



REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

This Policy outlines Citizen's approach to how we manage our responsive repairs and maintenance service.

Customers are responsible for some aspects of maintenance in their home and this Policy should be read in conjunction with customers' individual tenancy, licence and leasehold agreements which further define responsibilities.

Citizen works with a number of support providers who act as managing agents in Citizen-owned supported housing schemes. In these instances, the managing agents may be responsible for repairs to our asset and these repairs will be managed according to the management agreement in place.

This Policy supports our business strategy objective, Homes - making sure that our homes are safe, comfortable and sustainable for our customers.

We aim to provide the following outcomes for customers:

- deliver an efficient, effective and value for money repair and maintenance service
- provide customers with a safe and comfortable home
- where possible, complete repairs on the first visit
- comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and meet our contractual obligations.

We will achieve these by;

- continually monitoring performance against agreed targets
- listening to customer feedback to help shape and improve our service
- being innovative and adopting new working methods
- investing in our teams so that we are equipped to deliver the best possible service
- working with our partners to deliver our repairs service

2. Scope

This Policy extends to all empty and occupied property owned by us; properties we manage on behalf of others where the lease provides; and shared ownership properties to which we have a contractual or statutory duty. This includes communal areas of our properties and garage sites. Services provided by third parties on our behalf are expected to deliver services in accordance with this policy.

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Minor adaptations form part of this policy as they are managed as part of our responsive repairs.

3. Policy Detail

3.1 Service Standards

We will;

- provide a 24 hour, 7 day a week service to allow the reporting of and response to emergency repairs.
- attend and complete repairs to published timescales which are easily accessible on our website.
- offer a choice of appointment slots.
- Clearly communicate to customers regarding when they can expect their repair to take place
- Consider the individual needs of the customer when responding to repair requests.
- Meet any timescales stipulated in legislative and regulatory requirements. This includes those detailed in the Governments guidance supporting Awaab's Law.

Customer requests for appointments beyond published timescales will be accommodated, with the exception of emergency repairs.

Investigation reports will be issued electronically as standard however, where a customer has an alternative communication preference, every effort will be made to take these preferences into account.

Reporting Repairs

Customers can easily report repairs using the following methods;

- online via My Account,
- by telephone on 0300 790 6555

Customers will be encouraged to report repairs directly themselves via My Account. We cannot process repair requests made via social media or other channels not listed above.

Where a repair is identified that could form part of an imminent planned maintenance programme, consideration will be given as to whether the repair will be best managed as part of that programme, in which case, it may not be responded to within published timescales. In these instances, we will inform the customer of the likely timescale for replacement work. Where there is a risk to the health and safety of the customer or the repair falls within the scope of Awaab's Law this will not be applicable.

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For our new build homes, a warranty is provided by the house builder and repairs may not always be responded to in our published timescales unless the repair falls within the scope of Awaab's Law. In these cases, we will carry out the repairs within the statutory timescales.

3.2 Communal Systems

Where we have the responsibility for the maintenance or servicing of a communal system for example a communal TV aerial, we will do so in line with maintenance service standards. Where third parties such as managing agents have an interest, own or control the systems, we will endeavour to communicate and work closely with them to ensure the service received by customers meets our usual standards.

3.3 Roles and Responsibility for Repairs

The responsibility for repairs and maintenance for both Citizen and our customers are set out in individual tenancy, licence and leasehold agreements which should be read alongside this policy. Expectations around the maintenance of the home are published on our website.

Generally, we expect our customers to:

- Keep the inside of their home and where applicable exterior and garden in good condition
- Undertake minor repairs and avoid doing anything which may result in damage to the property, for example causing blockages to pipes by disposing of fat, oil, sanitary products, nappies etc. down toilets or in sinks
- **Adopt the responsibilities shown below**

Customers

- To use internal and communal installations responsibly.
- To allow access for repair works for which we are responsible and not obstruct or deny works to their home or the communal areas
- To maintain areas of the home for which they are responsible in accordance with the conditions of the tenancy agreement or lease. Details of these responsibilities are published on our website.

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- To ensure that a responsible adult is present for any repair or maintenance appointment
- To clear repair work area of personal items or valuables prior to a scheduled appointment
- To be responsible for the repair or replacement of items in a property damaged due to neglect, carelessness or deliberate action on the part of the customer, household or visitors. To pay any charges for such repairs that are undertaken by us
- To seek permission from Citizen prior to carrying out any improvement or alteration to the property either inside or outside of the home.
- Should not smoke or vape in the property when the engineer is present or 1 hour before.
- Should recognise that we have a zero tolerance towards the abuse of any staff or contractors by customers and visitors and incidents of this nature may be reported to the police. Any incidents will be dealt with in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Citizen

- To ensure that our approved operatives work in a safe, clean and tidy manner.
- To show ID when attending customer's homes.
- Will carry out repairs for which we are responsible to a good standard.
- Will show respect and courtesy to customers in line with the Citizen Code of Conduct and values.
- To only enter a customer's home where a responsible adult is present, unless there is evidence of a clear risk to any person(s).
- To ensure that operatives work in a way that is healthy and safe; protecting themselves, others, and the environment in which they are working.
- To ensure that customers are aware of the status of their repair.
- Will ensure that all our operatives and contractors are trained in how to recognise and report safeguarding.

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3.4 Rechargeable Repairs

For repairs that are not the responsibility of Citizen we will encourage and support customers to look after their homes. We will develop tools such as videos on our websites to help inform customers of their responsibilities.

On some occasions, we may use our discretion to undertake repairs that are a customer's responsibility. Consideration will be given to vulnerabilities, specific customer needs and where there is a risk to the customer's safety or home. On these occasions we may undertake the repair and recharge the customer in line with our Rechargeable Repairs procedure.

We may undertake rechargeable repairs free of charge when a customer has been the victim of crime and can produce a crime reference number.

We may undertake certain additional repairs to customers who are the victims of domestic abuse.

Where it is not our responsibility to undertake a repair for a customer, we may advise them on how they can access appropriate help and support.

3.5 Policy Management

We will carry out regular performance monitoring of our contractors and in-house services relating to contract compliance, customer care, quality standards, health and safety, timescales, and cost.

Regular reports will be provided to Board accounting for the delivery of our repair and maintenance service.

Regular audits and Scrutiny reviews of the repairs service will take place and outcomes presented to Board and Customer Assurance Committee.

3.6 Customer insight

Where we amend our Policy, customer feedback will be sought and considered as part of the policy review.

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3.7 No Access

Where a repair has been reported and we are unable to gain access to complete the repair we will attempt to make contact with the customer in order to rearrange. If we are unable to gain access to carry out the repair then the repair may be cancelled. I

If we are aware that the customer has additional needs which could be impacting our ability to gain access, we will ensure that these are considered and all reasonable attempts to gain access have been exhausted before cancelling the appointment.

No Access will be managed under Citizens No Access procedure and the number of attempts made will be dependent on the nature of the repair, for example, a HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) or health and safety concern will require more attempts compared to a minor/cosmetic repair.

Citizen will use all legal remedies available should a customer refuse access to carry out essential repair works. However, in exceptional circumstances and where it is clearly identified that wider welfare risk exists to others, Citizen will consider the use of forced entry to safeguard against any identified risk. Such cases will require written Director approval before any forced access is actioned.

4. Damp, mould and condensation (DMC)

Citizen will comply with all legal and statutory requirements for the identification and treatment of DMC and follow guidance from the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman. We will keep our policy and procedures under review against any further recommendations, good practice or spotlight reports from the regulator and ombudsman.

4.1 Management of damp, mould and condensation (DMC)

Citizen will respond to reports of DMC in customers homes and communal spaces in a timely way that takes a holistic approach to diagnosing and treating the causes of DMC. We will review and adapt the service to meet the requirements of Awaab's Law.

Citizen will use data to identify trends and analyse findings and risk so that priority properties can be identified and proactively inspected.

We will take a strategic approach to managing properties by using a range of methods to proactively monitor and prevent DMC.

When properties become void, they will be assessed for DMC and where remedial works are identified these will be carried out in a timely manner. Work to address DMC will be undertaken before the property is relet. Any remaining works to deal with further

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occurrences or prevention may be scheduled after the property has been relet to prevent extended void periods. No property will be relet with DMC in situ.

All staff and contractors who enter a customers property will be trained on how to identify and report instances of DMC. They will also be in a position to direct customers to appropriate advice. All customer facing staff are required to undertake training in order to understand the causes of DMC.

In regeneration areas, Citizen will continue to maintain properties where practical or move customers to a more suitable property where appropriate.

Citizen will undertake remedial works as necessary when cases of DMC are reported however we will utilise other services to ensure that all issues are addressed not just those relating to the fabric of the building.

This will include:

- offering advice on the best way to heat their homes and reduce condensation and make this available on our website and customer portal.
- specialist money advice for customers struggling with the cost of heating their homes
- support to seek more suitable accommodation through Mutual Exchange or in exceptional cases we can explore a transfer, where the property is no longer appropriate for the needs of the customer.

Citizen ensures that the way we manage DMC is effectively communicated to customers when they report issues to us.

Citizen will have in place a proactive communications plan to assist customers in understanding, reporting and managing the causes and effects of DMC.

5. HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System)

Maintaining the health and safety of our customers is our priority and Citizen will respond to Category 1 and Category 2 Repairs as identified within the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) within published timescales and in accordance with our statutory duties. The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool that helps landlords to identify and protect customers from potential risks and hazards to their health and safety.

6. Roles, Responsibility and Governance

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that this policy is successfully implemented, and the procedures followed. The Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service are responsible

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for ensuring that all staff understand the importance of this policy and the related procedures and comply with them.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that their reports have undertaken the appropriate policy eLearning by utilising reports produced by Learning and Development

Any changes to this policy must be made in line with the requirements set out in Citizens Standing Orders and our Policy framework.

7. Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless legislation, service delivery or sector developments require otherwise ensuring the policy continues to meet its objectives and take account of good practice developments.

Legal advice will be taken to ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and contractual responsibilities.

Where appropriate service delivery reports in respect of this policy are incorporated into our quarterly reporting suite.

8. Equality impact Assessment

This policy reflects Citizen's values, and as such, our staff and others covered by the scope of this policy are committed to not discriminate against any individual or groups and will respect the diversity of the communities with which we work. We will adhere to our statutory obligations set out in the Equality Act 2010.

In framing this policy, our staff are committed to not discriminate adversely against any group and will respect the diversity of the communities we are working within.

The Belonging & Inclusion Strategy sets out our commitment to improving the lives of all our customers and making our society a better place for everyone. We want to ensure that all our customers have a meaningful voice, and that we provide them with the best customer experience. In line with our legal and regulatory duties we must ensure that the services we provide are accessible, and where possible are tailored to the individual needs of our customers.

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9. Version Control

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENTS	APPROVED AT/BY	NEXT FULL REVIEW
V 1.0	Sept 2019	Policy updated to Citizen brand format	n/a	
V 2.0	Nov 2019	Updated to reflect the revised approach to Gas Servicing	Head of Compliance	April 2021
V 3.0	Apr 2021	Regular Policy Review	ELT	April 2023
V4.0	March 2023	Including of section 4 damp and mould	ELT	Oct 2024
V 5.0	March 2025	The exclusion of references to gas servicing, change of title, reasonable adjustments, clarification of rechargeable repairs, when a repair becomes part of the planned programme, clarity on no access, additions within the roles and responsibilities section.	ELT	Feb 2027
6.0	Dec 2025	Removed reporting via email, added that social media is not a reporting channel, references to Awaabs law added.	Policy Owner	Feb 2027

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