



Places to live. Space to grow.

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## Maintaining Your Home Policy

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## **1 Introduction and purpose**

1.1 We are dedicated to providing quality, safe, and affordable homes for all of our residents. We believe that housing is more than just a roof over your head, it is about creating a space where you and your family can thrive. With this in mind, we want each of our residents to have a comfortable and secure living environment through our 'Maintaining Your Home' standard.

The Maintaining Your Home standard is designed to uphold high levels of maintenance and care across all our properties.

We understand that a well-maintained home contributes to your overall well-being and quality of life. That is why we are committed to continuous improvement, listening to resident feedback, and adopting best practices in property management.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to give clear guidance on responsibilities, including:

- Inspections and access
- Residents' responsibilities
- The no access escalation process
- Timescales for works
- Our responsibilities

## **2 Repair responsibilities**

2.1 Our repair responsibilities

We are responsible for keeping the home in good state of repair and completing any repairs or servicing that we are responsible for.

\*Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of key items.

2.2 Information and videos for residents

Our website, [www.westkent.org](http://www.westkent.org), contains useful information and videos for residents on many topics, including:

- Damp, mould and condensation
- Fencing
- Grounds maintenance
- Home contents insurance
- Resident improvements
- Repairs at your home
- Self-help videos

## 2.3 Contents insurance

We do not cover your contents as part of your tenancy agreement. It's a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for, to help you make an informed decision on whether you need one.

Contents insurance is designed to help protect your possessions. No matter how careful you are, there's always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen, so home contents insurance can help provide peace of mind should the worst happen. For more information, visit [www.westkent.org/homeinsurance](http://www.westkent.org/homeinsurance)

## 2.4 Resident repairs responsibilities

Residents are responsible for keeping the home in good state of repair and completing any repairs or servicing that you are responsible for.

\*Please see [Appendix 2](#) for a list of key items.

## 2.5 Damp and mould

Please see our website for further information and our damp and mould policy:  
[Advice on Tackling Condensation in Your West Kent Home | West Kent](#)

## 2.6 Fencing

We will not repair dividing fences which separate your garden from a neighbour's garden. We will repair boundary fences that separate your garden from a public area if there is a health and safety risk, for example, your fence has fallen down onto the public highway/ path. You can also request repairs to dividing fences if you meet our vulnerability criteria or there's an antisocial behaviour risk.

Please see our website for further information on fencing:  
<https://www.westkent.org/your-home/looking-after-your-home-and-garden/fencing>

## 2.7 Additional guidance

- When reporting a repair, residents should provide as much detail as possible.
- We will not always know the cause or the extend of the repairs needed, so follow on visits may be required.
- Residents should refer to their tenancy agreement or lease for further guidance.

### 3 Our repairs timescales

#### 3.1 Repairs timescales

Repairs timescales timescale	
Emergency	By the end of the next day
Urgent	Within three full days
Routine	21 days
Damp and mould	21 days for routine damp and mould Seven days if a person in the home has a medical condition that could be made worse by damp and mould
Planned works	If the works are on the financial years programme, they will be completed within 12 months

If we identify further work during an appointment, we will advise you of when this will be completed within five working days.

All timescales include weekends, for example if an urgent repair is reported on a Friday we will be with you by the following Monday.

#### 3.2 Repair appointments

Our repairs appointment details are:

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 5.30pm
- Morning appointments: 8am to 1pm
- Avoiding school run appointments: 9.30am to 1pm
- Afternoon appointments: 12 noon to 5.30pm

Out of hours:

- Our out of hours service commences from 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday and 5pm on Friday.
- Out of hours is the weekend and bank holidays.
- For emergency or urgent repairs that are reported outside of normal working hours (5pm and 8am) we will attend to make safe only. We will then arrange a follow-on job to complete the work.

### 3.3 Repairs definitions

#### Emergency

This priority is used when there is an immediate risk to a resident's health or security, or serious damage to the resident's home. We will make it safe but may need to finish the repair at a later date.

#### Urgent

This priority is used where there is a risk to the resident's health or security.

#### Routine

All other repairs will be completed by appointment made with you.

#### Planned

Some repairs, such as large-scale replacements or improvement work may be scheduled outside routine repairs.

#### Further works

If we identify further work, we will advise you when these will be completed. We will contact you within 5 working days to provide the update.

#### Examples

[\\*Please see Appendix 3 for a list of Emergency, Urgent, Routine and Planned Works.](#)

### 3.4 Repairs in homes where we are not the freeholder

- Residents should report all repairs to us
- If it is our responsibility, the normal repairs process will apply
- If the repair is the responsibility of the freeholder, we will make the freeholder aware and ask for timescales
- If this deadline is not met, we may carry out the repair
- We will keep residents updated at each stage of the repair
- We will always respond to emergency repairs regardless of responsibility and then discuss with the freeholder.

The freeholder must be given a reasonable amount of time to investigate and arrange any necessary remedial works. If they fail to investigate or fail to act after their investigation, we may step in to resolve the matter; this would be considered on a case by case basis and normally if there is continued damage within a resident's home.

The table below shows a list of properties where we are not the Freeholder.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number/s</b>
Alpha House	1 to 24
Chestnut House	1 & 4
Dame Kelly Holmes Way	25 to 26
Erica Court	4
Esparto Way	175 to 183 & 187
Grosvenor Road	39 to 45
Inglewood	1 to 43
Robina Court	All
Shipbourne Road	42
Tennyson Lodge	1 to 61
Warren Farm Cottages	All
Weald Road	86 to 92

#### **4 Exceptions to our repairs timescales**

4.1 In certain circumstances, work may exceed our normal timescales. For example:

- Building control
- Conservation including pre advice and applications
- General health and safety concerns
- Insurance work
- Monitoring Works (for example subsidence and damp and mould monitoring)
- Pests
- Planning, including pre-advice and applications
- Specialist contractors or consultant work
- Specialist work (for example bespoke windows)
- Statutory/legal requirements (for example nesting birds)

Any work to a resident's home that falls under these exceptions will be treated as planned works, with a 12-month timescale.

#### **5 Inspections and access**

5.1 We will need to access your home to complete inspections and works, for example:

- Access to install remote monitoring equipment for items, such temperature and humidity
- Compliance Safety Checks (including Asbestos, Electrical, Gas and Fire safety works)
- General health and safety inspections
- General inspections to identify issues
- Planned works
- Repairs and follow-on work
- Stock condition surveys
- Void inspections

5.2 When a visit is booked, all residents are required to:

- Ensure someone above the age of 18 is at home for the appointment
- Ensure the working area is clear for the operative (please keep pets away from the working area)
- Contact us to cancel the appointment if it's no longer required
- Contact us if the appointment is no longer convenient to reschedule
- Treat all operatives with respect and allow them to complete their work

## **6 Escalation**

6.1 Where residents fail to provide access the issue will be reported to the neighbourhood housing team who may enforce the 'no access' process.

6.2 In an emergency, we may force entry to your home without notice or permission to complete essential work. An example of the type of emergency would be a substantial leak from a flat above another property.

6.3 You should check your tenancy agreement for further details on access and appointments



## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Our repair responsibilities

Below is a list of items that we are responsible for.  
Please note that this is a list of common items, not all items:

Item
Keeping the home in good state of repair and completing any repairs or servicing that we are responsible for
Arranging and managing repairs with contractors, consultants, and specialists
Communal TV aerials
Communal washing lines and posts
Completing repairs within our target timescales
Damp and mould
Electrics within your home, including the wiring and fuse board/ consumer unit
Hazardous substances, including asbestos
Internal decoration, where damage was caused by West Kent or our contractors
Maintaining adaptations that were installed by West Kent
Plumbing and pipework maintenance and repairs within your home
Repairs, maintenance and servicing to health and safety systems
Repairs, maintenance and servicing to intercom, warden call and hardwired telecare systems
Shared communal areas and repairs, both inside and outside
Shared communal services including plumbing and drainage
Smoke and CO2 alarms
Structural repairs

In addition to common repair items please see below a list of common items that we are responsible for and their normal lifespans. Please remember that we will survey these items after these lifespans to determine if they need replacing.

Item	Expected Lifespan
Air Source Heat Pumps	16 Years
Bathroom replacements	20 Years
Cyclical Redecoration	7 Years
External doors (GRP / UPVC)	22 Years
Gas boiler replacements	16 Years
Kitchen replacements	30 Years
Roofs (Flat) This will include any fascias, soffits and rainwater goods as required	26 Years
Roof (Pitched) This will include any fascias, soffits and rainwater goods as required	100 Years
Windows (UPVC)	35 Years

## Appendix 2

### Residents' repair responsibilities

Below is a list of items that residents are responsible for.  
Please note that this is a list of common items, not all items:

Item
Keeping the home in good state of repair and completing any repairs or servicing that residents are responsible for
Accidental or deliberate damage caused by residents, their family, pets or visitors in their home, garden, shared areas or our land; or if they have paid someone to alter these items. If West Kent repairs any damage caused by the above, we charge the cost back to the resident.
Adaptations, if it was installed by someone else other than us.
Adjustment of doors for carpets or other flooring.
Bleeding radiators.
Blockages to sinks, washbasins, baths, toilets. Residents are responsible for clearing blockages caused by items being put down drains such as nappies, wipes, food and cooking fats. If residents are unable to clear the blockage, we will arrange to attend and repair the problem. We may charge the cost to the resident if we find that the blockage was caused by them, their family, or visitors.
Clothes lines and posts.
Damage due to forced entry, including by the emergency services.
Door locks and cutting extra keys. If keys are lost, stolen or there is damage through force, residents are responsible.
Door numbers, nameplates, doorbells (including batteries), chains, door stops, letterplates and letterboxes.
Fencing replacements, for more information please visit our website: <a href="https://www.westkent.org/your-home/looking-after-your-home-and-garden/fencing">https://www.westkent.org/your-home/looking-after-your-home-and-garden/fencing</a>
Filling minor cracks and patching to walls and ceilings.
Floor coverings such as carpets and laminate/wood flooring that were not fitted by us.
Glazing, which includes glass in windows and doors (even if you have a crime reference number). We can make safe, but we will recharge you for this.
Home improvements including extensions, conservatories, sheds and outbuildings. If you add a porch to your home, you must leave the original door provided by us in its original location, this is the door that we will continue to maintain. The new front door to the new porch will be provided and maintained by the resident.
Individual appliances that residents own, for example cookers or washing machines. Residents are also responsible for the fitting and plumbing of these.
Individual TV aerials and satellites dishes.
Internal decorating, unless the resident's tenancy agreement says otherwise. Where we have caused damage, we will decorate or provide a decorating pack. If we have repaired one wall, we would only redecorate that wall, we will offer a colour choice from our standard range.
Keeping the inside and outside of the home clean and in good condition.
Keeping your home warm, ventilating the home and wiping away condensation from areas such as windows. More information on preventing damp and mould is on our website: <a href="http://www.westkent.org/dampandmould">www.westkent.org/dampandmould</a>
Light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, starters, fuses and batteries.
Maintaining trees, hedges and grass to a reasonable standard.
Managing any infestation of pests including insects, birds and/or rodents in your home or your garden

Paying costs that we incur putting right any damage that you, your family, pets, or visitors have caused, or general repairs that you are responsible for.
Plug and play telecare systems.
Plugs and chains to sinks, baths and washbasins.
Repairing internal doors, including handles, hinges and latches. We will repair the frame. We will repair all fire doors, but you may be charged if the damage was deliberate.
Resetting the trip switch at the fuse board and carrying out appliance tests if the fuse board keeps tripping.
Shower heads and hoses, shower rails and shower curtains.
Weekly checks to ensure that your smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors within your home are working.
Toilet seats.
Topping up boiler pressure (maintaining water pressure in your system).

### Appendix 3

#### Repairs definitions

Below are some examples of the different repairs categories:

Emergency
Blocked drains causing waste water to surge into the basin, bath, sink or toilet
Blocked flues
Blocked toilet (where there is only one in the home) – we may charge if the resident caused the damage
Boarding up windows or doors for security
Broken down lifts. We will attend to assess the issue, we will repair if possible or arrange for the repair to be completed as soon as possible.
Damp and mould that poses significant and imminent risk of harm
Failure of warden alarms
Faults to door entry systems that leave block closed
Leaking roofs, missing roof tiles and faulty or blocked guttering causing serious water penetration
Loss of heating or hot water in an over 55s extra care scheme
Major and non-containable water leaks from pipes, tank or cistern
Make safe after flooding, storm or fire
Make safe major damage to roof
Make safe major structural damage
Removing offensive or racist graffiti
Total loss of electrical supply – we will charge if a supplier issue
Total loss of water supply – we will charge if a supplier issue
Unsafe power, lighting or electrical fittings.

Urgent
Door or window security issues
Faults to door entry systems that leave block unsecured
Loss of gas supply – we will charge if a supplier issue
Loss of heating or hot water
Partial loss of water supply – we will charge if a supplier issue.

<b>Routine</b>
Blocked sinks, basins, baths, or second toilets.
Damage to stair tread or handrail/banister
Damp and mould investigations and treatment (within 14 days).
Defective kitchen or bathroom flooring which is not an immediate health and safety problem
Faulty communal TV aerials
Faulty electrical fittings and minor electrical faults
Faulty extractor fans
Fly tipping and rubbish clearance
Graffiti
Kitchen repairs
Leaking roofs, missing roof tiles and faulty or blocked guttering
Partial loss of heating
Partial loss of hot water
Plumbing repairs and day-to-day replacements
Repair to flooring
Repairing and cleaning of gutters and downpipes
Repairs to external doors and windows

Continued on the next page:

<b>Planned</b>
Damage arising from major water leaks, fire, flood, storm or structural collapse.
Fencing/boundary wall work
Lift repairs
Major component replacements such as windows, kitchens and bathrooms
Major plaster repairs
Repairs to external walls and paths
Replacement of misted double-glazed windows or doors
Replacement of skirting boards
Replacement of wall tiles in kitchens and bathrooms.