

## **Policy Name: Repairs & Maintenance Policy**

### **1. Policy Summary**

- 1.1. This Policy explains how Midland Heart's day-to-day Repairs service works. Our vision is to provide a fair, consistent and efficient Repairs service to all tenants and residents that represents value for money.

This policy also outlines how we will provide our tenants and residents with a high-quality customer experience which is tailored to support individual needs. We want all tenants and residents to feel safe, listened to, and for them to live in well-maintained and quality homes.

This policy supports Midland Heart's duties under Awaab's Law by ensuring routine repairs are assessed consistently and, where relevant, escalated in line with our Emergency Hazard Policy or Significant Hazard Policy.

### **2. Policy Principles**

- 2.1. The principles of this policy are to ensure that Midland Heart's tenants and residents are involved and consulted in the development and continuous improvement of its repairs and maintenance service. Our aims are to:

- Provide value for money and effective services which are delivered by our In-House Maintenance Team and approved contractors to fulfil our service obligations.
- Achieve the standards that align with Midland Heart's repair responsibility and service statement.
- Keeping homes well-maintained ensuring that our statutory and contractual responsibilities are achieved.
- Treat all tenants and residents with respect and demonstrate that we have listened through tenant feedback and involvement.
- Communicate with clear and appropriate language that is easily understood.

### **3. It applies to**

- 3.1. The policy applies to all Midland Heart tenants and residents. A tenant or resident is anyone who receives or requests a service from us or who is affected by our activities.

### **4. Reporting a repair**

- 4.1. Midland Heart is committed to making it simple for repairs to be reported, this can be done by:

- Visiting [www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home](http://www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home)
- Calling our customer hub on 0345 60 20 540. Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. Outside of this time, calls will be transferred to the out of hours service where emergencies can be reported.
- Social media – Twitter or Facebook.
- Downloading the free Midland Heart app from the App Store or Google Play

## 5. Repairs commitment

- 5.1. Midland Heart's commitment is to complete repairs which align with our legal and statutory obligations whilst maintaining a fair, robust and consistent repairs responsibility that is clear and easily accessible to all tenants and residents. Our repairs responsibility tool can be found by visiting [www.Mindlandheart.org.uk/my-home](http://www.Mindlandheart.org.uk/my-home).
- 5.2. Midland Heart safeguard the health, safety and security of tenants, staff, other occupants or visitors and to safeguard the building and environment.
- 5.3. Midland Heart's "Service Statement" sets out its published timeframes for completing repairs, this is based on severity, as well as scope and scale of works required. Our repairs timeframes are:
  - Emergency Repairs: within 24 hours
  - Routine Repair: within 28 days
  - Major Works: within 60 days
- 5.4. During winter months or periods of adverse weather our repairs demand increases. If the amount of service requests we receive effects our ability to meet our regular response times, we can exercise the right to extend those response times in line with our service statement traffic light system.
- 5.5. Where possible, we will always adhere to our service standards by:
  - Prioritising urgency based on repair responsibility, tenants requirements and risk to the property. The outcome will be clearly communicated and we will provide a unique job reference number for future reference.
  - If the repair meets the emergency criteria, we will attend within 24-hours and attempt to achieve a permanent fix. If this is not possible on the first visit, we will always make safe and explain what will happen next.
  - For routine repairs and major works, we will confirm an appointment at a time that is convenient which meets individual needs.
  - Always aiming to achieve "right first time" and complete the repair in one visit. If this is not possible, we will explain why and what will happen next.
  - Communicating when repairs are complete and allowing tenants to confirm that the work has been completed satisfactory.
  - Providing regular updates throughout the repair journey and being clear with expected timeframes and future appointments.
- 5.6. If the reported repair does not meet our repair criteria, this will be clearly communicated with advice on utilising local services like check-a-trade or Yellow Pages.
- 5.7. There may be occasions where there is good reason to apply discretion when deciding whether to raise a repair that is outside of our repairs criteria. We will always consider the

individual circumstances of the request and the individual involved when making our decisions.

- 5.8. All colleagues are required to identify and escalate any potential emergency or significant hazards in line with the Awaab's Law Emergency Hazard Policy and Significant Hazard Policy.

## 6. Rechargeable works

- 6.1. Midland Heart operate a fair and consistent Recharge Policy. We will recover the cost of any repairs completed which are tenants' responsibility. These repairs will only be only carried out to safeguard the health, safety or security of vulnerable customers, staff or other visitors in the building.
- 6.2. Any repairs required to the property caused by wilful actions or because of neglect that cannot be classed as fair wear and tear, will be charged for by Midland Heart in accordance with the Recharge Policy.

## 7. Accessing our homes

- 7.1. Midland Heart is committed to attending appointments to ensure our homes are repaired to the highest standards whilst maintaining its legal and statutory obligations.
- 7.2. We will adopt a responsible and pro-active approach to gain access through multiple attempts with our tenants and residents and will always endeavour to use "preferred" contact methods.
- 7.3. In exceptional circumstances, Midland Heart may be required to gain immediate access to our homes where a reasonable assumption that there is a threat to the health, safety or security or where failure to act may result in property damage.
- 7.4. In these circumstances, permission to act will be risk assessed and confirmed with all relevant stakeholders but only after every attempt has been made to contact tenants and residents directly.
- 7.5. In most cases, scheduled appointments result in successful access to the property however, where we have made several failed attempts, Midland Heart can exercise the right to take tenancy or lease enforcement actions to secure access. Where we need to escalate, we would:
- Apply for injunctions from the courts to enforce the landlords "right of access".
  - Serving "Notices to seek possession" for breach of tenancy and applying to the courts to bring the tenancy to an end.
  - Midland Heart will only pursue the above legal remedies for gaining access to properties when other reasonable attempts and access by agreement have been exhausted.

## 8. Repairs Quality

- 8.1. Midland Heart expects its staff and contractors to adhere to its Repairs Quality Agenda in all areas including regulatory compliance, company standards and quality metrics.
- 8.2. We have objectives in relation to repairs quality for all employees and contractors that reflect the requirement to:
- Deliver a first-class repairs service to all tenants and residents

- Encourage thorough record keeping
- Evidence value for money
- Document where best practice and service improvements have been identified

## 9. Damp and mould

- 9.1. Midland Heart understand that damp, mould and condensation has potential to cause hazards in our homes, we treat these instances as a priority.
- 9.2. We have a dedicated damp and mould policy to make sure we take the correct action when a report of this nature is received. We will attend within our agreed timeframes outlined in the damp and mould policy to protect the safety of our tenants and our homes.
- 9.3. Our approach to treating damp, mould and condensation may include emergency, routine and/or major repair works and full details of our process is outlined in the damp and mould policy.
- 9.4. We provide detailed guidance, advice and additional support to help tenants manage condensation in their homes. This can be found at [www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home](http://www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home).

## 10. Right to repair

- 10.1. The Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993, gave secure tenants of housing associations enhanced rights relating to the repair and improvement of their homes.
- 10.2. Midland Heart will ensure tenants are made aware of the provisions of the Right to Repair legislation.
- 10.3. Ensure the timescales specified for carrying out the works as prescribed within this policy are incorporated into the term contracts for repairs.
- 10.4. Ensure that all contractors carrying out repairs are aware of the expectations with regard to qualifying repairs.
- 10.5. Ensure all contractors are aware that Midland Heart will recover costs incurred under the scheme where appropriate.
- 10.6. Monitor the level of failure to meet the terms of the scheme and take appropriate action.
- 10.7. Have a procedure that enables staff to manage the process in an efficient and effective way.
- 10.8. When a customer reports an emergency or routine qualifying repair, Midland Heart will state who will do the repair and when it should be completed.
- 10.9. If Midland Heart fails to complete the repair within the set time, tenants and residents may inform the us that the repair is not complete.
- 10.10. Midland Heart will provide a further deadline for completing the work.

- 10.11. If Midland Heart fails to complete the work within the second time period, tenants should be paid compensation.
- 10.12. Right to Repair compensation is not payable if tenants have failed to provide access for the work to be inspected or carried out.
- 10.13. Midland Heart will operate within the statutory requirements of the 'Right to Repair Scheme' offering appointments to accommodate tenants requirements however, ensuring attendances are met within the prescribed right to repair guidelines.
- 10.14. The 'Right to Repair scheme only covers small, urgent or routine repairs costing up to £250 which are likely to jeopardise the health or safety of the tenant.

**11. Self-assessment, reporting and compliance.**

- 11.1. All information held about our tenants or residents must be in line with the Midland Heart Data Protection Policy, Data Protection Procedure and General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) guidance.
- 11.2. We will provide to our Board regular updates on:
  - Customer satisfaction and Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's)
  - Repairs completed on first visit
  - Average time to complete repairs
  - Appointments made and kept
  - No access rates
  - Orders issues and overdue
  - Repair related complaints
  - Financial and commercial performance of repairs service

**12. Related Law & Regulations....**

Legislation/Regulation	Relevance to This Policy
Landlord and Tenant Act 1985	Landlords have a responsibility to ensure they meet their repairs and maintenance obligations.  Right to carry out repairs  S11 disrepairs/compensation
Environmental protection Act 1990	Makes provision for the control of premises which are considered to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance.  S82 prejudicial to health.
Defective Premises Act 1972	To take reasonable care to ensure tenants and visitors are reasonably safe from injury or damage to their property

	caused by a relevant defect of which the landlord knew or ought to have known existed.
Housing Health & Safety Rating System Housing Act 2004 Part 1.	Assessment of potential risks to the health & safety of occupants in residential properties in England & Wales
General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) guidance.	All information held about our tenant, residents or colleagues must be in line with the Midland Heart Data Protection Policy, Data Protection Procedure and General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) guidance.
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (Awaab's Law)	This act, incorporating Awaab's Law, mandates social landlords to respond to reports of hazards under HHSRS, setting strict timelines for remedial action. It underscores this policy's focus on the response and effective resolution hazards to protect tenant health and safety. Operational detail on how Midland Heart complies with Awaab's Law in respect of Emergency Hazards and Significant Hazards is set out in the Emergency Hazard Policy and Significant Hazard Policy.

### 13. This policy links to ...

#### Internal:

- Midland Heart Service Standards
- Midland Heart repairs responsibility
- Data Protection Policy & Procedure
- Damp and mould policy
- Midland Heart Quality agenda
- Awaab's Law – Emergency Hazard policy
- Awaab's Law – Significant Hazard Policy

#### External:

- The Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 Housing and Regeneration Act
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) guidance
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (Awaab's Law)

## **Policy Document Control**

**Business Owner/Role:** James Watkins, Director of Repairs & Maintenance

**Author/Role:** Rikki Kerr, Head of Repairs & Maintenance

**Directorate:** Property Services

**Version Number:**

**Customer Insight (if applicable):** *Tenant Involvement into this policy and associated changes has been obtained through tenant involvement.*

**Approved By/Date Approved:**

**Next Review Date:**