

# ABILITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION REPAIRS

Customer Handbook 2024





**As a customer of Ability Housing Association, you can expect us to make sure your home is safe and comfortable for you to live in.**

This includes using our 'Reactive Repairs Service' when you need it. This service is delivered by one of Ability's maintenance contractors, all of whom we check to make sure they can meet our needs.

This guide gives you a list of the repairs covered by this service, as well as the time it should take for us to visit your home to address the repair.

If you have a repair need to report, please complete the simple repairs form on our website [www.ability-housing.co.uk](http://www.ability-housing.co.uk)

If your repair is considered an emergency (based on the descriptions in this guide) please call our Contact Centre on **0808 164 7474**, and we will help you. You can also use this number if you prefer to speak to someone about your repair rather than use the website.

### **Emergency Repairs – Same Day Attendance**

We aim to attend your home the same day when there is/are:

- A serious leak where water cannot be suitably contained - such as a burst pipe or where the water cannot be turned off and it could damage your home or somebody else's home nearby
- An externally caused blockage where sewage is overflowing directly into a home
- A dangerous structure which is at risk of collapse or has the potential to harm someone
- External doors or windows to your home that are insecure
- If there is a fire, someone will attend your home to assess it to make sure it is safe

In these cases, our contractor will make sure your home is safe. After the initial emergency call out, they may need to book a follow up appointment to complete any works that are needed.

### **Emergency Repairs – Attendance Within 24-Hours Following Report**

We aim to attend your home within 24 hours of you reporting it when there is/are:

- A externally caused blocked toilet that is the only facility in your home (i.e. there is no second toilet), and you have tried to clear it yourself – or when the toilet is adapted for your use (such as a Closomat toilet or similar).

*Please note that if a blockage is caused by misuse such as putting wet wipes or other sanitary products in the toilet, the call out and action will be charged to customers.*

- A externally caused blockage which is causing dirty or waste water to back up inside your bath, shower or basin, and you have tried to clear it yourself.

*Please note that if a blockage is caused by misuse such as grease and fat, hair or similar deposits, the call out and action will be charged to customers.*

- A total loss of your electrical supply due to an issue or fault not related to credit meters.
- An unsafe electrical fitting - or where bare electrical wires are exposed.
- A complete loss of the water supply to your home.
- No heating and/or hot water between the months of: 1st October and 31st March.



*Please note that if the issue with your heating supply be related to credit issues (i.e. if there is no credit on the meter) or related to improper use of the controls such as thermostats, the call out and action will be charged to customers.*

- Failure of a 'warden/alarm call system (Telecare) when this is reported during the working week (Monday – Friday, 09:00am – 5:00pm)
- Failure of door entry system
- Externally blocked drains
- Failure of a communal fire alarm system
- Damaged communal flooring presenting an immediate and/or potential trip hazard
- Roof leak resulting in serious internal flooding
- Lift or hoist breakdown
- Significant damage to the structure of a building, but not believed to at risk of imminent collapse
- Offensive or racist graffiti

As with the 'same day' emergency attendances, the aim of the initial response will be to ensure the immediate safety of you and your home - and wider areas when this is applicable. Again, this may mean that a follow up appointment is required to complete the works needed, following the initial call out.







**Urgent Repairs – Attendance Within Seven Days Following Report**

We aim to attend your home within seven days of you reporting it when there is/are:

- A leak where water can be contained or captured, but where wider damage could happen as a result and the water is not running into a basin, bath, or sink.
- Loss of bathing and/or washing facilities
- A broken or faulty electrical shower (where there is no other bathing facility)

- No heating and/or hot water between: 1st April – 30th September.

*Please note that if the issue with your heating supply be related to credit issues (i.e. if there is no credit on the meter) or related to improper use of the controls such as thermostats, the call out and action will be charged to customers.*

- Lift breakdown within a block
- Appliance breakdown, where Ability Housing Association is responsible for the appliance.
- Issues with door entry phone/system

**Routine Repairs – Attendance Within 28-Days Following Report**

We aim to attend your home within 28 days of you reporting it when there is/are:

- Works to gutters, downpipes, hoppers, clips and other fittings.
- Roof and roofline repairs
- General repairs to external windows and doors
- Faulty and/or broken taps.

*Please note that replacing tap washers is customers' responsibility. They should be replaced before you report a repair needed to make sure this is not the problem. If this issue is found to be caused by a washer, then the call out will be charged to the customer. Repairs to fencing and/or gates.*

- Kitchen repairs
- Bathroom repairs
- Toilet repairs
- Glazing repairs
- Repairs to failed internal doors, frames, skirtings, and architraves
- Repairs to boxing-in/service casement where applicable
- Communal TV aerial failure
- Plaster failure (commonly called 'blown' plaster, or whereby plaster has failed because of another fault, such as a leak).

*Please note that this plaster repairs do not cover general filling of holes and cracks – as this is considered 'decorative' work. These decorative works will be charged to customers.*

- Works associated with faulty or broken carbon monoxide, heat, and smoke detectors.

*Please note that our service covers works to the supply and detector, not battery replacement. If the issue is found to be due to a failed battery, the customer will be charged for the repair. We advise that you change batteries in your detectors before reporting an issue.*

- Faulty or failed light fittings/pendants. Please note that if the issue is found to be a faulty or failed bulb then a call out will be charged to the customer. We advise you to change bulbs before reporting a repair.
- Faulty or broken light fittings in communal areas
- Faulty electrical sockets and switches
- Faulty electrical heaters, including storage, convector, and oil-filled.

- Faulty radiators.

*Please note that this service does not include bleeding radiators, which is the customer's responsibility. If the issue is found to be related to radiators that need bleeding, the call out will be charged to the customer. We advise customers to bleed their radiators before reporting a repair.*

- A leak where water is being contained or captured, but where a fault is present and repair required
- Communal floor covering repairs and works
- Brickwork and/or render repairs
- Pest proofing
- Groundwork repairs
- Washing lines and rotary dryers (within communal spaces/shared lines/dryers)
- Re-securing of existing grab rails and handrails
- Damage to a property's subfloor, causing a risk and/or trip hazard to the customer. Please note that this does not relate to floor covering or finish such as vinyl, carpet, tiles, wood, laminate, engineered wood, or others – as these are the customer's responsibility.





### Cyclical and Planned Works

In addition to our 'Reactive Repairs Service' provided (as outlined and displayed above), Ability Housing Association also provides 'planned' services to you and your home.

This includes:

- A full electrical test (including any electrical upgrades needed) every five years
- An annual boiler assessment and gas safety certificate
- Investment works at appropriate intervals (we identify these through a Stock Condition Assessment)

These are planned by Ability's Property Team rather than being offered in a 'reactive' way. We will contact you about these to organise appointments with you.

### Damp and Mould Reports

You should report any damp and mould issues you can see in your home to our Contact Centre. This will trigger a process to assess the problem, find its cause, and take action to resolve it.



### Aids and Adaptations

If you need aids and/or adaptation to support you in your home, you should contact us. You will need to supply a report from a practitioner such as an occupational therapist.

We will aim to deliver any aids and/or adaptations needed within 28 days. With certain items you will need to apply for DFG funding with your Local Authority. Your Housing & Support Officer will be able to support you with this process.

### Tenant/Customer/Occupying Parties' Responsibilities

The following items are your responsibility and not covered by our repairs service.

Changing of light bulbs/lamps, including fluorescent tubes and starters within all light fittings within a customer's home

- Changing of tap washers
- Bleeding of radiators
- Balancing/setting of temperature and heating controls
- Gaining access to your home after losing/misplacing keys (i.e. locksmith's costs)
- Lock changes to cabinets or other similar units
- Renewing locks to external doors and windows after losing/misplacing keys
- Internal and external decoration works to your home – this includes preparation, filling, papering, painting, and other treatments
- Floor coverings in your home (including cleaning and replacement)
- Replacement of blown fuses within appliances
- Replacement of plugs and chains in sinks and basins
- Shower heads and hoses
- Silicone sealant renewals to sinks, worktops, baths, etc.
- The replacement or repair of toilet seats
- Bath, shower curtains and associated poles, including installation and renewal of the existing ones.
- Shower screen and door seal replacements
- The replacement of batteries in smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide alarms
- Renewal of electrical pull cords
- Clearance of blockages in sinks, baths, basins, showers, and toilets. Or blockages caused by improper usage.
- Washing lines and rotary dryers (individual/property specific line)
- Installation of additional locks or safety catches
- Installation of additional items or parts (i.e. installing not repair of existing elements.
- Installation of additional ironmongery

- Generalised improvements or alterations (i.e. non-repair elements)
- Repair of customer installed elements, components, and appliances
- Garden maintenance, including grass, shrubbery, and tree cutting/felling within an individual property boundary
- Repairs/works to external structures such as sheds, etc
- External landscaping works and improvements, such as decking installations
- Additional draft-proofing to windows, doors, and other elements where required
- Aerials, satellite dishes, phone wiring and telecoms elements (individual and property specific)
- Repairs to furniture or non-fixed building components
- Repairs (all incumbent) as a result of improper usage and/or wilful damage, as appose to general 'wear and tear'/generalised usage.

To ensure that any items of work you carry out yourself (or ask someone else to do) is of the required & desired standard, we recommend that only competent and skilled tradespersons and/or contractors are sourced and used.

Here is a list of websites that may help you with this process:

- [www.mybuilder.com](http://www.mybuilder.com)
- [www.trustatrader.com](http://www.trustatrader.com)
- [www.trustatrader.com/handyman](http://www.trustatrader.com/handyman)
- [www.checkatrade.com](http://www.checkatrade.com)
- [www.guildmc.com](http://www.guildmc.com)
- [www.napit.org.uk](http://www.napit.org.uk)
- [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)
- [www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com)

If you require any further help, please contact your Housing & Support Officer.

Please note that for any alteration or improvement works which in any way change the design and layout of your home or any of your supply/service elements (electric and gas elements) you will need permission from Ability Housing Association to go ahead. You can call our Contact Centre or your Housing & Support Officer to get a copy of our 'Customer Improvement & Alterations' document, which will help you with the application process.

We recommend that customers ensure that their home contents insurance policy covers losses for personal belongings and furnishes, including carpets, decorations, furniture, etc, and that it covers the cost of your possessions at home.





## COMMITMENTS

### VALUES

#### We engage actively for feedback

*We listen actively to our customers, colleagues and partners to help improve what we do and how we do it.*

#### We value differences

*We respect and value the individuality of each person.*

#### We focus on ability not disability

*We focus on what each person CAN-DO.*

#### We demonstrate integrity

*Our culture is one of openness, honesty and personal accountability.*



### BEHAVIOURS

#### Seek first to understand

*I will listen actively to ensure I have the best possible understanding.*

#### Think: CAN-DO

*I will focus on what is possible and think about what I CAN-DO.*

#### Give a positive response

*I will work with you to agree a positive outcome, without excuse or blame.*

#### Personal ownership

*I will take full responsibility for making sure the agreed outcomes are achieved in good time.*

### Company registered office

Ability Housing Association,  
The Coach House,  
Gresham Road, Staines,  
Middlesex, TW18 2AE

### Registrations

- Company number: 01261380
- Charity number: 271547
- Registered with The Regulator for Social Housing for England & Wales, Number LH2174

### How to get in touch with us:

☎ : 0808 164 7474  
✉ : [contact@ability-housing.co.uk](mailto:contact@ability-housing.co.uk)  
Visit or write to us: Ability Housing Association  
The Coach House, Gresham, Staines, Middlesex TW18 2AE

