

Responsive Repairs Policy

Policy Statement

Purpose

As owners and managers of residential property we have a legal obligation to ensure that we are maintaining our properties in accordance with best practice. This policy provides the framework to ensure compliance.

Legal Obligations

As the landlord under Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, we have a duty to keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling house and keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling house for the supply of water, gas, electricity, sanitation, space heating, and heating water.

The Safety and Quality Standard, as set by the regulator for Social Housing, requires Registered Providers to provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service, meeting all applicable statutory requirements for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

We will comply with our duties for repairs and maintenance as set out in:

- The Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 2004
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Decent Homes Standard
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Environment Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010

Orwell's Commitment

Orwell is committed to being a high-quality landlord and providing a repairs service that responds to our customers' needs whilst continuing to represent excellent value for money.

This policy sets out our commitment to deliver high quality homes and services for our customers, and to ensure we keep our homes in the best possible condition. Tenants are safe in their home and have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.

To achieve this, we will:

- Provide a 24-hour emergency repairs service offering a flexible appointment system for tenants to enable us to complete repairs at their convenience. As a minimum we will meet the following service levels:

Emergency	6 hours
Urgent	7 Calendar Days
Non-Urgent	14 Calendar Days
Routine	31 Calendar Days
Responsive Plus	12 Months

- Offer a wide range of ways in which customers can report repairs. Repairs can be reported at any time via our website, our portal, email or by telephone. We encourage and promote self-appointing repairs online for those customers who are able. All contact will be logged on our cloud-based repairs management system so that a clear audit trail is available.
- When necessary,, arrange for a diagnostic appointment to take place before work can be ordered; for example, if the scope of the repair cannot be clearly defined. The diagnostic appointment will be offered, and any follow up work will then be arranged.
- Individually agree appointments with customers for all repairs except those in communal areas. The customer will be advised of the relevant response time and offered the next suitable appointment to undertake the repair.
- Aim to attend all the appointments made within the given time slot and get repairs right first time. We will diagnose repairs to identify the urgency of the job and ensure we send the correct colleague/contractor to complete the job with the right materials and tools at the first visit. Whilst we aim to minimise the need for follow-up visits, these are sometimes necessary due to the type of work involved or materials required. We aim to complete 90% of repairs at the first appointment.
- Give our customers the opportunity, via Orwell Residents Group, to scrutinise our repairs and maintenance policies, procedures, and activities, as well as being involved in the annual review of our compliance with the Safety and Quality Standard.
- Scrutinise and develop our repairs and maintenance activities considering the planned maintenance programme, housing management issues, and tenancy sustainment, and will link in with colleagues in other teams as appropriate to ensure holistic, joined-up service delivery to our customers. We will analyse trends and flag any potential referral needs or additional property inspections should the property suffer from significant or recurrent disrepair, or if it may be beyond economical repair.
- Ensure that all services installed within a property are serviced in accordance with statutory requirements or, where such statutory requirements do not exist, in line with good practice guidelines.

- In accordance with our Damp, Mould, and Condensation Policy, we will take responsibility for diagnosing and resolving damp and mould in a timely and effective way where there are issues that require repair. We will treat customers reporting damp, mould and condensation with empathy and respect and will not prejudge the reason for any issue.
- Ensure both Orwell's staff and external contractors are trained in and provide a high level of customer care. Our staff/contractors will be polite and sensitive to the needs of customers and will explain the nature of the work they are undertaking to the customer and advise of any unavoidable delays. All trade staff/contractors will wear corporate uniforms, and carry, and show ID.
- Ensure that all staff/contractors have appropriate safeguarding training.
- Deliver a repairs service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure that the health, safety and security of our staff and customers is protected at all times.
- Ensure that repairs are carried out to a high standard using good quality, and responsibly sourced materials.
- Carry out regular surveys to obtain our customers' views on the repairs service via a range of means, including monthly and quarterly Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) surveys, and use feedback to inform and develop our service offers.
- Ensure complaints are handled quickly and efficiently in accordance with our Complaints, Compliments and Compensation Policy and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, using complaints information to monitor and improve the quality of the service.
- Consider offering compensation for service failures, considering the number, nature, and severity of any such failures, the length of time taken to resolve repairs issues and the impact on the customer, having particular regard to any vulnerabilities. We will also have regard to recent cases published by the Housing Ombudsman and refer to the Housing Ombudsman's Remedies Guidance.
- Publish data on how we are performing on repairs.
- Collect benchmarking information to assess the performance of the responsive repairs service in terms of both value for money and customer satisfaction and, where there is differentiation, look to understand why this occurs and adjust the service if appropriate.
- Ensure responsive repairs procurement is carried out in accordance with Orwell's procurement policy and procedures and that contracts are monitored.