



Repairs and maintenance policy

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1 Introduction

Alamo Housing Co-operative has taken on the responsibility of providing the day to day maintenance service to the properties we manage on behalf of other landlords. However, in most cases, the landlord has retained responsibility for certain functions, including gas servicing, external redecoration and major repairs.

In return for providing the maintenance service, we receive allowances to cover the cost of the repairs themselves. The allowances also pay for the staff and agents we employ to manage the repairs service.

It is our aim to maintain the homes we manage to a high standard, to obtain value for money, and to ensure that we deliver a high quality service to our members.

2 Objectives of the repairs and maintenance policy

The objectives of our repairs and maintenance policy are to ensure that:

- We meet our legal and contractual obligations as a managing agent and, where we have taken on this responsibility, we discharge the legal duties of the landlord.
- The maintenance service is of a high standard, fair and accessible to all our members, convenient to use and compliant with our *Equality and Diversity Policy*.
- All the staff, contractors, agents and consultants we employ are honest, reputable, competent and comply with our *Code of Conduct*.
- We obtain good value for money from the money we spend on repairs and maintenance.

3 Planned maintenance

Under most of the management agreements we have entered into, the landlord has retained responsibility for planned maintenance functions including:

- Maintaining the walls, roofs (except minor repairs) and other parts of the building structure.
- Renewal of major internal property components such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- Cyclical redecoration.
- Void repairs.

Members will always be consulted by landlords about planned works, and should be given adequate notice of any work that may affect them.

Most landlords also retain responsibility for some health and safety functions including:

- Gas safety.
- Routine testing and upgrading of electrical installations.
- Removal of asbestos.
- Improvements needed for health and safety reasons (for instance upgrading fire doors).

More information on property health and safety can be found in our *Health and Safety Policy*.



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4 Reporting repairs

Members should report day to day repairs to the co-operative, or, if we have appointed an agent to provide the maintenance service, directly to the agent. If we appoint an agent to provide maintenance services we will advise members how to contact them.

Central heating faults and other repairs relating to gas appliances will usually remain the responsibility of the landlord, and should be reported directly to the landlord's emergency helpline.

We will always ensure that our members have access to a 24/7 telephone service for emergency repairs.

5 Repair time-scales

Repairs will be categorised either as emergency, urgent or routine. Examples of the different repair priorities are shown in the table below.

Priority	Examples of repairs	Target timescale
Emergency	Serious water leak. Gas leak (<i>contact Transco</i>) Loss of gas heating or hot water if member vulnerable or if during a cold spell (<i>but landlord's policy will apply</i>) Lack of security (broken lock or broken ground floor window) Anything that is hazardous to the member's household or to the general public Loss of power	Within 24 hours
Urgent	Loss of gas heating or hot water (<i>contact the landlord</i>) Minor water leak Failure of communal TV aerial	Within 7 days
Routine	All other repairs (other than planned works and improvements)	Within 28 days

The repair categorisation outlined above will be applied to all repairs unless there are specific reasons why the member's individual circumstances merit a faster response.

A repair may be given a higher priority if someone living in the property is vulnerable. For instance if:

- The member (or a member of their household) is elderly and / or infirm
- The member (or a member of their household) has a relevant disability
- The member has children under the age of five.

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6 Providing access

It is a condition of the tenancy agreement signed by every member that they allow their landlord, and also the landlord's agents and contractors, access to their home at reasonable times of day to undertake repairs.

When repairs are required, or if we need to inspect a property, whether or not the member has requested a repair, we will expect that, subject to reasonable notice, the member will co-operate with our staff and agents so that the work can be completed quickly and cost effectively.

7 Insurance claims

The buildings managed by Alamo Housing Co-operative are insured by their respective landlords. If the landlord may be entitled to reclaim the cost of a repair under the buildings insurance policy, our staff or agents will forward details of the repair in order that a claim can be made. Each of our management agreements includes a procedure for reporting insurance claims to the landlord.

Repairs that are likely to lead to insurance claims include criminal damage, fire, subsidence, storm damage, and also other less common *Acts of God* such as floods and earthquakes.

8 Minor repairs

Members have an obligation under their tenancy agreement to take care of their homes, which means that there are certain minor repairs that Alamo Housing Co-operative will usually consider to be the responsibility of the member and not that of the co-operative. These repairs are listed in the table below.

The repairs that we expect our members to do for themselves	
Internal redecoration generally.	Replacing locks if keys lost. Also copying keys.
Repairing broken glass in doors & windows (unless due to criminal damage, storm damage or other "act of God").	Pest control, with some exceptions. We will expect our members to deal with non-threatening pests such as garden ants and beetles themselves, but we may be able to assist with other vermin.
Replacement of plugs and chains in baths and sinks.	Filling minor cracks in plasterwork and gaps between skirting boards and floors.
Replacement of toilet seats, toilet roll holders, shower heads & hoses	Plumbing in (and out) of washing machines, dish washers and other appliances
Replacement of internal light bulbs.	Repairing anything that the member has fitted, both inside and outside the property.
Repair and replacement of internal doors. Also adapting doors for carpets.	Fitting extra draught exclusion to doors & windows.

Our management committee, staff or agents may use their discretion and authorise a repair that we would usually expect the member to carry out for themselves if the tenant is vulnerable for any of the reasons set out in section 5 above. The repair may be treated as a rechargeable repair and member may be asked to pay for the cost of work (see section 9 – Rechargeable repairs below).

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9 Rechargeable repairs

If a repair is needed because one of our members has damaged or neglected their home, we will usually expect them to put the damage right themselves.

However, in exceptional circumstances, for instance because of health safety concerns, or if the member is vulnerable, the committee, staff and agents may use their discretion to authorise the repair. If we do agree to carry out such a repair, it will be treated as rechargeable in full to the member concerned. We will either ask the member to pay for the repair in advance, or agree a plan to repay the cost by instalments.

10 Voids

When a property falls vacant, we will aim to complete any necessary repairs and to re-let it within 28 days.

The co-op manager will inspect and order repair works as required to bring the property up to an acceptable lettable standard. This standard may vary depending on the property type (short-life or permanent tenancy) and on the terms of the management agreement with the landlord.

The following repairs and tests will be carried out at every void property:

1. Gas safety test
2. Electrical safety test
3. Removal of refuse
4. Clean and sweep

A electronic CORE return must be completed for each void property and under the terms of our management agreements with landlords, the co-op manager may also be required to inform the landlord when a property falls void.

On letting, the new tenant of a void property should be given a copy of the Gas Safety Certificate and also a copy of the EPC (Energy Performance Certificate).

11 Alterations and improvements

Members wishing to carry out alterations or additions to their home must first obtain written approval from their landlord. It will be considered a serious breach of the conditions of tenancy if any member carries out an alteration without first obtaining permission.

Unauthorised alterations which create a hazard, do not conform to building regulations, or are otherwise unacceptable to the landlord will be remedied by the co-operative (or by the landlord) and the member will be recharged for the cost of putting things right.

12 Approved contractors

We will either maintain our own approved list of contractors or rely on the agent providing our maintenance service to do so. Where an agent provides the maintenance service on our behalf, we will always reserve the right to nominate our preferred contractor.

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The decision to admit a contractor to the approved list will be taken by the management committee. The list of approved contractors will be reported to the annual general meeting (or to another general meeting).

The process by which a contractor is admitted to or rejected from our approved list will be clear and transparent. In return for accepting a contractor onto our list we will expect them to behave honestly and professionally and to demonstrate that they deliver value for money.

If we employ agents to provide the maintenance service, we will expect them to demonstrate that their approved contractors are able to meet the standards we expect of our own contractors.

13 Monitoring and reporting

We will keep a record of all the repairs we raise and also of the repairs ordered by agents acting for us. The committee will be provided with a maintenance report each quarter.

The report will show the number and cost of the repairs ordered, and will also provide external comparative information on typical maintenance costs so the committee can check that value for money is being obtained.

A repairs and maintenance report will also be provided to the annual general meeting (or to another general meeting).

14 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be reviewed if there are changes to relevant legislation or to the regulatory framework.