



Repairs Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of our key corporate objectives is to keep homes safe, secure, and affordable for our customers. To meet this objective, Irwell Valley Homes (IVH) aims to provide an accessible, reliable, and efficient repairs service that offers choices and is tailored to meet customers' needs.
- 1.2 This Repairs Policy sets out our obligations and commitments to customers in relation to the repair and maintenance of their homes and communal areas.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Repairs responsibilities

2.1.1 IVH's repairs responsibilities regarding general needs and independent living homes are set out in the tenancy agreement(s), in repairs-related legislation such as the Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018, and in the Regulator for Social Housing's Homes Standard.

2.1.2 In summary, IVH is responsible for:

- Keeping the structure and exterior of customers' homes safe, secure and weatherproof.
- Ensuring that all fixtures and fittings for the supply of water, gas, electricity, heating and sanitation are in working order.
- Maintaining communal areas and facilities.

2.1.3 IVH repairs responsibilities relating to rent to buy, market rent (MR) and intermediate market rent (IMR) are the same as for social and affordable rent homes. In addition, IVH is responsible for the maintenance and replacement of installations provided under MR & IMR tenancy agreement e.g. cookers, unless these items are damaged by the customer.

2.1.4 IVH is responsible for repairs to the structure, communal areas, and exteriors of leasehold and shared ownership schemes. The cost of these communal repairs is passed on to leaseholders through service charges. Leaseholders in apartments have insurance, which covers repairs in their homes arising from external causes such as leaks from

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another property. Where Section 20 consultation is required before starting repair works, the timescales will follow the statutory consultation requirements.

2.1.5 The Government has recently introduced a new model for shared ownership which includes additional repairs responsibilities for landlords during the first 10 years of the lease. Newly built leasehold and shared ownership properties will have repairs to the structure covered for a further 11 years after the defects period by NHBC warranty.

2.1.6 If a property is newly built, it will have a 12-month defect period from the date of completion with the original developer. The original developer will be responsible for rectifying any defects that arise due to design, material, specification or workmanship during the 12-month period. Any repairs that are caused by the customer due to neglect or misuse will not be covered and a charge may be made where this occurs.

2.2 Customer responsibility

2.2.1 Customers are responsible for the following:

- Reporting repairs to IVH as soon as possible. Customers can report repairs through a variety of different media including telephone, live chat, social media, email, via our website and via the app. Outside of usual business hours, customers can report emergency repairs by telephone.
- Reporting any criminal damage or vandalism to the Police, such as damage to doors caused during a break in, and obtaining a crime reference number when reporting related repairs.
- Allowing IVH colleagues and contractors to access their homes to inspect, carry out repairs and maintenance works including safety checks.
- Keeping their homes clean and in good condition, ensuring they prevent damage caused by neglect or misuse (for which a charge may be made where this occurs).
- Carrying out minor repairs and replacements that require no technical ability or special tool, for example replacing light bulbs.
- Decorating the inside of their homes.
- Repair of customers' own fixtures and fittings.

2.2.2 Details of IVH's and customers' repairs responsibilities are set out in Appendix A.

2.3 Our customer offer for repairs

2.3.1 Our commitments to customers relating to repairs are as follows:

- Complete emergency repairs within 24 hours;
- Complete routine repairs within 28 working days;

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- Complete non urgent & major repairs in 60 working days;
- Make and keep appointments with customers for routine and major repairs;
- Notifying customers by text about their appointment time and date.

2.3.2 Right first fix (RFF): we aim to complete all repairs ‘right first fix’. We will use HouseMark’s definition to measure RFF, which means that we will consider a repair to have been completed right first fix if it meets the following criteria:

- When the operative has attended the property, identified, diagnosed and remedied the fault (using van stock), and carried out any making good before leaving the property.
- Multiple trades: Where the job requires multiple trades, who may follow on from each other, then the work would still be considered completed at first visit so long as each of the trades were completed in one visit.

If the job required specific replacement parts and the operative needed to return a second time with the correct parts because they were not part of his/her van stock, then this would not count as completed at first visit.

Where the operative is unable to gain access to the property at the agreed appointment time, this will not be counted as a visit and will be excluded from the figures.

Inspections will not be counted as a visit for the purpose of measuring RFF.

2.3.3 Emergency repairs: these are repairs that are required when there is a risk or potential risk of harm to customers or significant damage to a property. We will respond to these repairs within 24 hours and make the property safe. We will complete any further repairs required by appointment.

2.3.4 Routine repairs: we will offer customers an appointment that is convenient and reflects the urgency of the work needed. Morning (8 am to 12.30pm) and afternoon (12.30 pm to 4.30pm) appointments will be offered. We offer appointments that avoid school drop off & collection times (9.30am to 2.30pm). Saturday morning gas services are also available.

2.3.5 Non urgent repairs: these types of repairs will be batched wherever possible to ensure that work is completed as efficiently as possible. Again, appointments will be offered to customers.

2.3.6 Guidance about the way we prioritise repairs is shown in Appendix B.

2.4 Inspections

We will complete an inspection before ordering repairs that may be more complex and/or repairs requiring a significant amount of work e.g. diagnosing damp, complex or component replacement works. We offer customers a convenient appointment for the inspection and for the work required. The target time for completing repairs begins from the day we complete the pre-inspection, where one is required. We aim to complete 10%

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post inspections of all works completed by contractors and the findings will be used to inform quality control and budget management.

2.5 Use of contractors

Most responsive repairs are carried out by the Homes Team. Repairs jobs should only be sent to contractors in the following circumstances:

- Specialist work: these are jobs that the Homes Team is unable to carry out due to the skills and equipment needed to complete works. Examples include repairs to door entry systems, communal aerials, communal heating and hot water systems, blocked drains and scaffolding.
- Lack of capacity within the Homes Team: in the event that a repair cannot be completed by the inhouse team due to high workloads, vacancies or absences, work can be passed to the relevant contractor, with the approval of a Homes Team Manager (HTM).

2.6 Financial Regulations

IVH's Financial Regulations include our Scheme of Delegation, which sets out the financial permissions and responsibilities relating to raising repairs. All colleagues must familiarise themselves with the financial limits that relate to their role.

2.7 Essential changes to service

In the event of a major incident, such as a pandemic, IVH will follow Government guidelines relating to working in customers' homes. This may result in temporary adjustments in the level of service we can provide and adjustments in our ways of working. We will communicate any such changes to our customers in a timely manner and keep customers informed. Our overriding aim is to keep customers and colleagues safe.

3. Performance Monitoring

3.1 The Executive Director of Property, Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance and Homes Team Managers are responsible for monitoring RFF, budget spend, type of works ordered, appointments made & kept and customer feedback on a weekly basis. Contractor expenditure is monitored daily.

3.2 Repairs expenditure and performance is reported to the Leadership Team monthly and to the Board on a quarterly basis.

3.3. The Executive Director of Property and Customer Voice Manager report repairs performance to the Customer Offer Panel and publish this information on IVH's website quarterly.

3.4 The Senior Repairs Administrator is responsible for carrying out regular checks of orders raised to ensure the correct work types have been used and to ensure that work is being

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allocated correctly to Homes Team and contractors. Any errors identified by the Senior Repairs Administrator will be fed back to colleagues and additional training will be provided.

- 3.5 The Complaints Policy sets out timescales for resolving complaints. Performance information relating to complaints performance is reported to Leadership Team monthly and to Board after end of each quarter.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

- 4.1 Irwell Valley Homes is committed to treating people with honesty, dignity, respect, and trust. This applies to colleagues, customers potential customers, contractors, and Board Members. At IVH:
- **Equality** is about ensuring that every individual has an opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
 - **Diversity** is recognising difference and responding positively to those differences.
 - **Inclusion** is about creating an environment where our services and employment opportunities are accessible to all.
- 4.2 IVH will be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 in all its actions and will consider all the protected characteristics of the Act which are: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Age, Marriage/Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly. Further to the protected characteristics, IVH will be mindful of socio-economic disadvantage and will do everything in its power to minimise this and other forms of disadvantage.
- 4.3 When applying this policy, we will use data we hold about the diverse needs of customers to make appropriate service adjustments. We will ask customers how the repair is impacting their safety and security to assess if the repair is having a disproportionate effect due to protected characteristic(s) e.g. physical disabilities or mental ill health, pregnancy, age, experiencing domestic abuse or hate crime, and needs to be completed quickly.
- 4.4 We will ensure customers have a wide range of choices in terms of accessing the service, the format and media used to communicate information about the service.
- 4.5 Appendix A includes details of repairs responsibilities. In some instances, we will carry out repairs that would usually be customers responsibility, for example, repairs needed due to damage caused because of incidents of domestic abuse or serious anti-social behaviour (ASB), repairs when customers are no longer able to complete a repair due to age and/or some disabilities, for the purposes of reasonable adjustment.

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- 4.6 Colleagues will receive regular training to help identify vulnerabilities, signs of abuse or serious ASB and to assess when it is reasonable for IVH to take the responsibility for repairs. All judgements will be recorded and monitored to prevent discrimination.

5. Responsibility

- 5.1 The Executive Director of Property is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.
- 5.2 The Executive Director of Customers & Communities, Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance and Homes Team Managers are responsible for operational implementation of and compliance with this policy. They are also responsible for monitoring performance and customer feedback, and for introducing any changes required to improve performance and the customer experience of the service.
- 5.3 The Executive Director of Property, Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance are responsible for training colleagues, ensuring they understand and comply with the policy and associated procedures.
- 5.4 The Head of Repairs & Estates Maintenance is responsible for the continued review of and updating this policy.

6. Current Legislation and Regulatory guidance

- 6.1 The Home Standards in the current Regulatory Framework have been considered in this policy.
- 6.2 This policy also ensures that IVH complies with the following legislation: –
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985,
 - Housing Act 1995 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002
 - Localism Act 2012
 - Health & Safety Legislation & Regulations
 - The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
 - Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
 - Tenancy Agreement
 - Housing Acts 1988,1996,1998 and 2004
 - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - Right to Repair Regulations 1994 (for secure tenants of Local Housing Authorities)
 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - The Defective Premises Act 1972
 - Building Regulations
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993

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- Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014
- Modern Slavery Act 2015.

7. Cross Reference Documents/Good Practice

- IVH Damp & Mould Policy
- IVH Voids Policy and Procedure
- IVH Lettable Standard
- IVH Mutual Exchange Policy
- IVH Gas Policy
- IVH Alterations & Permissions Policy
- IVH Complaints Policy
- IVH EDI Framework
- IVH Adaptations Policy
- IVH Financial Regulations

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Appendix A: Repairs responsibilities

1. General needs, independent living, rent to buy homes, market rent and intermediate market rent

Repairs	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Decorating		✓	Note; if damage to decorations has been caused as a result of repeated failure to complete a repair, IVH will offer a decoration voucher
Floor coverings e.g. carpet, linoleum, tiling		✓	
Plumbing in washing machines, connecting cookers and other kitchen appliances		✓	
Replacing fuses and lightbulbs, including light bulbs in external lighting		✓	Note; we have a how to film demonstrating how to replace a fluorescent light bulb, which can be shared with customers. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW5qyzawMWu3RaH8Sx1U5nA There will be occasions when some people with disabilities and/or due to age, will need reasonable adjustment with IVH taking responsibility.
Repairing and servicing customer's own gas appliances, including cookers and fires.		✓	Note; these will be annually checked (not serviced) to ensure safety and steps taken to isolate the supply if dangerous.
Replacing sink and wash hand basin plugs		✓	
Replacing toilet seats		✓	Note; we have a how to film demonstrating how to replace a toilet seat, which can be shared with customers. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW5qyzawMWu3RaH8Sx1U5nA
Blocked toilets, sinks and waste pipes that could have been avoided e.g. flushing large items		✓	Note; we have 'how to' films on our website that show customers how to deal with these issues. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW5qyzawMWu3RaH8Sx1U5nA

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Repairs	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
			The only exceptions are in instances where the customer has tried to unblock in the first instance or is vulnerable due to ill health, disability or age. In these cases, permission must be authorised by a HTM before ordering works.
Repairs to or replacement of locks, latches, chains, letter boxes, door numbers		✓	The only exceptions are in instances where the customer is vulnerable or experiencing serious ASB or domestic abuse. In these cases, permission must be authorised by a HTM before ordering works.
Filling small cracks in the plaster that are less than 3mm wide (e.g. the width of a pen)		✓	If the crack in plaster is more than cosmetic, please order an inspection. If the customer or CSST advisor is unclear about whether the crack in plaster is cosmetic or needs an inspection, ask the customer to send a photograph before ordering works. If the plasterer attends without an inspection, and the job is cosmetic or minor, we will not complete the works.
Replacing door and window keys		✓	The only exceptions are in instances where a lock becomes faulty, the customer is vulnerable or experiencing serious ASB or domestic abuse. In these cases, permission must be authorised by a HTM before ordering works.
Replacement shower curtains and shower curtain poles		✓	
Cracked bath panels		✓	Unless damaged because of age or being removed by an IVH operative.
Garden sheds, unless tenancy agreement specifies that IVH will carry out works		✓	
Party/dividing fencing or fencing that the customer has erected		✓	We do not carry out repairs to dividing fences. We do not provide fencing in place of hedges or provide fencing where none was provided previously.

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Repairs	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Repairs to electrical wiring, sockets, switches and smoke/CO alarms	✓		Note; We will remove any burglar alarms when the properties are empty or if they become obsolete. Of the few we are responsible, we will carry out a repair up to 2 hours including minor parts. We will attend to burglar alarms when sounding due to a fault.
Repairs to or replacement of window locks & privacy locks	✓		
Repairs to or replacement of vents inside of the home	✓		
Pests in your homes and communal areas	✓		Customers must keep the property clean and clear internally and externally, including any communal areas, to ensure pests are not attracted.
Repairing external doors, walls and windows	✓		Before ordering doors or windows, we will ask the customer how the damage happened and try to record as much information as possible. If it sounds like damage rather than wear and tear, advice must be sought from a HTM before ordering works.
Repairing internal doors, door frames, skirting boards and stairs	✓		Before ordering internal doors, we will ask the customer how the damage happened and try to record as much information as possible. If it sounds like damage rather than wear and tear, advice must be sought from a HTM before ordering works.
Repairing roofs, gutters, downspouts and drains	✓		
Repairs to sinks, kitchen units, baths, showers, toilets	✓		Note; We do not repair sanitary, washing or bathing facilities that the customer has installed. If an item is chipped, but not leaking, we will attempt a smart repair using a specialist contractor.
Repairs to lifts, door entry systems, lighting, halls, stairways and walkways in communal areas	✓		

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Repairs	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Fencing that we have installed that is boundary fencing i.e. facing onto a footpath or rear of the property facing onto open land.	✓		For fencing repairs that are our responsibility. It is important to find out if a repair would suffice instead of replacement. Please order an inspection if in doubt or if the customer is requesting replacement fencing.
Footpaths and hard standings within the curtilage of the property	✓		
Repairs to masonry, cladding and rendering	✓		
Repairs to heating and hot water systems, including radiators and storage heaters	✓		We will endeavour to repair electric & gas fires installed by our engineers, wherever possible. If this is not possible, we will not replace. We will leave in situ or remove and offer vouchers to make good any decoration, if applicable.
Treating suspected mould or damp	✓		This will require an inspection before raising works. Please refer to IVH's Damp & Mould Policy.
Repairs to paving and driveways	✓		Note; if the customer has provided these, they are responsible for ongoing maintenance.
Repairs to sprinkler systems communal and within properties	✓		Note; if the damage has been caused by the customer, ie, by stripping wallpaper near the sprinkler heads, IVH will not be responsible for any damage to belongings.
Repairs to electrical car charging points	✓		Note; if the customer has installed their own, they will be responsible for maintaining. We will only maintain car charging points which have recently been installed by IVH in new properties.

Please note: IVH is responsible for the maintenance and replacement of installations provided under MR & IMR tenancy agreement e.g. cookers, unless these items are damaged by the customer.

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2. Leased properties including all shared owners but excluding commercial leases

Repairs in leased properties	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
All repairs costing over £250 per leaseholder MUST wait for a Section 20 consultation to be completed before ordering the works.			
Communal heating	✓		
Heating in property		✓	Leaseholders are responsible for all items in their property.
Communal electrics	✓		Any communal electrics up to the electric meter is IVH to maintain.
Electrics in property		✓	Leaseholders are responsible for all items in their property.
Communal Doors in all schemes	✓		
Internal doors in leased properties		✓	

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Repairs in leased properties	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Front doors (and door furniture) of leased flats		✓	Leaseholders are responsible for their front doors and furniture but will need permission from IVH to ensure that the door meets correct fire safety standards.
External repairs window frames in leased properties	✓		The external frames are considered the structure.
Internal window frames in leased properties		✓	The internal frames are the responsibility of the customer.
Windowpanes in a leased property		✓	
All communal windows: panes and frames	✓		
Lifts and communal stairs	✓		
Communal Gardens – gates, paths, fences, walls	✓		
Structure of building	✓		
Communal drains and water pipes	✓		
Roofing & gutters	✓		
Pests in communal areas.	✓		IVH is responsible for pest control in the communal areas and responsible for blocking mouse holes/entry points for pests in the communal areas only.
Pests inside their property		✓	Customers must keep the inside of their homes clean and not attract pests and are responsible for pest control in their homes.
Communal TV aerials/supply	✓		We will only carry out communal repairs if it is confirmed that more than one property is affected.
TV system in property		✓	If only one fault is reported, we assume it is the TV system in their home.
Decorating communal areas	✓		

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Repairs in leased properties	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Plumbing in washing machines, connecting cookers and other kitchen appliances		✓	
Replacing fuses and lightbulbs, including light bulbs in security lighting in Communal Areas	✓		
Repairing and servicing customer's own gas appliances, this includes cookers and fires.		✓	
Repairing or replacing window locks and privacy locks on bathroom doors		✓	
Replacing cylinder jackets		✓	
Replacing sink and wash hand basin plugs		✓	
Replacing toilet seats		✓	
Repairs to or replacement of vents inside of the home		✓	
Blocked toilets, sinks and waste pipes that could have been avoided e.g. flushing large items		✓	
Repairs to or replacement of letter boxes, locks on letter boxes, in communal areas	✓		We are not responsible for letter boxes on individual properties' front doors.
Replacing all door and window keys		✓	Keys and fobs for main entrances can be replaced at cost in advance.
Replacement shower curtains and shower curtain poles		✓	

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Repairs in leased properties	IVH responsibility	Customer responsibility	Additional information
Repairs to electrical wiring, sockets, switches and other electrical fittings such as hard wired smoke alarms		✓	
Repairing roofs, gutters, downspouts and drains in a block	✓		
Repairing roofs, gutters, downspouts and drains in a house		✓	
Repairs to sinks, kitchen units, baths, showers, toilets		✓	
Repairs to lifts, door entry systems, lighting, halls, stairways and walkways in communal areas	✓		
Treating suspected mould or damp in communal areas	✓		
Treating suspected mould or damp in leased properties		✓	Note; If the damp has been caused by a leak from a communal defect, it would be covered through the insurance that leaseholders pay.

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Appendix B: Prioritising repairs

Priority	Definition	Timescale	Examples
Emergency	Likely to cause injury to a customer, or major damage to a home. Complete loss of gas, electrical and water.	24 hours	Dangerous structures; including fires, gas leaks or floods. Internal uncontrollable water ingress. Total loss of or damage to electric supply electricity. Unable to flush toilet, and no other toilet available. Blocked drains. Door or window insecure due to wear and tear. Loss of heating and hot water. Communal lift or fire alarm failure. Loss of lighting in communal areas and emergency lighting. Faulty smoke alarms.
Routine	Routine repairs requiring attention between within 28 days are defined as being faults or defects that are not causing an immediate discomfort, inconvenience and nuisance to the customer and with no risk of increased damage to the property.	First available appointment within 28 days	No electricity or water supply to part of a home. Faulty door entry system. Outside doors and windows that are not safe (where this is not an emergency). Leaking roof, gutters or downpipes; if they are causing dampness in the property. Renewal of an immersion heater or sanitary ware. Minor repairs to kitchen units, floorboards, stairs, skirting boards, doors and windows. Repairs to extractor fans. Repairs to electrical car charging points installed by IVH (new build properties).
Non urgent	These are repairs that are not an emergency or routine, as per the definitions above.	60 days	Repairing blocked gutters and rainwater pipes. Minor repairs to steps and staircases. Replacing outside windows and doors. Fencing repairs.

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			Plastering and joinery works.
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