



Repairs & Maintenance Policy

1. Purpose

The Repairs and Maintenance Policy describes how Dawson Housing Association (DAWSON) sets, manages and maintains property standards and provides a reactive and a planned repairs service. The policy describes how DAWSON does this in a clear, consistent and transparent manner.

Scope	The policy applies to all of Dawson Housing Association's properties
Policy relates to	Tenancy Policy Allocations and Lettings Policy Complaints Policy Adaptations Policy Health & Safety Policy
Version	1.0
Release Date	28 March 2019
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Review Frequency	3 years or less
Review Date	2022

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Dawson Housing Association (DAWSON) provides supported housing and intensive housing management services to tenants with complex needs. DAWSON does not own any properties but leases them from third parties. DAWSON holds full repairing leases and is responsible for property standards both inside and outside the home, including communal areas, excepting structural and other matters excluded by leases.
- 2.2 DAWSON sets its property standards in compliance with Decent Homes guidance¹, specifically part 5. DAWSON homes are let at and maintained to Decent Homes standards and the organisation maintains a programme of planned works to replace and renew failing components.
- 2.3 DAWSON employs MYSHON as its managing agent partner. MYSHON deliver the repairs service to DAWSON's tenants.
- 2.4 DAWSON makes tenants and their advocates aware of this standard when a property is let. Tenants have their repair rights and responsibilities explained and provided in writing in the Tenants' handbook.

3. Policy Aims

3.1 The Repairs & Maintenance Policy aims to:

- Set clear standards for DAWSON properties and communicate these to tenants
- Deliver a repairs service which represents good value for money
- Provide clarity about the responsibilities on DAWSON and its tenants
- Deliver a timely repairs service which gets things right first time

4. Legislation and Regulation

- 4.1 DAWSON complies with all relevant legislation including the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 covering repair responsibilities and the Housing Act 2004 covering the Housing Health Safety Rating System.
- 4.2 DAWSON applies the Home Standard in full as published by the Regulator of Social Housing which includes the provisions and requirements to adhere to Decent Homes standards.
- 4.3 DAWSON will make tenant's aware of their rights and responsibilities under this legislation and regulation including the Right to Repair².

5. Health & Safety

- 5.1 DAWSON takes the safety of its tenants extremely seriously and complies with all legislation, regulation and best practice to ensure homes are safe and that gas, electricity, water, fire and other systems are regularly checked and operating correctly. Details of the policy relating to these items can be found in the DAWSON Health & Safety Policy

¹ Decent Homes Standard can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>

² <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/right-repair-scheme>

6. Reactive Repairs

6.1 Tenants should contact DAWSON directly as soon as they become aware of a repair that needs to be carried out. Repairs will be diagnosed over the telephone or in person if the repair is reported face to face and an appointment made for a contractor to attend and attempt to fix the repair.

6.2 Repair appointments will be made in an order of priority based on the urgency of the work required. DAWSON offers morning or afternoon appointments during the working week.

6.3 Emergency Repairs will be attended to within 24 hours of the repair being reported. The emergency repairs service is available 24 hours a day on every day of the year. Examples of emergency repairs include:

- Complete power failure throughout property or communal area
- Burst water pipes causing internal flooding
- Blocked toilets where sewage is overflowing into the property
- No water
- Complete failure of central heating and hot water system (during the winter months)
- Immediately dangerous or insecure structures
- Insecure external doors and windows
- Glazing that is completely smashed through (not cracked)
- Lost keys leaving tenant unable to enter property (rechargeable to tenant)
- Fire
- Carbon Monoxide activation
- Notification of gas leak
- Security alarm consistently sounding unable to silence – rechargeable if user error
- Blocked drains causing sewerage to back up
- Offensive graffiti.

6.4 In some circumstances the contractor will make good the problem and arrange for a full repair to be carried out at a later date.

6.5 DAWSON will provide temporary heaters to tenants where they have no adequate source of heating until a repair has been made to the property

6.6 Urgent repairs will be completed within 7 days. Examples of urgent repairs include:

- Repairs to communal white goods
- Slow leaks that are containable
- Leaking bathroom appliances
- Leaking roofs
- Shower system not working
- Smoke alarms beeping intermittently
- Partial property electrical failure
- Faulty door locks, handles and automatic closers
- Insecure windows above ground level
- Cracked window panes
- Acts of vandalism not leading to an immediate health and safety risk.

6.7 Routine repairs will be completed within 28 days. Examples of routine repairs include:

- Minor repairs to internal joinery such as kitchen units and doors, window-frames and catches, floors, floor tiles, skirting boards and banister rails extractor fans
- Partially blocked and defective gullies
- Leaking radiators
- Dripping or leaking taps and showers
- Repairs to loose tiling and plasterwork
- Broken or fallen down fencing
- Loose and/or uneven pathways.

6.8 Some jobs require a pre-inspection before the repair appointment can be arranged, to establish the extent of the works where, for example, the scope of the job is not known, or the diagnosis given by the tenant is not detailed enough. Pre-Inspections may be carried out DAWSONs service provider or nominated contractor. Repairs will then be issued in the appropriate timescales. Where pre-inspections are not possible, DAWSON may ask tenants or care operators to send photographs of the problem for diagnosis.

7. Re-let Standard

7.1 Prior to the commencement of a tenancy, DAWSON will inspect and carry out necessary repairs to a property in order to make it suitable for letting and bring it up to the DAWSON relet standard.

7.2 The relet standard ensures the following:

- The property is safe and free from Category 1 hazards under the HHSRS
- The property is wind and weathertight
- The property is secure, and keys are available for all door locks
- The property has a valid Gas Safe certificate, electrical certificate and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- All sanitary wear is clean and not cracked
- The kitchen is clean and kitchen units are in a good state of repair
- Flooring is clean, flat and in a good state of repair
- The property is in a reasonable decorative order
- The property is clean, habitable and has been cleared of all rubbish

7.3 The relet standard does not guarantee that all repairs have been carried out. At the relet, the tenant and housing officer may agree that a number of minor repairs are required which will be ordered and arranged in the usual way.

8. Planned works

8.1 DAWSON will maintain a programme of planned works to replace components such as kitchens, bathrooms and boilers on a planned basis which fall outside the reactive repairs service.

8.2 DAWSON will use a sinking fund to pay for the replacement of major components based the expected life of the asset.

8.3 Stock condition information and reports from tenants and surveyors will be used to create a planned programme.

8.4 DAWSON uses the life expectancy values for different assets as described in the Decent Homes standard.

8.5 DAWSON will not replace a major component simply on the basis of its age. To qualify for replacement, the component needs to have failed in some way making it uneconomic to repair.

8.6 A range of choices will be made available to tenants when kitchens, bathrooms and flooring are being replaced through the planned programme. Tenants will have the opportunity to purchase their own kitchen or bathrooms, at the same or better quality that DAWSON would install, and DAWSON will install these items on the tenant's behalf.

9. Access

9.1 Tenants have a responsibility to allow for access for DAWSON to carry out repairs. Where access cannot be gained during the agreed appointment, the repair will be passed back to

the contractor to be rescheduled. DAWSON will make two attempts for access for a requested repair before the repair is cancelled.

9.2 Preventing access causes considerable cost to DAWSON which reserves the right to recharge the tenant for the call-out cost. This is covered by the Rechargeable Repairs policy.

10. Tenant Obligations

10.1 Some repairs are the responsibility of the tenant and not DAWSON; such repairs are defined within the Tenant Repairs Handbook and DAWSON Rechargeable Repairs Policy, as well as the respective tenancy agreement. The tenant is responsible for the maintenance, repair or replacement of repairs set out in their tenancy agreement. The tenant will also be responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged items as outlined in the DAWSON Tenants' Handbook.

10.2 Tenants are responsible for maintaining the inside of their home and carrying out minor repairs. They are also responsible for items such as:

- Clearing blockages in sinks, baths and toilets caused by misuse.
- Decorating inside the home, including filling small cracks in walls and ceilings.
- Internal window cleaning
- Repairing or replacing any damage to glazing
- Providing replacement keys if lost or locked in the property
- Adjusting internal doors so they open and close over tenants own fitted carpets
- Replacement of lightbulbs (except in communal areas)
- Organising replacement of/Replacing of household dustbins, including wheelie bins
- Repair or replacement of gate catches or bolts
- Replacing plugs and chains on sinks, baths and basins
- Replacing damaged toilet seats
- Replacing tap washers
- Maintenance or replacement of any shower hoses or heads
- Replacing latches, door numbers, letter boxes, door knockers and doorbells
- Repairing damage caused deliberately or accidentally by tenants or guests
- Putting up of tenant's own blinds, curtain tracks, coat rails, coat hooks and shelving
- Tenant's own cookers and white goods, including connection (in self-contained properties)
- Taking any necessary steps to prevent water in pipes and tanks from freezing
- Pests such as mice, rats, ants, bed bugs –if they exist due to neglect
- Bees / Wasp nests

11. Handypersons Service

11.1 The handyperson service is aimed at vulnerable tenants who are either unable to undertake certain DIY tasks or have no other relative or support who can assist them with a task which falls outside of DAWSON's responsibility and remit. The handyperson service will

provide free fixings but will not supply any materials. DAWSON will provide a maximum of two visits per year with up to two jobs.

12. Fixed Floor Coverings

- 12.1 DAWSON advises tenants not to lay fixed floor coverings (tiles, hard wood or laminate) as it increases the cost and difficulty of carrying out underfloor work. Tenant must receive written consent from DAWSON before fitting fixed floor coverings. Tenants who have fitted fixed floor coverings must remove them at their own expense to enable DAWSON to do works to the property. DAWSON will take reasonable care to avoid damaging fixed floor coverings but will not be liable for damage caused during essential repairs.

13. White Goods, furniture and furnishings

- 13.1 Homes with communal areas such as shared kitchens will be provided with white goods. DAWSON may also provide soft furnishings (such as curtains & blinds) and communal furniture. Where provided these communal items will be checked annually and replaced every 5 years.

- 13.2 DAWSON may occasionally provide furniture and soft furnishings to bedrooms or self-contained units. These items are “gifted” to the tenant and are no longer the responsibility of DAWSON and DAWSON are not responsible for repair or replacement

14. Home Improvements

- 14.1 Tenants may request to undertake their own improvements. Tenants will be able (subject to approval, relevant Building Regulations and meeting the required standard of work) to make the following improvements and DAWSON will not unreasonably withhold approval
- Kitchen modernisation
 - Bathroom modernisation
 - Dropped kerb
- 14.2 DAWSON reserves the right to request removal or to put back any unauthorised works or improvements to the property.

