good or removing the improvement.
- 19.6 A tenant who does not apply for consent before carrying out improvement works on their home is in breach of their tenancy agreement and will have to apply for consent retrospectively. The Council may instruct that the property is returned to its original condition.
- 19.7 The council is not responsible for maintaining improvements to fixtures and fittings installed by tenants.
- 19.8 Tenants will be responsible for their maintenance throughout the duration of the tenancy. Fixtures and fittings include items like showers, kitchen worktops and units, and external power supplies.
- 19.9 The council will take responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of any approved structural improvements and alterations to the property such as patios, driveways, or walls.

- 19.10 At the end of the tenancy, tenants are not permitted to remove or damage any alterations or improvements they have installed unless authorised to do so. They may be charged for the cost of repair or reinstallation.

20 Damp, mould and condensation

- 20.1 The Council understands that damp and mould are significant concerns for many tenants and leaseholders and recognises the health risks damp and mould can cause. Although damp, condensation, and mould can be complex issues to manage, the Council are committed to addressing each case promptly and effectively, taking a proactive and thorough approach to resolving these problems whilst following necessary requirements. See the Damp and Mould Policy.
- 20.2 Awaab's Law phase 1 came into effect in October 2025 and applies to all emergency hazards and Damp and Mould hazards. Landlords must:
- Investigate any potential emergency hazards (hazards posing an imminent and significant risk to health or safety) 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 emergency hazard.
 - Investigate any potential significant hazards (hazards that pose a significant risk of harm to health or safety) 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, unless fully repaired within 3 working days.
 - 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 time period.
 - 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 timescales.
 - Keep the tenant updated throughout the process and provide information on how to keep safe.
- 20.3 Regulation will be extended on the 30 November 2026 to include the following hazards where they present a significant risk of harm from 2026:
- Excess cold.
 - Excess heat.

- Falls associated with baths etc., on level surfaces, on stairs and between levels.
 - Structural collapse, and explosions.
 - Fire, and electrical hazards.
 - Domestic and personal hygiene and food safety.
- 20.4 Regulations will be extended to all remaining HHSRS hazards (apart from overcrowding) where they present a significant risk of harm from 2027.
- 20.5 When addressing significant hazards, we will always consider the tenant's individual needs alongside the nature of the issue and the extent of the required works.

21 Quality control

- 21.1 To ensure repairs are completed to the highest possible standard the Council will send a satisfaction survey, where possible, on completion of the repair.
- 21.2 The Council will carry out post completion inspections, to a percentage of our repairs, depending on the severity of the hazard and/or cost of the repairs. These inspections will be for works completed by either a contractor or the Council's Operations colleagues.
- 21.3 Quality assurance inspections, on contractor work, will form a part of any contract, relationship, risk, cost and performance management for that contractor.
- 21.4 If works by contractors are deemed sub-standard, the Council will call contractors back to site to rectify.
- 21.5 The Council will use repair post inspections, estate inspections, tenant satisfaction surveys and photographs of completed works to monitor and improve performance.

22 Managing disrepair claims

- 22.1 Disrepair is a repair that either falls within the remit of a defect that the landlord is liable to repair or that has been reported to the landlord, but the landlord has not carried out in accordance with the landlord's own timeframes for carrying out a repair.
- 22.2 The Council will follow the Civil Procedure Rules, Pre-Action Protocol when responding to all legal disrepair claims:
- Where a tenant issues a disrepair claim, the Council will instruct a solicitor to act on our behalf who will communicate about the claim with the tenant's solicitor if they have one acting or with the tenant if they are representing themselves.
 - The Council will consider using alternative dispute resolution (mediation) methods where reasonable to resolve matters at the earliest opportunity to avoid legal action.
 - The Council will, where appropriate, consider settlement including financial settlements to resolve disrepair claims.
 - Where appropriate, the Council will instruct an expert or single joint expert in conjunction with the tenant or their third-party legal advisor to inspect the property

for evidence of disrepair.

- The Council will undertake an agreed schedule of works to remedy disrepair within a reasonable timeframe. This may sometimes mean that parts of the property will be inaccessible while works are undertaken. Where this means the property is uninhabitable (for example if the kitchen or bathroom is inaccessible) the Council will provide temporary alternative accommodation.
- The Council will take account of a household's vulnerability and their needs including children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and school location.
- If tenants are required to move into temporary alternative accommodation, the Council will explore needs as early as possible.
- The Council will exchange information with solicitors or other agencies requests in line with the Pre-action Protocol and our Data Protection Policy.
- The Council has an obligation to collect outstanding rent arrears and if a tenant has rent arrears and is awarded damages/compensation, we will deduct the sum of outstanding arrears before settling with the tenant's solicitors.
- Where disrepair has been reported and subsequent attempts to access the property have failed, we will pursue formal routes, including access injunctions and enforcing the tenancy agreement where necessary, to obtain access.

23 Data Protection

23.1 Where information needs to be shared with our colleagues and partners to deliver our repairs service, this will be in line with data protection requirements ensuring:

- Data is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.
- Data is collected for a specific and legitimate purpose and not used for anything other than its stated purpose.
- Data is relevant and limited to whatever the requirements are for which the data is processed.
- Data is securely stored

24 Roles and responsibilities

24.1 The council is accountable for ensuring that the legal and regulatory requirements for repairing and maintaining council owned homes are met. Responsibility for determining the council's policy on repairs and maintenance is delegated to the Director of Housing, who is also responsible for evidencing that Council are meeting our regulatory and statutory requirements.

24.2 The Head of Housing Technical Services is accountable for the delivery of the repairs and maintenance service and the implementation of this policy, including staff training and communication with tenants.

24.3 Repairs and maintenance performance information is collected and scrutinised to ensure compliance with this policy and legislative and regulatory requirements. Key

performance information is reported to the Corporate Director for Prevention & Communities, Director of Housing, Housing Improvement Board, Housing Assurance Board, Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Cabinet Member for Housing and Property and Cabinet, as appropriate.

- 24.4 The Council makes repairs and compliance performance information available to all tenants via our web page.

25 Monitoring and review

- 25.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if legislation or regulations change.

26 Appendix A

26.1 Doors

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes Potential Recharge cost Description of work
Make safe or secure external doors	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Gain access – lock not working	SBC	R1 – 24 Hours	
Gain access – lost/damaged keys/fobs	Tenant	N/A	SBC can complete as a rechargeable job -£130
Useable but sticking lock	SBC	R40 Working Days	
Replace glazing to external doors	SBC	R40 Working Days	
Repair/replace internal doors (not fire doors)	Tenant	N/A	SBC can complete as a rechargeable job -£130
Repair/replace internal fire doors	SBC	R40 Working Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Door linings, beadings, architraves, furniture	SBC	R40 Working Days	
Fire doors – front entrance	SBC	R40 Working Days	Tenants are prohibited from undertaking any works to fire doors including fixtures and fittings. We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete repairs as soon as possible. Subject to access and material availability.
Block main entrance/communal doors	SBC	R40 Working Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary

			repairs as soon as possible
Repair door entry system	SBC	R40 Working Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Windows

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Secure window (broken handles/hinges/restrictors/locks)	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	I – 24 hours may be made safe only if repair cannot be completed at time of visit
Window cannot close (security risk)	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	I – 24 hours may be made safe only if repair cannot be completed at time of visit
Window cannot be opened	SBC	R40 W Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Ease/adjust sticking windows	SBC	R40 W Days	
Replace broken glazing	SBC	R1 – 24 hours R40 W Days	I – 24 hours may be made safe only if repair cannot be completed at time of visit. Replacement of glass will be within 40 W days
Misted double glazing unit	SBC	M90 W	

		days	
Repair/replace window board or sill	SBC	R40 W Days	
Repair/replace window handles/locks	SBC	R40 W Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Repair/replace window restrictors	SBC	R40 W Days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Electrical

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
No electricity	SBC or Utility Provider	R1 – 24 hours	
Unsafe electrical fitting/exposed wires	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	This may be a make safe only visit
No lights	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Replace bulbs/tubes/starters	Tenant	N/A	I - 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants with non-standard fittings in the kitchen or bathroom.
Lights/power to part of property	SBC	R2 Days	
Resetting tripped switches	Tenant	N/A	R - 5 Working days for vulnerable tenants
Hard-wired smoke detector repairs	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	

Battery smoke alarms	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Check electrics after water penetration	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Partial loss of electricity	SBC	R2 days	
Repair/replace extractor fan	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Repairs to tenant's own white goods	Tenant	N/A	
Repairs to communal lighting	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Cleaning or replacing filter, cleaning extractor fan or a ventilation system	Tenant/SBC	R40 W days	SBC will only be responsible if the filter is not accessible.
Repairs to communal aerial systems	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Lifting equipment

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Passenger lift failures	SBC	R1 – 24 hours R60 W days	I – 24 hours to release trapped occupants and to make safe or repair. May become M – 66 days if parts are required.
Stairlifts – where installed by SBC	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Hoists/lifting equipment – where installed by SBC	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Gas

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Gas escapes	Wales and West Utilities	N/A	Our process is to Report immediately to the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999
Loss/partial loss of gas	Wales and West Utilities	N/A	Our process is to Report immediately to the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999
Gas cookers/tenant appliances	Tenant	N/A	

Heating and Water

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Total loss of heating or hot water	SBC	R1 – 24 hours R3 days	Oct – Mar Apr - Sept
Partial loss of heating or hot water	SBC	R10 W days	1 – 24 hours for vulnerable tenants.
Leaks to the boiler, cylinder or heating system (not containable)	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Leaks to the boiler, cylinder or heating system (containable)	SBC	R3 days	1 – 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants
Bleeding radiators	Tenant	N/A	R – 3 days for vulnerable tenants
Blocked flue	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	

Internal finishes

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Internal Plastering	SBC	R40 W days M90 W days	Area less than 4 square meters Area more than 4 square meters
Internal plastering – Hairline cracks	Tenant	N/A	
Internal decorating	Tenant	N/A	
Consequential decorating	Tenant	N/A	
External decorating	SBC	M90 W days	

Replace/re-grout tiles	SBC	R40 W days	Area less than 4 square meters
		M90 W days	Area more than 4 square meters

Floor and Panels

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Unsafe timber floor or stair treads	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Repair/replace floorboards and/or skirtings	SBC	R40 W days	
Repairs to concrete floors	SBC	R40 W days	
Repair/replace floor coverings in the bathroom or kitchen	SBC	R40 W days	Unless the floor is part of an agreed modification and the responsibility of the tenant, SBC will not be responsible.
Repair/Replace Carpets or laminates not in the bathroom or kitchen	Tenant	N/A	
Bath paneling or pipe boxing	SBC	R40 W days	

Internal repairs

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Handrails/bannisters	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Kitchen drawers/worktops	SBC	R40 W days	
Loft insulation	SBC	M90 W days	
Insulate water pipes	SBC	R40 W days	

Fireplaces

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Fire grates and other solid fuel fire parts	SBC	M90 W days	Fires will be removed and the chimney blocked - and alternative heating provided
Repair or replace tiled hearths or surrounds	SBC	M90 W days	Fires will be removed and the chimney blocked - and alternative heating provided
Replace or repair solid fuel heaters	SBC	M90 W days	Fires will be removed and the chimney blocked - and alternative heating provided
Chimney sweeping	Tenant	N/A	Only where open fireplace is in use and approved by SBC

Garages, Outhouses and Sheds

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Repairs to outhouses/sheds	SBC	40W days	
Lock(not integral to a door) garages/sheds/outbuildings	Tenant	N/A	
Repairs to non-structural walls	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Plumbing

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
No water	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Partial loss of water	SBC	R3 W days	1 – 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants
Leaks (not containable)	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Leaks (containable)	SBC	R3 W days	1 – 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants
Toilet blocked (only toilet)	Tenant/SBC	R1 – 24 hours	Tenants are expected to make all reasonable attempts to clear blockages. If the blockage is deemed tenant misuse this will be recharged £130
Toilet blocked (another toilet available)	Tenant/SBC	R10 days	1 – 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants. Tenants are expected to make all reasonable attempts to clear blockages. If the blockage is deemed tenant misuse this will be recharged £130
Blocked foul drains	SBC	R1 – 24 hours	
Blocked rainwater drains	SBC	R10 working days	1 – 24 Hours for vulnerable tenants if causing issues with access
Blocked sink/basin	Tenant/SBC		Tenants are expected to make all reasonable attempts to clear blockages. If the blockage is deemed tenant misuse this will be recharged £130

Repair/replace baths/sinks/toilets/taps	SBC	R40 W days M90 W days	Single item replacement i.e. bath/basin/toilet will be 40 W days replacement of 2 or more will be 90 W days
Minor plumbing repairs do not affect use	SBC	R40 W days	
Leaks from overflows	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

External

Type of repair	Responsibility	Repair priority	Notes
Unsafe paths/steps – triaged to determine potential emergency	SBC	R1 – 24 hours R10 W days	Emergency repair or make safe. Non-emergency attendance to repair/make safe
Repairs to manholes	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Repairs to concrete/tarmac (not creating a trip hazard)	SBC	R40 W days M90 W days	Less than 4 square meters More than 4 square meters
Communal clotheslines/rotary driers	SBC	R40 W days	
Clear blocked refuse chute	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Water penetration (habitable areas)	SBC	R40 W days	If the water leak is creating a H&S risk, we will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Water penetration (non-habitable areas)	SBC	R40 W days	
Repairs to roofs/chimneys/gutters	SBC	R40 W days M90 W days	If partial or full replacement is required, this will be M - 90 W days
Fences/gates (public/private boundary)	SBC	R40 W days M90 W days	Less than 12 linear meters More than 12 linear meters
Fences/Gates (garden division)	SBC	R1 – 24 hours R40 W days	Emergency repair or make safe. Non-emergency attendance to repair/make safe
Dangerous chimney	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible
Storm damage	SBC	R40 W days	We will aim to inspect within 5 working days and complete any necessary repairs as soon as possible

Appendix B

Repair type	Response time (working days)
Total Loss of Electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	2
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 November and 30 April	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 May and 30 October	3
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only 1 toilet in the property)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap cannot be turned on	3
Leak from a water pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or stair tread	3
Rotten Timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical fan not working	7