

City of Edinburgh Council Housing Repairs Policy

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Housing Operations

Introduction

The City of Edinburgh Council's Housing Service is responsible for the repairs and maintenance in approximately 20,000 Council homes across Edinburgh every year. Every repair we carry out is important to us.

This repairs policy lets you know the type of repairs that we are responsible for. It also lets you know the repairs that you, our tenants, are responsible for.

This repairs policy also includes a section on how to fix minor faults, details our complaints process and provides some useful contact information.

In communal areas the Council is jointly responsible with other owners for any repair work. Before we can carry out any repair work, we need to get the agreement of the other owners. This can sometimes lead to a delay in repair work being carried out. This includes repairs to stair windows, roof repairs, door entry systems, fences and paths.

This repairs policy does not cover repairs carried out as part of our planned maintenance and modernisation programme. To find out more about this programme please ask at your locality office.

If you have a question about your repairs or about our repairs service, this policy will help you find the answer...Please keep it somewhere handy.

You can also find it online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/councilhouserepairs

Our responsibilities to you

As your landlord, the Council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of the property that you live in. This includes:

- walls, floors and ceilings
- window frames and external doors
- roofs, drain pipes and gutters
- kitchen and bathroom main fixtures (toilets, baths, basins, sinks, gas and water pipes)
- heating equipment (fires, radiators, storage heaters and panel heaters)
- water heating equipment (boilers and immersion heaters)
- electrical fittings (light switches, light fittings, sockets, wiring and mains operated smoke detectors)
- steps and access paths (not garden paths), fences and walls in and around public areas but not between neighbours
- communal areas around the property (stairs, lifts, landings, some lighting, entrance halls, paving, bin store doors and rubbish chutes). This may also be a joint responsibility if other owners are involved (see section on communal / block repairs)
- carrying out annual gas servicing and other safety checks.
- carrying out 5 yearly electrical safety checks

We may also complete the following work if you agree to pay for it:

- repairing any damage caused by you, your family or visitors (if you don't have a police incident number)
- replacing lost keys
- helping you gain access if you've lost your keys, or you're locked out.

Gas safety checks

By law the Council is responsible for carrying out yearly gas servicing and safety checks in every home with gas. Legally you must give us access to your home so we can carry these out.

Faulty appliances can give off carbon monoxide fumes, which are highly poisonous. Carbon monoxide has no colour, taste, or smell, and can kill. Annual gas safety checks mean we can make sure your appliances are in safe working order. Every year we will send a letter telling you when your next gas service is due. If the date is unsuitable, please contact us to arrange an alternative appointment.

If we've been unable to get into your home after two appointments and you've not been in touch, we will begin legal proceedings to gain entry to your home.

If we require entry to carry out the gas service, you will have to pay the costs for this.

If you would like to install a new gas heater or boiler or replace an existing one, you must get written permission from us first. Any new appliance must be installed by a properly qualified, registered gas installer.

The new gas heater or boiler will then become the property of the Council, and we will maintain and service it for you. If you want to take the appliance with you when you end your tenancy, you must leave a suitable and properly fitted replacement.

If you smell gas, turn off the gas supply, open windows, and phone Scottish Gas Networks (SGN) on 0800 111 999.

Electrical checks

All Council housing stock must have a full check of the electrical circuits, known as an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) and should be conducted at intervals of no more than five years or at change of tenancy. Remedial repairs to electrical fixtures and fittings or electrical installations which do not meet current standards will be upgraded during the ECIR.

A Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate (MEIWC), also called a minor works certificate, applies to all minor works, and provides proof that they were carried out according to the latest safety standards and wiring regulations BS 76S71 this should be completed following any electrical installation works.

Properties must have power during the EICR to enable full testing. All non-standard wiring and appliances (faulty or otherwise) will be disconnected and removed.

Copies of all Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) will be held by the Housing Service.

Any electrical equipment supplied by the Housing Service as part of the tenancy (such as electric fires, electric showers, electrically operated ventilation systems etc) will be hardwired to the electrical supply via an appropriate fused spur or similar.

Any portable electrical appliances which may be supplied on a temporary basis (such as temporary heaters, dehumidifiers etc) are subject to annual portable appliance testing by the housing service.

Tenant responsibilities

As a tenant, you're responsible for minor repairs such as:

- fittings that you installed or accepted at the start of your tenancy, such as shelves, built-in wardrobes and laminate flooring
- fitting additional locks
- resetting tripped switches, fuses and light bulbs (not communal stair lighting)
- attempting to clear plumbing blockages
- testing smoke detectors and replacing batteries (unless they are mains operated smoke detectors)
- repairing minor cracks and holes in walls and ceilings that can be reasonably filled before decorating.
- television aerials and reception equipment (unless installed by the Council)
- all internal decoration
- maintenance of fences, gates, driveways, and any garden structure not put in place by the Council. (Responsibility may be jointly shared among owners for fences, gates, and driveways in communal areas)
- all rechargeable repairs as set out in the Council's Rechargeable Repairs Policy unless an exemption is applied.

Our Repairs Direct staff can offer help and advice on getting this work done if you're having problems. You can contact them on 0131 200 2345.

As a tenant you should also:

- report criminal damage or vandalism to the police and get an incident number.
- take action to prevent further damage once a fault has been identified.
take action to avoid condensation by ventilating your home, not blocking air vents and opening windows.
- get written permission before making alterations to your home
- allow us access to your home to carry out safety checks required by law
- repair any damage that you, your family or any visitors have caused, other than through fair wear and tear. If the repairs service puts right this damage you will be responsible for paying a recharge cost. The repair must be carried out by a competent person and to an acceptable standard. Any gas or electrical work must be completed by a qualified tradesman.

If the Council is responsible for the repair, you can request this by:

- reporting it online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/councilhouserepairs
- phoning Repairs Direct on **0131 200 2345**
- emailing repairsdirect@edinburgh.gov.uk
- visit your locality office

If you live in a multistorey block you can speak to the Concierge to arrange repairs.

When requesting an appointment please make sure:

- you arrange the appointment at a time when you will be at home
- you always give a contact number in case we need to reschedule the work
- you let us know of anything that may stop us gaining access to the property or your ability to clear the area around the fault.

Once you've arranged an appointment date, there are a number of things you should do to make sure we can carry out our job as quickly, effectively and safely as possible.

Before we arrive to carry out the work it is your responsibility to:

- make sure there is a responsible adult present to allow our staff access to the repair. If a responsible adult over 16 is not in when we call we will have to cancel the appointment
- clear the area around the repair before our staff arrive to carry out the work. This may include lifting carpets, laminate flooring, clearing work surfaces, emptying cupboards, taking down curtains or moving furniture away from the area for health and safety reasons, keep pets and young children away from the area of the repair work whilst we carry out the repair.

When you move into your new home, we will have carried out all repairs according to the Edinburgh Standard of Let and turned on all services. This may be carried out together with the utility suppliers.

At the start of your tenancy, the housing officer will show you where your electricity fuse box, water stopcock, and gas stopcock (if the property has gas) are and explain how to turn these off in an emergency.

You will also be given general advice on how to prevent and fix some minor faults. Find out more in the Common Faults section of this booklet on page 26.

At the start of your tenancy, the following items below will be supplied. After this, it is your responsibility to replace them:

- internal door handles, hinges and catches (except fire exit doors and kitchen doors)
- drawer handles
- external door numbers and letter plates (not fitted by the Council)
- plugs and chains for baths and basins
- draught excluders (where appropriate).

Your Right to Repair

The Right to Repair

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced the Right to Repair scheme. This gives tenants the right to have certain repairs carried out within a fixed timescale, and also gives you the right to be paid compensation if we don't meet the required timescales.

To qualify for the right to repair scheme, the repair must:

- be a 'qualifying repair' (qualifying repairs are listed in the table below).
- and have an estimated value of £350 or less.

Requesting a repair

When you contact Repairs Direct, we will tell you:

- if it is a qualifying repair, where the repair is, and arrange access to fix it.
- the maximum length of time we have to fix it and the date it must be fixed by before you are entitled to compensation.
- your rights under the right to repair scheme
- the name and contact details of an approved alternative contractor, who you may contact if we have not started the repair in the time allowed.

Compensation

If we do not complete a qualifying repair within the time allowed, you are entitled to £15 compensation. You are also entitled to a further £3 each qualifying day until the repair is completed. The maximum compensation that you can be paid is £100.

Timescales for completion

We will always work hard to complete your repair sooner than the legal timescales, many of which have a one working day completion time (see list of qualifying repairs on the following page).

This means, for example, if a repair is requested on a Tuesday we will have until 5pm on Wednesday to complete the repair. If a repair is reported on a Friday, we will normally have until 5pm on Monday to complete the work.

Exceptional circumstances

Sometimes there may be circumstances beyond our control which will make it impossible to do the repair within the maximum time allowed, for example, severe weather or availability of parts from manufacturer.

If this happens we might need to make temporary arrangements and to extend the maximum time to complete the repair. We will let you know if we need to do this.

If boiler parts are unavailable, temporary heating can be provided. You will then be told when the parts will be available and when the repair will be carried out.

Using the alternative approved contractor.

If we have not started the repair within the time limit set, you can tell the alternative contractor to carry out the repair. You will be given the name and contact number of this

contractor when you first report the repair. The contractor will tell us you have asked them to carry out the work. We will then authorise the contractor to go ahead.

The Right to Repair does not apply if:

- i) the cost of the repair exceeds £350. In this case the right to repair is at an end.
- ii) we have been unable to gain access for inspection or for the repair to be carried out. In this case you will need to make a new repair request and the right to repair process will start again.

Fault	Timescale for completion (working days)
Blocked flue due to open fire or boiler	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans (where there is no other toilet in the house)	1
Blocked sink/wash hand basin, bath, drain	1
Loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
External window, door or lock not secure	1
Unsafe access path or step	1
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks or cisterns	1
Loss or partial loss of gas supply	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available	1
Toilet not flushing and there is no other toilet in the house	1
Unsafe power, lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Loose or detached banister or hand rail	3
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads	3
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7

Appeals

If you want to appeal our decision on whether or not to award compensation, you can contact us by writing to Customer Services, The City of Edinburgh Council, Housing Service, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG, or email customer.care@edinburgh.gov.uk, or telephone 0131 200 2300. Your appeal will be managed using our two stage complaints process. If, following this process, you are still unhappy with our decision, then you are entitled to appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

A right to Council Repairs Service

The Council may limit your access to services if:

- you, your family or others living with you present a current risk of violent or abusive behaviour towards Council staff or representatives.
- your home is scheduled for demolition. If your home is subject to demolition, you will receive information which outlines what repairs can be carried out. Under normal circumstances tenants will receive the full repairs service and only when demolition is imminent will there be the possibility of a more limited repairs service

In some circumstances where a fault is reported that requires replacement rather than repair it will be dealt with as part of a planned maintenance programme.

You have the right to complain against any decision to limit repairs by email to customer.care@edinburgh.gov.uk or in writing to:

Customer Care, Housing Services, The City of Edinburgh Council, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG or telephone 0131 200 2300.

Our policy on violence / abuse to employees at work

Our staff have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse. Anyone threatening or abusing our staff will be reported to the police and we will press for prosecution. If such an incident occurs on any occasion, your access to the Council's Repairs Service will be restricted and your tenancy may be put at risk.

Budgetary action

We must ensure that the cost of work in any financial year is within the budget set by the City of Edinburgh Council. In extreme cases, the Council may need to restrict repairs to the legal minimum in order to meet this requirement. Such severe action would be exceptional, would require a senior management decision and would be widely advertised.

Will I have to pay for repairs?

You are responsible for any damage that you, your family or visitors have caused.

Tenants will not be charged for any damage caused by fair wear and tear. Any repairs we ask tenants to pay for will only be for damage caused 'wilfully, accidentally or negligently' to their home, garden (including walls and fences) or any of the common parts of the block as stated in the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement. This includes damage caused by you, your family or your visitors.

You can make your own arrangements for repairs to be carried out, provided the work is completed to an adequate standard. Any gas or electrical work must be completed by a qualified tradesperson for that specific repair.

If we carry out a repair for such damage you will be asked to pay for it. We will give you an estimate for the repair. If you can't afford to pay it all at once, we will agree a payment plan with you.

When you give up the tenancy we will inspect the property and its state of repair. If you have carried out repairs and these are not to the required standard, then we will carry out the repairs correctly. You will have to pay the full cost of these repairs, and any others which you or your family have caused. If you don't leave a forwarding address, the Council will initiate its usual debt recovery process.

A record of the repairs and the outstanding bill will be kept and taken into account should you approach the Council for housing in the future. If you feel that you're not responsible for the cost of the repair you can complain by contacting your locality office. If the complaint is not settled it will be directed to the locality housing manager. You can find contact details for local offices on the back of this document.

Appointments

Below are the different types of appointments available.

All day

We will arrive anytime between 8am and 5pm Monday to Wednesday. Up to 3.30pm on Thursday and 1.00 pm on Friday.

Morning appointments

We will arrive between 8am and 12.30pm.

Afternoon appointments

We will arrive between 12 noon and 5pm Monday to Wednesday. Up to 3.30pm on Thursday and 1.00pm Friday.

We will make every effort to keep all appointments. If there is any delay we will let you know in advance.

Emergency repairs

Emergencies during working hours should be reported by phoning:
Repairs Direct on 0131 200 2345.

Some emergency repairs are available to all tenants 24 hours a day, every day of the year. **If a serious fault occurs outside normal working hours, and it isn't safe to wait until the next working day, you should report it to the out of hours emergency repairs service by calling 0131 200 2000.**

The out of hours emergency service is available on:

Weekdays Monday to Wednesday 5pm to 8am, Thursday 3.30pm to 8am

Weekends Friday 1.30pm to Monday 8am

Bank Holidays 24 hours

Emergency repairs will be dealt with outside normal working hours when the fault:

- poses a serious risk to health and safety
- poses a serious risk to the structure of the property
- the property is not secure.

Examples include:

- no water to kitchen sink
- blocked toilet
- broken window or door and the property is not secure.
- no electricity
- no heating or hot water when no alternative is available.

If the repair doesn't qualify as an out of hours emergency, we will let you know.

If a responsible adult is not present at the property when the emergency service responds, the job will have to be cancelled.

We will let you know when you report an emergency repair when we will respond, normally up to four hours from the time of reporting. In some cases, such as severe weather conditions, where there may be a high demand for repair work, some delays to the service may be expected.

The work will be to make the situation safe and/or carry out a temporary repair. If further work is needed, arrangements for a follow-on appointment will be made before our staff leave your home

Communal / block repairs

As well as attending to emergency and routine repairs in your home, the Housing Service carries out external repairs, for example to certain communal areas of flats such as stairs or roofs.

This service will depend on the type of property you live in. There are two basic types of property where we will carry out communal repairs: multi-storey blocks and low-rise blocks.

In multi-storey blocks, generally those that have lifts and a caretaking and concierge service, the Council has full responsibility for carrying out common repairs. Our normal standards and procedures for repairs apply. Owners in multi-storey blocks are recharged for their share of the costs. In some cases, such as severe weather conditions where there may be a high demand for repair work, some delays to the service may be expected.

Tenants are encouraged to use recycling facilities. By using this facility you will help to improve the environment and also help reduce the number of blocked chute repairs carried out each year.

Low rise blocks are generally those without lifts, caretakers or a concierge. Responsibility for repairs and the maintenance of common areas is shared between all owners including the Council.

The Council will organise emergency communal repairs where council tenants are directly affected and will recharge other owners for their share of the costs later.

We will also repair communal / block faults which pose a risk to health and safety or requires repair under the Council's wind and watertight landlord commitments. In these cases, we will repair the fault within our usual standards for urgent or emergency repairs.

For non-emergency communal repairs, the Council will offer advice to owners on how to organise the repair and will offer to pay its share of reasonable costs on behalf of our tenants for the repairs carried out. Owners can also organise emergency repairs with the Council making a contribution towards these if requested.

Stair lighting in blocks with council tenants is a Council responsibility. Please call **0131 200 2345** to request a stair lighting repair.

Multi-storey fire safety

The materials and fittings in multi-storey blocks are designed to prevent fire and smoke spread.

SMOKE AND HEAT ALARMS FOR EARLY WARNING

Make sure you've got working smoke alarms and test them weekly. If your smoke alarms don't work, contact the concierge staff or Repairs Direct to get them repaired or replaced. Make sure any smoke or heat alarms can be heard in all areas of your home with the doors closed.

Fire escape plans to get out quickly.

All homes should have a fire escape plan that the whole family/household knows about. It should include:

- how to get out quickly at night
- who is going to get the children?
- where the front door keys are located
- an identified 'safe room' in case you can't escape. Choose a room with a phone and a window.
- practise your plan, especially if you have children.

If a fire occurs in your flat

Smoke alarms should give you early warning in order to escape safely.

- Follow your 'fire escape plan'.
- Shout to alert others in the house and get out quickly.
- If smoke is present keep low, and crawl if you need to get below the smoke.
- Close doors behind you as you escape, to prevent smoke and fire spread.
- Don't return to investigate or fight the fire.
- Don't use the lifts; always take the stairs to exit the building.
- Once you get out, call the Fire and Rescue Service and stay out.

If the Fire is Not in your Flat

- If a smoke alarm is sounding in a communal area or you smell smoke, call the Fire and Rescue Service and tell them the location of the fire if you know it.
- Stay in your flat and keep the front door closed, you will be far safer.
- Pack a towel or sheets around the bottom of the front door to stop smoke getting in. Go to an open window and wait for the arrival of the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Only leave the safety of your flat if you're affected by heat or smoke, or if you're told to leave by firefighters or the Police.

If you are trapped

- In the unlikely event that you become trapped by fire in your home, go to your 'safe room' and gather everyone there.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service as soon as possible and protect the room by packing bedding or towels around the door to help block smoke.
- Gather on a balcony if one is accessible.
- Do not jump – the Fire and Rescue Service will be on their way.

Keeping your building safe

- Do not store refuse bags, combustible materials or items of furniture in common areas such as stairways, corridors or drying rooms. By keeping these areas clear it will protect escape routes and reduce the risk of deliberate fires.
- Lifts, fire alarm panels, fire doors and dry riser landing valves are there to assist with fire fighting operations. If you see damage to any of these features, please report it immediately.
- Doors in common areas are fire resisting and fitted with self closing devices and should never be wedged open.
- Bin rooms and access doors to the building should be kept secure to prevent intruders starting deliberate fires.
- Gas cylinders, flammable liquids and fuels should not be stored or used within a high-rise building.
- Emergency vehicle parking areas must be kept clear to allow firefighters access to fire hydrants and the building quickly in the event of fire.

Built to be fireproof

- The materials and fittings within a multi-storey are designed to prevent fire and smoke spread.
- If there is a fire in someone else's flat, you'll be safer staying in your own home.
- Most fires will not spread further than the area where they have started.
- You are at no more risk of having a house fire in a multi-storey flat than those living in other types of house.

Visit www.firescotland.gov.uk for practical fire safety advice, or talk to your local firefighters. You'll find contact details on the website, in your local library and in the phone book or speak to your concierge.

TO BOOK A FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT Call 0800 0731 999
Text 'FIRE' to 80800 or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk

Preventing blocked bin chutes

Bin chutes can become blocked if they are not used correctly.

If the chutes become blocked this causes inconvenience to tenants and causes a fire risk. Tenants are encouraged to use recycling facilities. By using these you will help to improve the environment and help reduce the number of blocked chute repairs carried out each year.

Help us make your bin chute better by

1. Not forcing large items down the chute
2. Only using the chutes between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm
3. Taking large amounts of rubbish to the bin room or phoning the concierge staff if you are unable to do so yourself
4. Calling 608 1100 to book a special uplift for bulky items
5. Wrapping rubbish and making sure it is small enough to fit a standard carrier bag
6. Not leaving rubbish on the landings

Maintenance and improvements

Every year, the Council repairs and modernises hundreds of properties where the fixtures and fittings need repair or replacement. This is carried out on a pre-programmed basis and is known as planned maintenance.

Planned maintenance includes things like new kitchens and bathrooms, new boilers or heating systems, electrical rewiring, external fabric improvements / door entry systems.

If the property is due to have planned maintenance work carried out in the next 12 months, such as a new kitchen or bathroom, repairs will only be ordered if the fault:

- is an emergency.
- poses a health and safety risk
- is covered by the Right to Repair
- is unrelated to the planned work
- will cause you serious inconvenience.

If your property has had planned works completed within the past 12 months, please report any repairs in the normal way by telephoning **Repairs Direct 0131 200 2345** and we will work with the relevant contactor to resolve.

Extra help for tenants

We aim to deliver the best service possible to all our tenants but realise that some may need a little extra help. For example:

- people with disabilities who use a wheelchair or walking frame.
- tenants with an advanced terminal illness
- tenants who use medical equipment, eg ventilators or kidney dialysis machines
- tenants within the community alarm scheme
- tenants who may require additional support.

If you or someone you live with has a disability or medical condition, we may be able to do these more quickly or provide extra help. However, we can only arrange this if the reported fault clearly has a negative effect on the medical condition or disability.

When requesting your repair, please ensure you clearly describe your situation to our call centre staff if:

- you need repairs to be completed faster than normal because of your circumstances.
- you have an impairment that will affect the arrangements of the appointment (such as hearing impairment or mobility restriction). We can ensure that our staff are aware of this and, for example, knock loudly or allow extra time for the door to be answered, or make contact via a third party such as a support worker
- you will have difficulty clearing the area around the fault (including lifting carpets and moving furniture) and you can't get help from relatives or neighbours
- you can't carry out minor repairs that you're responsible for (see pages 7-8), and you don't live with an able-bodied person. In some cases we may carry out these repairs. However, we would normally refer you to the Handyperson service from Care and Repair.

Please note:

- We will record this information in our tenant notes for future repairs only with your permission.
- We will arrange repairs through a third party such as a friend, relative or carer if necessary.
- We're unable to respond to requests for services that are not normally offered (for example changing light bulbs, fire alarm batteries, curtains for example).

Inspections

We want to get the right tradesman, with the correct materials to all our jobs each time, every time. To do this, it is sometimes necessary to arrange for one of our Quality Control Officers to carry out a pre-inspection.

Pre-inspections may be carried out in cases where:

- you're unable to fully explain the problem
- it isn't clear who is responsible for the repair
- measurements and/or technical specifications are needed before ordering work
- we need to identify the source of the problem
- specialist materials or equipment may be required.

Our Repairs Direct staff will determine if an inspection is needed, and in these cases will make an appointment for a Quality Control Officer to visit.

When the Quality Control Officer calls they will tell you what work is needed, arrange an appointment for the work to be carried out, and leave these details with you on a card or tell you if no work is to be carried out.

Post-inspections are carried out on a random sample of completed repairs, to ensure our staff and subcontractors provide a high standard of workmanship.

We also carry out quality checks when a tenant reports that:

- the work carried out has not rectified the problem
- the quality of workmanship was not acceptable.

We may also carry out a quality control check if you were dissatisfied about the repair.

Customer satisfaction / complaints

We value your feedback and use this to learn how we can improve our services. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. We will investigate what went wrong and, where appropriate, correct the problem. We will also take steps to make sure it does not happen again. We're committed to resolving complaints or problems. We learn from these so we can provide an even better service.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of our services. This could for example be about delays or failure to complete a repair, the standard of workmanship or service, the behaviour or attitude of a staff member or operative etc.

What is not a complaint?

Requests for repairs, requests for compensation, requests to reschedule a repair appointment or requests for a higher level of service than that outlined within this repairs policy are not complaints.

You can make a complaint, compliment, suggestion or enquiry online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk

What if I have a complaint

You can call us on 0131 200 2300, email customer.care@edinburgh.gov.uk write to **Customer Services, Housing Services, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG** or in person at any locality office.

Stage 1 - Frontline Resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in no more than five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage 2 - Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation. When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

Ombudsman

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it. You need to do this within one year of completing the complaints process.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, write to **Freepost SPSO**,

You can visit in person at **4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS**,

Tel. 0800 377 7330 or 0131 225 5300, fax 0800 377 7331, online www.spsso.org.uk

Appendix A: our commitment you

When working in your home our staff will:

- be tidily dressed and wear a uniform at all times
- introduce themselves and show identification to you before entering your home
- take care of your property and possessions, protecting them from damage, dust and paint
- be polite and respectful to you and your family
- not accept gifts
- follow Health and Safety requirements
- make sure materials and tools don't cause danger
- make good any damage caused by repair work in the property
- keep noise to a minimum and warn you and neighbours of any likely disturbance
- keep you informed about the progress of the repair
- make sure essential services are connected at the end of each day and when a repair is completed
- remove work related rubbish from the property, including the garden or common areas at the end of each working day
- not work in your home without a responsible adult present or hold keys to your home
- not smoke, play radios or use your facilities without your permission

Appendix B: common faults

Below are some general guidelines on what you should do if you discover a fault with gas systems or appliances.

The Gas meter and stopcock are located at: _____

GAS LEAK/SMELL OF GAS

- Don't turn electric switches on or off
- Turn off the gas supply at the meter
- Don't smoke
- Open doors and windows to get rid of the gas
- Don't use naked flames
- Call Scottish Gas Networks on the emergency freephone number **0800 111 999**

No gas, high or low pressure, fire or explosion: Call Scottish Gas Networks immediately on 0800 111 999

No heating or hot water	Check the pilot light has not gone out Check the timer is set correctly Check the isolation switch Check the gas meter has not run out of funds
Pilot light has gone out	Press the reset button on the boiler
Radiators are not very hot	Check the timer is set correctly, adjust the thermostatic valves or boiler temperature setting
Other	Call Repairs Direct for advice on 0131 200 2345 or 0131 200 2000 for out of hours emergencies

ELECTRICITY

Meter, fuse box and trip switches are located at:_____

If you have no electricity to all or part of your property the first thing you should do is check the trip switch.

Trip switches The trip switch/fuse box is next to your electricity meter. If any of the switches are down push them to the up position. (The main switch may need to be turned off then on again to reset the system).

If this does not fix the problem, you should then try the following:

No electricity (power points and lights) at all - card meter

The power will be cut off if you do not have enough credit on your card meter; you will need to get more credit to reinstate the supply.

Are your neighbours affected?

You could also check the stairwell or communal areas.

Yes Call Scottish Power on **0845 272 7999**

No It is likely that the fault originates from inside your home. Call Repairs Direct on **0131 200 2345** stating that you have no electricity at all. An emergency electrician will come and investigate the problem.

No electricity (power points or lights) to part of the property

Is it the electrical supply or the appliance?

Electrical supply If lighting is affected in a part of your home, or if no appliance will work in the affected socket, call Repairs Direct on **0131 200 2345**, stating that you have a partial loss of electricity. They will arrange an appointment for an electrician to call.

Appliance If only one appliance is not working it may be faulty. If other appliances work in the same socket, you should get the appliance checked by a qualified electrician.

PLUMBING

Stopcock

This is a tap that controls water flowing from the mains into your home. If you have a leak you should turn the water off at the stopcock to prevent any more water leaking.

A leak may not stop immediately because water is still flowing from the main tank or the hot water tank. You should turn on other taps to drain down the tank.

Check the immersion heater is switched off before the hot water tank is drained down. In the case of gas heating, switch off the water heater. Stopcocks are often located in the hallway or under the kitchen sink, there is sometimes more than one stopcock to allow you to turn water off to part of the property.

Frozen pipes

If the temperature inside a property drops below freezing, water may freeze inside the pipes. When the ice thaws out it may cause pipes to burst. To prevent frozen pipes always ensure that you turn the water off at the mains, or leave the central heating on if the property is going to be unattended for long periods of time during the winter months.

No water

Check the stopcock and then check to see if your neighbours have water. If they don't there may be a burst mains. Contact Scottish Water on 0845 600 8855 to report it, otherwise call Repairs Direct on 0131 200 2345 for advice.

Taps won't turn off

Contact us and we will arrange an appointment to repair it. If the water is running very quickly (full stream) you may need to turn the water off at the stopcock. (Sometimes there is a separate stopcock for the kitchen sink, this is usually under the sink). You can turn the stopcock on if you need water in the meantime. If your water is a different colour to normal, there may be a problem with the water supply. You should contact Scottish Water on **0845 600 8855** for further advice.

Blocked toilet

As a responsible tenant you should ensure that your toilet doesn't become blocked due to objects being flushed down it. Common examples are

- children's toys
- nappies
- entire toilet rolls
- kitchen roll
- paper
- plastic toilet fresheners.

If an object causes a blockage, the cost of the repair will be recharged to you. If an object accidentally falls into the toilet bowl, you should always remove it by lifting it out, NEVER try to flush it away.

Blocked shower head

It is your responsibility to clean the shower head. Using a plunger, sink unblocking agent or sodium bicarbonate can often clear blocked sinks or baths quickly and easily. Some blockages will clear themselves if they're left for a few hours.

Toilet won't flush

If this is your only toilet, we will fix the fault by the end of the next working day. In the meantime toilets can be flushed by pouring a bucket of water down it after each use.

Water from above

If you're on the top floor, a leaking roof could be the cause. We will arrange a temporary roof repair to ensure your home is wind and water tight. Please be aware that we cannot go onto a roof in the dark, during high winds or when it is raining for health and safety reasons.

If there is another flat above you, please try speaking to the occupier and get them to turn off their water. If they're not in, check the flats on both sides and the floor above, as sometimes the leak can travel some distance before it becomes noticeable.

Where the property is privately owned, we cannot break in to repair a leak without first going through a legal process. This may take some time.

Lost keys

If you lose your keys, door entry key, or get locked out, you will be charged for any costs associated with gaining access to your property. This includes:

- a call out fee
- cost of replacing all locks
- cost of repairing any associated damage to the door
- cost of repairing any associated damage to the door frame
- an administration charge.

We must attend other emergency repairs before attending to anyone who is locked out. This means you could wait up to six hours before we're able to gain access to your property. To avoid this, we strongly recommend that you leave a spare set of keys with family, friends or neighbours.

Useful numbers

Repairs Direct

0131 200 2345

repairsdirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

There is also a special repairs freephone in the reception area of each locality office

Out of hours / emergency repairs

0131 200 2000

Customer care

0131 200 2300

Housing Service Customer Services
Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street,
Edinburgh EH8 8BG

North East Locality Offices

0131 529 3111

northeast.locality@edinburgh.gov.uk

101 Niddrie Mains Road, EH16 4DS

North West Locality Offices

0131 529 5050

northwest.locality@edinburgh.gov.uk

8 West Pilton Gardens, EH4 4DP

South East Locality Office

0131 529 5151

southeast.locality@edinburgh.gov.uk

40 Captains Road, EH17 3YT

South West Locality Office

0131 527 3800

southwest.locality@edinburgh.gov.uk

10 Westside Plaza, EH14 2ST

Online

You can request a repair, report a problem or make complaints or suggestions at the [City of Edinburgh Council Website](#)

Happy to translate

We may be able to provide an interpreter or translate documents if you need help to use our services because you

- cannot speak English
- have problems understanding English
- have a sight or hearing loss.

Please contact us at its@edinburgh.gov.uk