

# Repair Guidelines



Reporting repairs, how we deal with them  
and an outline of our priority guidelines

## Introduction

This leaflet is intended to set out how we deal with repairs once you have reported them to us; our guidelines on what constitutes an emergency; our timescales; and expectations.

Please note that if you are a leaseholder or shared owner you are normally responsible for your own repairs but, if in doubt, please contact us. The exception is where there is a problem in a communal area that Sandbourne owns, for example inside of a block of flats.

For our tenants, some repairs may be your responsibility and not Sandbourne's, for example changing your light bulbs, replacing your toilet seat, cleaning and replacing your shower head and hose, cleaning extractor fans and maintaining your own electrical/gas appliances. If you are unsure, please read this leaflet and then ring the office on 01202 671222 to speak to us if it is still unclear.

This leaflet should be in conjunction with the 'Recharge Guidelines' leaflet. We also have a Policy on Responsive Repairs. All documents are available on our website or upon request from our office.

## How do I report a repair?

By:

- ringing the registered office on **01202 671222**, 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday, except for public and other English statutory holidays (a message can be left on the answer phone if the line is busy)
- emailing us at [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk)
- using our repairs reporting form on our website at [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk).

We normally aim to acknowledge telephone messages, emails and website contact forms the same or next working day. However, we have up to five working days to do this, particularly if messages are left outside of normal office hours.

Please do not 'nab' a member of Sandbourne's staff to report a repair if you happen to see them on site.

Similarly, please do not leave written repair requests at any of our Bournemouth site offices (Woodlands and Craigleith) as we cannot guarantee when a member of staff will be there to pick it up.

Any repairs reports made in writing to the registered office should only be for non-emergency repairs.

## **What if the office is closed?**

Messages relating to non-urgent repairs can be left on our answer phone, or sent by email, outside of normal working hours and will normally be dealt with the next working day.

If the repair is an emergency when the office is closed and it cannot wait until the next working day, you (tenants only) can call the 'out of hours' emergency service (Careline) on 01202 392322 or use your emergency pull cord if you have one provided by Sandbourne. They will be able to offer advice or call out a member of staff or contractor to help you.

However, please consider carefully before doing so as you may be charged if a member of staff or a contractor is called out on your behalf for a non-emergency repair which could have waited until the office is open or the repair is your responsibility.

## What happens when I report a repair?

- Once you have reported your repair to us at the office, it will be logged on our repairs system. Please note that your repair date and any timescales for making an appointment and completing the works will only count from the date you advised the office.
- The contractor, or a member of our maintenance team, may need to visit your home to assess what is needed before arranging an appointment for any works to be carried out. We will advise you if this is the case.
- Once we know what is involved, the maintenance team will send a works order to one of the contractors on our approved list. It will include your name, contact telephone number, address and a brief description of the repair.
- If you have given us your written consent to receive the repairs texting service, a text will be sent to you acknowledging that your repair has been logged and advising who will be dealing with it.
- The contractor will then ring you to make an appointment that is convenient to both you and them (normally to be completed during normal working hours unless it is an emergency or you have agreed an alternative time with them). This will be followed up with a text message from our contractor to confirm the appointment. Please note that a responsible adult must be home to let the contractor in and stay with them and they should be aged 18 or over.
- If we, or our contractor, fail to arrive for the appointment, please ring and let us know so that we can find out why. (Please allow extra time due to traffic etc.)

- Please note that if we don't have your up-to-date telephone contact details we may not be able to keep you up-to-date on progress with your repair.
- You should also check your phone for missed calls from either us or our contractors, check for text messages and listen to any voicemail messages left.
- You can opt out of receiving the text messaging service if you write to the office.
- If you haven't opted in to receive text messaging, you will be contacted by phone, at the appropriate stage, provided we have your up-to-date contact details.

## **What happens about changing or cancelling appointments?**

- If you need to re-arrange or cancel an appointment, please ring us as soon as possible. If you give us less than 24 hours' notice, this could result in us being charged for the contractor's time, the cost of which may be passed on to you. In addition, if you cancel appointments on a regular basis, without giving proper notice, the charges may also be passed on to you.
- If we, or our contractor, need to re-arrange an appointment, we will aim to give you a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

## **Carrying out a repair**

As mentioned above, we need you to arrange for a responsible adult, aged 18 years or over, to be available to enable us or a contractor to enter your property.

We will only enter your property, without your consent, if we receive reports of something like a gas leak or water

pouring through the ceiling of a flat and we cannot wait and cannot contact you.

On occasions, our contractor may not be able to carry out a repair on the first visit, for example if a new part needs to be ordered. If this happens our contractor will make another appointment with you.

## **What are the priorities for repairs?**

Set out below are summaries of our repairs categories.

### **What is an emergency, ie 24 hours?**

Sandbourne defines an emergency repair as one which will be attended to within 24 hours and is anything which, if left unattended, may cause immediate risk or injury, damage to health, loss of facility causing undue hardship, extensive damage to property, or loss of security to the property.

Examples of these types of works are the total loss of cold water supply, blocked overflowing drains or loss of heating during winter months (further examples are given on the following pages).

Where a permanent repair cannot be made immediately, a temporary repair will be carried out to make safe and a permanent repair will then be undertaken under a less urgent priority timescale and you will be contacted by our contractor to make a follow up appointment. This also applies to any works required to repair any damage caused by the emergency incident.

During the winter months, normally defined as between November and April (inclusive), heating repairs will be considered as emergency works.

## Examples of emergencies are:

- **Water**, including the total loss of water; burst water main; flooding; water leaking into electrical fittings (please turn off your water stop cock).
- **Storm damage**, including loose/dangerous roof tiles, fallen trees likely to cause damage to people or properties; or broken downpipes allowing water to penetrate the building.
- **Electricity**, including the total loss of the electricity supply; a major fault; loss of lighting in communal hallways where it presents a hazard; lift failures; or unsafe electrical fittings. Please check with neighbours to see if they have power before ringing us and check for area faults (emergencies 0800 072 7282 or updates on 150). Remember that landlines may not work.
- **Security (doors and windows)**, including damage caused by break-ins to doors and windows (please get a crime number from the police and let us have this); windows and outside doors not closing (particularly on the ground floor).

Being locked out or losing your keys does not constitute an emergency and you should call a local locksmith (this may be covered under your home insurance).

- **Gas**, including the total loss of the gas supply, gas leaks (if you smell gas you should call British Gas on 0800 111 999 and don't use anything electrical or with a naked flame until you are told it's safe to do so); and blocked flues.
- **Drains, soil pipes and toilets**, including blocked mains drains when water or waste is likely to enter the property; blocked toilets where it is the only toilet in the property.

- **Heating and hot water**, where the loss affects elderly/vulnerable tenants; where there is a major leak from any part of the heating system; or when the heating system fails in the winter (1 November to 30 April). Where you have a heating or hot water booster, you should use this. Loss of hot water is not an emergency unless you are elderly/vulnerable.
- **Fire damage**
- **Lifts and main entrance doors to blocks of flats**, where there is a total failure.
- **Offensive or racist graffiti**
- **Broken windows (glazing)** – if the damage is caused as a result of a crime, please notify the local police and contact us. They will give you a crime number which we will need for our records. We will arrange for your window to be made secure for you and an appointment will be made to call back and re-glaze it.
- **Roof leaks or other damage** – this will be classed as an emergency when the damage to the roof is likely to worsen or when it is hazardous, for example roof tiles that may fall down in a public area. Normally we will make the roof safe, once it is safe to do so, and then arrange for it to be repaired as soon as possible afterwards.
- **Downpipe and gutters** – we will only deal with this as an emergency if the water is entering the building causing major damage, or where there is a loose part which is dangerous and cannot be temporarily made safe.
- **Dangerous walls and fences** – we will make safe walls and fences that are in a dangerous condition only, for example as a result of storm damage.

- **Defective manhole covers** – if dangerous, we will carry out emergency repairs to those within the boundary of your property. This could be to temporarily cover or protect damaged, loose or missing manhole covers.

## **What constitutes a non-emergency repair?**

Other works not covered above will normally be arranged to be undertaken by mutually agreed appointments, made directly with you by our contractor.

For non-emergency works, we would expect our contractor to contact you within three working days of them receiving a works order from us to make an appointment for the works to be carried out.

If our contractor has not been able to make contact with you, then they will advise us. For this reason, it is important for you to supply us with up-to-date contact telephone details and check your phone for missed calls, text messages or voicemail messages.

These works will normally only be undertaken during normal working hours, Monday to Friday, unless the contractor agrees otherwise direct with you.

### **Examples of these works would be:**

Minor plumbing leaks/defects  
Blocked drains, sinks, basins, bath, WCs  
Defective cistern or overflow  
Non-urgent hot water faults (luke-warm water)  
Minor electrical faults  
Blocked gutters  
Damp  
Security of internal doors and windows  
Repairs to void (empty) properties  
Defective flooring  
Damage to stair treads or handrails/banisters

General graffiti

**The following might be lower priority:**

Dripping/leaking taps or shower units

Other minor plumbing repairs

General joinery repairs

Repairs to doors, windows and floors

Repairs to external walls, fences and paths

Repairs to walls, brick work and slates/tiles

Repairs/clearing gutters and downpipes

Repairs to kitchen fittings (cupboards)

Repairs to plasterwork

Repairs to tiling

Easing doors and windows

Other minor day-to-day repairs/replacements

Repairs to garages/car ports

**What are Planned Maintenance Works?**

These are works that are planned in advance by us, for example external or communal area decorations, replacing downpipes, guttering, fences, kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, etc. Residents will be advised when these are likely to take place.

**What repairs are Sandbourne not responsible for?**

**We will not repair/replace the following in your home:**

- **Light bulbs/fluorescent tubes**
- **Toilet seats, toilet roll holders**
- **Tap washers**
- **Replacing or cleaning shower heads and hoses**
- **Broken mirrors, where you have caused the damage**
- **Cleaning extractor fans**

- Anything to do with your own electrical/gas appliances
- Anything you have installed yourself.

## Can I get someone else to do repair or maintenance works in my home?

Yes, we do allow residents to employ reputable contractors to undertake repair or maintenance work to their homes **but only if it is not** something that Sandbourne is responsible for doing. The works must be carried out by an appropriately qualified and adequately insured contractor, be to Sandbourne's satisfaction, and be in line with any reasonable specifications for materials and workmanship that we may require.

If you are considering major works yourself, for example a new kitchen, changing your bathroom suite, etc, you must contact Sandbourne first to get our permission and ensure you are complying with our policies. Where this relates to aids and adaptations recommended by social services, they should contact us.

Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement/Lease and/or speak to one of our maintenance team before carrying out anything other than minor repairs to obtain our permission before any works are undertaken.

## Can Sandbourne recommend anyone to carry out maintenance works?

We are sorry but we are not able to make any recommendations as this would go against advice given to us by our insurers in the event of you being unhappy with a contractor's work and deciding to make a claim against us.

## Can I give feedback about my repair?

Yes, we would welcome your feedback about repairs, even if this is negative, as it could help us improve our services. We will also pass feedback to our contractors. You can do this using the contact details given below, or using the form provided in our quarterly newsletter.

## Need more information?

The Regulator of Social Housing requires landlords to appoint a lead officer for health and safety. Sandbourne has appointed the Head of Housing to that role.

If you need more information, you can:

Write to us at our registered office:

Craigeith First Floor Office, 9 Derby Road, Bournemouth, BH1 3PX

Email: [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk)

Website: [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)

Telephone us on: 01202 671222

Please note that telephone calls to the registered office number above may be recorded for information and training purposes.

In addition, we do have a range of other leaflets on specific topics, available on our website or upon request from our office.

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