

Housing Repairs Policy

Issue details	
Title:	Housing Repairs Policy
Version number	Version 1.0
Officer responsible:	Corporate Lead for Housing Property & Assets
Authorisation by:	
Authorisation date:	

History of most recent Policy Changes – Must be completed			
Date	Section	Change	Origin of change (eg change in legislation)
June 2025	Policy template	Policy Drafted	

Policy

East Devon District Council

1 Why has the council introduced this policy?

This policy sets out how East Devon District Council delivers a responsive, risk-based repairs service that protects residents, prioritises health and safety, and aligns with Awaab's Law and other relevant legal obligations. The policy ensures repairs are prioritised based on risk to residents safety and security, and promotes consistent, transparent, and accountable decision-making that allows officers to balance cost, performance and risk.

This policy replaces both the Repairs policy published in April 2023 and the Damp and Mould policy that is due to be reviewed in June 2025.

This policy does not cover repairs to leasehold properties, improvements, modernisation, adaptations or planned works programmes

2 What is the council's policy?

Policy Objectives

The objectives of the policy include:

- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of residents.
- Ensure compliance with Awaab's Law and related legislation.
- Prioritise resources to address defects and hazards having the greatest risk on residents health, safety and wellbeing.
- Provide a transparent, consistent and accountable repairs service.
- Allow for timely and consistent communications to enable customers to be kept informed.
- Deliver value for money and meet regulatory standards. This includes, where possible, delivering planned works programme over more expensive responsive repairs.
- Allow officers to balance:
 - Risk: Minimise risks (e.g. safety, environmental, social, etc) to customers and other stakeholders.
 - Cost: Ensure the continued financial viability of the social housing function.
 - Performance: Delivery of the regulatory performance standards (E.g. RSH Consumer Standards)

Legislative and Regulatory Context

This policy is informed by and complies with:

- Awaab's Law (via the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023)
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004 – HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System)
- Regulator of Social Housing: Consumer and Home Standards
- Building Safety Act 2022

Risk-Based Repairs Categorisation

All repairs are triaged and categorised by risk level, ensuring that the most serious issues are addressed first, regardless of when they were reported. The priority classification and definitions below will be used for all repairs activities.

Priority	Definition	Examples
P1: Emergency Hazard	Immediate threat to life, health, security or building safety. Lower threat thresholds will be applied for vulnerable groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HHSRS Severe Risk (Cat 1).• Vulnerable tenant with no heating/hot water.• Failed front door lock on a property with young children.• Moderate HHSRS Damp & Mold risk in a property with young children.
P2: Significant Hazard	Potential risk to the health or safety. Lower threat thresholds will be applied for vulnerable groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HHSRS moderate risk.• Trip hazards on footpaths.• Inadequate lighting.• Failed front door lock on property with just adults.
P3: Routine - Urgent	Minimal customer risk or impact on the asset if resolved within 3 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of water to non-vulnerable tenants• Loss of heating to non-vulnerable tenants• Roof leak during the winter• Broken window.• Drainage issue.
P4: Routine – Non-Urgent	No immediate risk, but needs attention to prevent impact on the asset or customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaking tap• Extractor fan not working.• Roof leaks reported during dry periods.
P5: Planned Works	Low risk or grouped for efficiency (e.g. cosmetic or cyclical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HHSRS slight risks• Made safe/Decant Severe & Moderate HHSRS risks.• Painting, render repairs• End of life replacements: kitchen, bathroom, window, roofs, etc.
P6: Legal Works	Repairs work defined from legal decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disrepair rulings requiring action within a defined timescale.

Priority	Definition	Examples
	include Disrepair rullings Complaints or Ombudsman decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ombadsman case requiring action within a defined timescale. • Complaints requiring action within a defined timescale.
P7: No action	No risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen or bathroom in the later stages of their lives. • Repairs task that are the responsibility of tenants (e.g. garden works, decorating, etc) • Condensation around windows.

The above prioritisation framework will be used for all housing repair activities and contracts, including the compliance remedials.

Repair Timeframes

The repair timeframe consists of the following milestone:

1. Reporting: The timescales for the tenant to report the repair & EDDC to acknowledge and explain the next steps.
2. Survey Visit: Time limit to complete any required surveys and scope the necessary repairs.
3. Resolve, Make Safe or Establish Short-term relocation: Establishes the timescale to either complete the repair, undertake works to mitigate the risk (e.g. make safe) or complete a short-term relocation (e.g. decant) to remove the tenant(s) from the risk and allow the repair works to be completed.
4. Repair Completion: Timescale to complete any required repairs.

The above milestones and the relevant legislation has been used to generate the target response time framework below.

Priority	Reporting	Surveyor Visit	Resolve, Make Safe or Establish Short-term relocation	Repair Completed
P1: Emergency Hazard	Emergency calls to be answered in 2 minutes and next steps confirmed. Emails or Repair Forms to be reviewed and responded to within 1	4 to 24hrs	24hrs from the initial site visit	<12 weeks from the initial site visit
P2: Significant Hazard		10 working days	5 working days after initial site visit	<12 weeks from the initial site visit.
P3: Routine - Urgent		Should not require a surveyor visit.	NA	3 days from the reporting.
P4: Routine – Non-Urgent		Should not require a surveyor visit.	NA	28 days from the reporting.
P5: Planned Works*		As per Emergency & Significant	As per Emergency & Significant	As per the planned works schedule for the

Priority	Reporting	Surveyor Visit	Resolve, Make Safe or Establish Short-term relocation	Repair Completed
	working day.	Hazard response where appropriate.	Hazard response where appropriate.	project. Categorised as 6mth, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 years.
P6: Legal Works		Complaint – Stage 1: < 5 days. Complaint – Stage 2: < 10 days. Disrepair: 20 days or As per Emergency & Significant Hazard response where appropriate.	As per Emergency & Significant Hazard response where appropriate.	Complaint: As per the above criteria. Disrepair: As defined by the legal judgement. Categorised as 28 days, 60 days or 90 days. Ombudsman: 28 days.
P7: No action		NA	NA	NA

The application of the response timescale framework is supported by the following activities:

- For emergency and significant hazards, the tenant is to be provided with a report within 3 working days after the survey. The report will summarise the finding, confirming the work to be completed and when it will be delivered.
- Tenants will be updated at each milestone of the next steps and the associated timescales. If the timescales change, then the tenant will be updated proactively by the Repair Agents.
- All repairs and their delivery timescales confirmed through the Complaints process will align with the above prioritisation and timescale frameworks.
- Post repair inspections will be completed for a sample of the repairs. The sample rate will be increased if high numbers of workmanship issues are identified.

Short-term relocation

All short-term relocations (e.g. decants) will be based on the principle of avoid displacement, preserve family routines, and minimise costs for all parties, but while ensuring tenants are safe and secure.

Where possible, we will look to provide tenants with choice: payment equivalent, compensation, food deliveries and temp leisure centre

membership to cover showering facilities. This could include changing how the home is used with replacement services including Air filters, dehumidifiers, portable toilets, space heaters, room segregation and temporary fixes.

We will minimise the use of Short-term relocations, however, there will be times when the property cannot be made safe and it is not safe to stay in the property. The Decant Policy will apply in these situations.

Assessment, Inspection & Triage

We will:

- Use trained surveyors and/or housing officers to carry out the hazard assessments and assign the appropriate priority.
- Apply the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to determine severity and risk. The classification of the Severe, Moderate or Slight HHSRS risks are defined in a separate document that provides examples of failures for each of the 29 categories. This reference document will be independently validated and help to ensure a consistent HHSRS classification.
- The person-centred element of the HHSRS classification will be applied by increasing the standard classification by one grade if a property contains vulnerable tenants. The definition of vulnerable tenants include:
 - Elderly or frail individuals.
 - People with disabilities – physical, sensory, or learning.
 - People with mental health conditions.
 - Victims of domestic abuse.
 - Children (longest child <18 years old).
 - Pregnant mothers.
 - People with substance misuse issues.
 - People at risk of homelessness or with a history of rough sleeping.
 - People experiencing financial hardship or fuel poverty.

Items we will repair

The repairs we are responsible for are set out in your tenancy agreement. We will keep in good repair and proper working order our installations for supplying water, gas, electricity, room and water heating and sanitation including basins, sinks, baths, and toilet fittings.

We will keep the structure and exterior of the property in good repair, including drains, gutters, and external pipes, as well as the lift service, where provided.

We will keep in good repair communal entrances, halls and stairways in flats, as well as any other areas for use by all tenants and their families and visitors. The outside of your home and communal areas of flats and maisonettes will be decorated and kept in good repair.

Tenant responsible repairs

Tenants are responsible for the cost of repairs that are a result of neglect, misuse, or deliberate, malicious, criminal or accidental damage by you, people living with you, or people visiting your home.

Damage caused by neighbours or the general public to items that are the responsibility of the tenant, will need to be covered by the tenant's house content insurance.

Tenants must keep the inside and outside of your home, including internal decoration, garage and any outbuildings, in a neat and tidy condition. You may be asked to repay any costs we have to pay for cleaning your home if you allow it to become dirty or infested with vermin.

Listed below are some of the repair and maintenance items which tenants must carry out or arrange themselves. Permission maybe required to complete some of these items.

- All internal decoration
- Replacing keys when you have lost them or broken them in the lock (unless fair wear and tear) or where you have locked yourselves out
- Getting extra keys cut, including radiator keys
- Replacing broken or cracked glass (unless this is due to criminal damage and a police crime number is given)
- Fitting curtain rails, coat hooks or pelmets and draught proofing to doors or windows
- Fitting extra door or window locks without a recommendation from the police, unless these were inadequate in the first place
- Adjusting doors when you have fitted new floor coverings.
- Replacing light bulbs, fluorescent tubes or starters*
- Testing smoke detectors (including any provided by us) or replacing batteries except for a communal system (Home Safeguard)*
- Resetting electrical trip switches*
- Getting chimneys swept if used for wood or a coal fire
- Filling minor cracks or holes in walls and ceilings
- Clearing basins, sinks, baths or toilets which have become blocked due to misuse

- Replacing toilet seats and flush chains, and plugs and chains on baths, basins or sinks
- Replacing clothes lines or restringing rotary driers (unless in a shared area)
- Maintaining garden paths or patios (except those leading to front or back doors or provided specifically for an existing disabled tenant) and any other general garden features (unless in shared areas)
- Keeping gully grids and wall vents clear of leaves and rubbish
- Replacing TV aerials and sockets (except for communal aerials)
- Disconnecting or reconnecting appliances such as cookers or washing machines.
- Installing extra electric sockets unless the number available is below the minimum standard
- Bleeding or venting central heating radiators.
- Fitting or replacing internal door latches, handles, chains or spy holes
- Repairing or replacing handles, catches or knobs on kitchen units
- Maintaining garden fencing not boarding public land and the property contains children (unless it is post and wire fence provided us).

In very exceptional circumstances we will arrange these repairs for extremely vulnerable tenants. This is at the discretion of EDDC.

Resident Engagement and Communication

We will:

- Clearly explain to tenants the repair policy via the website, tenant magazine, other engagement events and targeted digital communications.
- Provide updates at key stages: report received, inspection completed, works scheduled and works completed.
- Encourage feedback and complaints to drive service improvements.

Monitoring and Performance

We will track and report on the repairs performance using the Performance Framework. The monthly reporting will include:

- % of repairs completed within the target times scales for each milestone.

- Number of repairs completed within the target times scales for each milestone.
- Weekly tenant satisfaction insights with different elements of the repairs service.
- Number of HHSRS failures by classification and severity.

Monthly reports will be incorporated with the quarterly reporting ELT.

Training

All staff involved in housing management, repairs, and compliance will receive mandatory training on damp and mould, Awaab's Law, and risk-based triage. Other ongoing training will be provided to maintain the knowledge within the service.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities associated with the repairs are set out in the table below.

Role	Responsibility
Repairs Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the policy reflects best practice. - Deliver repairs within legal timeframes and in accordance with this policy.
Housing Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify risks, escalate issues, support vulnerable residents.
Planned Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor repair performance and Delivery of planned works scheme prior to repair rates increasing to uneconomic levels.
Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report issues promptly and allow access for inspections/repairs. - Complete the repairs they are responsible for completing.

Equality Assessment

The equality assessment below aligns with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and ensures the policy does not inadvertently disadvantage any protected group.

Characteristic	Relevant?	Potential Impact	Mitigation / Action
General	Yes	Understand the impact on different tenant cohorts	Monitor repairs and complaint performance by tenant profile and asset archetypes. Regular engagement with Tenant engagement events and scrutiny groups.
Age	Yes	Older tenants may be more vulnerable to cold, disrepair or	Prioritisation of repairs for vulnerable residents; proactive

Characteristic	Relevant?	Potential Impact	Mitigation / Action
		inaccessible services.	monitoring of sheltered schemes;
Disability	Yes	Tenants with mobility, cognitive or sensory impairments may struggle to report or manage repairs.	Home visits for inspections; prioritisation of adaptations. Support from MSO's.
Gender Reassignment	Possibly	No specific impacts identified, but privacy concerns or discrimination risk in interactions.	Staff training in equality, privacy, and respectful service delivery.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	Unlikely to be directly affected	NA
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	Expectant or new mothers may be more affected by damp, heating or unsafe conditions.	Risk-based prioritisation will include pregnancy and infants as vulnerability factors.
Race	Yes	Language barriers or cultural differences may impact understanding of repair obligations or communications.	Use of translation services, multilingual documents, and cultural awareness training.
Religion or Belief	Possibly	Appointment scheduling or home access may be sensitive around religious practices.	Flexible appointment options; staff awareness of cultural norms.
Sex	Possibly	Lone female tenants may feel unsafe during contractor visits.	Use of ID checks, chaperone option, and staff/contractor conduct policies.
Sexual Orientation	Possibly	Risk of discrimination during in-home services.	Contractor and staff equality and diversity training; anonymous complaints process.

Continuous Improvement and Review

This policy will be reviewed within 3 years of the publish date or sooner if:

- Regulations change.
- Serious service failure occurs.

- Feedback or data suggests improvement is needed.
- Opportunities are identified to improve the policy, and ultimately the service delivered to customers.

3 Policy Administration

Appendices and other relevant information

Enter appendices and other information

Links related Policies/Strategies, Procedures and Legislation

This policy is associated with the following other policies/strategies:

- Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Decant Policy

Data Protection

Provide a general view of what personal data is to be used and how and provide a link to the [Council's Data Protection Policy](#) and reference the relevant privacy notices.

b) The collection and use of tenant's personal data will not exceed that agreed to in their tenancy agreement

If selecting option c) – please provide a summary of additional personal data required and how this will be obtained and used below.

Click or tap here to enter text.

The [EDDC Data Protection Policy](#) provides further information on how we store and use personal information.

The following privacy notice(s) provide further information on how we will use tenant's personal data, how it is gathered, and how long we will retain this information, and what rights tenants have in relation to this.

Property and Assets - Completion of programmed, servicing and cyclical works

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

All our privacy notices can be found on the EDDC website

(<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/access-to-information/data-protection/privacy-notices/>)

Policy consultation

Listing which committee has agreed the publication of this policy, such as SMT+, Cabinet, HRB or Joint Staff Forum

Policy review

The Corporate Lead for Property and Assets is responsible for the policy. The policy will be reviewed in March 2028.