



# Southway

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## Repairs Policy

**SER-POL-17**

**Version 8.0**

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**Date approved: [DD MMM YYYY]**

**Approved by: [ Board / XXX Committee / Chief Executive]**

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## 1. Policy Introduction and Aims

- 1.1 Our Responsive Repairs Policy explains how we will meet our 2025-2030 Five Year Plan commitment to delivering a high quality and customer focussed repairs service.
- 1.2 Southway is responsible for maintaining and repairing homes and the communal spaces that it owns and manages, and this policy applies to all social and affordable rented homes.
- 1.3 The overall aim of our Responsive Repairs Policy aim is to:  
***Ensure that every home we manage is safe, well-maintained, and meets the standards that tenants deserve.***
- 1.4 Underpinning the policy are the Southway values of Respect, Equity, Ambition, Compassion and Honesty.



- 1.5 Through this policy we will:
  - Meet all relevant legal duties in relation to property condition and the safety and quality of homes
  - Provide a responsive repairs service that is prompt, cost-effective, and easy to understand for tenants and staff.
  - Explain what repairs Southway is responsible for and how we will prioritise these to deal with urgent issues first.
  - Provide clear information on the timescales in which we will deliver repairs.
  - Explain the ways in which you can report repairs to us.
  - Set out how we will be accessible and meet the individual needs of tenants.
  - Set out the repairs that are the responsibility of tenants.

## 2. Context and Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 Through this policy, Southway will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements on housing quality and safety. This includes:
- 2.2 The **Housing Act 2004**, which sets out the overarching legal requirement in respect of housing conditions. This requires homes to be free of major hazards as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- 2.3 **The Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards:** Southway will fully comply with the [Safety and Quality standard](#), and in doing so, we will “provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas,” and we will “enable repairs and maintenance issues to be reported easily.”
- 2.4 **Awaab’s Law:** legislation since October 2025, we are required to respond to significant hazards within set timescales, dealing with emergency repairs within 24 hours and “significant hazards” being dealt with in fixed timescales. These are detailed in our [Damp and Mould policy](#).

## 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Southway is committed to working with tenants to deliver an effective, responsive repairs service with each playing a role in keeping homes safe, well-maintained, and comfortable.

### Southway Responsibilities

- 3.2 Southway is responsible for the overall upkeep of its homes. The repairs we must carry out are:
- 3.3 **Structural and External Repairs:** Maintaining roofs, chimneys, walls, windows, doors, drains, gutters, and external paths, steps, and ramps.
  - **Installations:** Ensuring heating systems, water, gas, and electrical installations are safe and working properly.
- 3.4 **Kitchens and Bathrooms:** Carry out repairs to ensure that they are kept in working order. When we carry out repairs to your kitchen or bathroom, we will use materials that match the existing ones as closely as possible.
- 3.5 **Safety Devices:** Keeping carbon monoxide detectors, smoke and heat alarms, and smart monitoring units in good working order.
  - **Adaptations:** Where installed by Southway and/or the local authority.

- 3.6 **Communal Areas:** Maintaining shared spaces in flats and age-friendly housing, including entrances, stairways, lifts, lighting, and fire safety systems.
- 3.7 **Fences and Gates:** Repair and make safe.
- 3.8 **Driveways and Garages:** where provided by Southway repairs to address health and safety concerns and maintain driveways.
  - **Decoration:** Keeping the exterior and communal areas in reasonable decorative condition.
- 3.9 **Communication and Access:** Providing clear updates, appointment details, and timely responses to repair requests.
- 3.10 **Respect and Cleanliness:** Treating tenants and their homes with respect and leaving areas tidy after repairs.
- 3.11 **Damaged Decoration:** After a repair is finished, we will fix any damaged decoration in the affected area using the closest matching materials we can find.

## **4. Tenant Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Tenants are expected to do the following:
- 4.2 **Report Repairs Promptly:** Let us know about faults or damage as soon as possible.
- 4.3 **Provide Access:** Allow authorised staff or contractors into the property for inspections, servicing, or repairs. Notice will be given unless urgent access is required. We may charge for no-access repairs in some circumstances.
- 4.4 **Maintain the Interior:** Keep the home clean, decorated, and in good condition. This includes sweeping chimneys if using solid fuel fires, by an approved contractor.
- 4.5 **Carry Out Minor Repairs:** Handle small tasks such as replacing light bulbs, unblocking waste pipes, filling small plaster cracks, internal decoration, replacing lost keys, television aerials and maintaining tenant-installed fixtures.
- 4.6 **Minimise Damage:** Take reasonable steps to prevent further damage (e.g., moving furniture away from leaks).
- 4.7 **To help us carry out repairs, we kindly ask that personal items are moved out of the way.** If you need assistance with this, we are happy to

help—just let us know. We'll need your permission and a signed disclaimer before we can proceed.

## **5. Repair Categories and Timescales**

5.1 To deliver a responsive and efficient service, repairs are prioritised based on urgency and impact:

### **5.2 Emergency Repairs – we will attend within 24 hours to make safe**

Emergency repairs are those that pose an immediate risk to health, safety, or the security of the home. In some cases, we may carry out a temporary fix to make the property safe, followed by a full repair later.

### **5.3 Routine Repairs – will be completed within 20 working days**

These repairs are scheduled by appointment and prioritised based on urgency. If the issue causes discomfort, inconvenience, or could lead to further damage, we aim to offer an appointment within 5 working days.

### **5.4 Planned Repairs – will be completed within 90 working days.**

Sometimes, a repair turns out to be a bigger job than we expected; for example, needing to replace a large item rather than just fixing it. These repairs take more than one day to complete and may require multiple appointments for different trades.

## **6. Restricting Repairs**

6.1 There are some circumstances where the repairs service may be limited to emergencies due to:

6.2 A live Right to Buy/Acquire application having been submitted.

- A notice to quit has been served.

6.3 Access is denied for health and safety works, including - annual gas services, asbestos, electrical, fire risk assessments or lift servicing.

- Violent or abusive behaviour by members of the household.

## **7. Repair Appointments**

7.1 For all repairs except emergencies, we will arrange an appointment that suits you at the time the repair is logged.

7.2 Appointments are available Monday to Friday between **8:00 AM and 3:30 PM**. We will offer you a choice of slots to fit around your day.

7.3 **Appointment slots as follows:**

Appointment slots and abbreviations.	Times of appointment slots.
AM (Morning).	8 am to 12:00 pm
ASR (Avoid school run).	10 am to 2:30 pm
PM (Afternoon).	12 pm to 3:30 pm
ALL (All day).	8 am to 3:30 pm
LA (Late Afternoon) – emergencies only	3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

7.4 Saturday Appointments: A limited number of Saturday morning appointments are available for gas servicing. These are prioritised for tenants who are unable to be at home during the week due to work or other commitments.

7.5 We aim to make the process as convenient as possible, keeping you informed and ensuring that your repair is completed within the agreed time limit.

7.6 Southway reserves the right to cancel repairs and surveys when no access is provided on the appointment date. If a repair or surveyor visit is still needed, the tenant will need to re-raise the repair.

## **8. Inspections by Surveyors**

8.1 Sometimes, a repair needs to be looked at in more detail before we can fix it properly especially if it involves issues like damp, structural damage, or several different issues.

8.2 If an inspection is needed, we will visit within 10 working days. After the inspection, we will:

- Diagnose the issue and explain what needs doing.
- Raise the repair order

8.3 We will keep you informed throughout the process and make sure the repair is booked in as quickly and conveniently as possible.

## **9. What Counts as an Emergency Repair?**

9.1 Emergency repairs include the following:

9.2 Faults that could cause **serious injury or death** to occupants, staff, visitors, or the public.

- Issues likely to cause **major damage** to the building or its contents.
- Faults that breach **Health and Safety Regulations**, posing a danger to life or limb.

## **10. Emergency Out of Hours Repairs**

10.1 We understand that emergencies do not always happen during office hours. That is why Southway operates a **24-hour emergency repairs service**, ensuring help is available when it is needed most.

10.2 **Out of hours emergency service hours limited to critical emergencies only including:**

- Total power failure
- Lift or stairlift breakdowns
- Heating/hot water failures only if there is a **severe medical need that specifically requires heating or hot water**.

10.3 **Emergency Service Hours:**

**Weekdays:** 5:30 PM – 8:00 AM

**Weekends & Bank Holidays:** 24 hours

10.4 Misreporting of emergency repairs could result in you being charged for the cost of the out of hours appointment.

## **11. How to Contact Us to Report Repairs**

11.1 Please let us know about any repair issues as soon as you spot them. You can currently contact us in the following ways:

- Phone 0161 448 4200.
- Email: [connect@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect@southwayhousing.co.uk)
- Tenants Portal and upcoming Southway app.
- Website: <http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk> or Southway social media platforms.
- Or via a Southway member of staff.
- Postal Address: Southern Gate, 729 Princess Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LT

11.2 If you are reporting an emergency, you can use the same daytime contact number, 0161 448 4200, at any time. Our out of hours calls are dealt with by a dedicated team who will assess the situation and dispatch a trained operative or contractor if needed.

## **12. Rechargeable Repairs**

12.1 You may be asked to cover the cost of a repair if:

- The damage was caused by you, someone in your household, or a visitor—through wilful action, neglect, or abuse.
- You repeatedly miss appointments or refuse access without good reason.
- You leave your home or garden in poor condition at the end of your tenancy or at the time of a mutual exchange.
- You have made unauthorised improvements or alterations that require correction.

12.2 If you are being charged:

- We will let you know that the repair is your responsibility when we inspect or diagnose it.
- You will be given the option to carry out the repair yourself or use a qualified contractor.
- If Southway carries out the work, we will confirm the cost in writing before we start the work. Charges are based on our standard rates plus a 10% admin fee.

- Payment is usually required in advance, but we may offer a repayment plan of up to 12 months, by exception.

12.3 There is an Appeals process relating to rechargeable repairs.

12.4 We will not recharge for repairs:

- Where damage is caused by a domestic abuse perpetrator - survivors will not be held responsible or charged.
- If damage is due to criminal activity by a third party and confirmed by the Police, Southway may cover the cost.

## **13. Health and Safety and Wellbeing**

13.1 Your safety is our top priority. We will complete every repair with care and attention to make sure your home stays safe, secure, and comfortable.

13.2 We follow strict health and safety rules to protect tenants, staff, and contractors. This means:

- We check for risks before starting work.
- Operatives use safe tools and equipment.
- We make sure everyone working in your home knows how to do so safely and respectfully.

13.3 If there is ever a repair that could affect your safety—like a gas leak, electrical fault, or serious damp, we will treat it as an emergency and respond quickly.

13.4 We also understand that every tenant is different. If you have specific needs—such as mobility challenges, sensory sensitivities, or communication preferences—please let us know. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the repair process works for you.

## **14. Right to Repair**

14.1 Southway is committed to completing all responsive repairs within the published timescales and to a high standard. If we do not carry out the repair on time tenants have the right to act under the **Right to Repair** scheme.

14.2 This scheme allows tenants to arrange for certain small, qualifying repairs to be carried out by an approved contractor if Southway does not complete the

work on time. These repairs must affect health and safety and fall within specific categories.

#### 14.3 Examples of Qualifying Repairs

- No water, electricity, or gas,
- Leaks from pipes, tanks, or cisterns,
- Unsafe electrical lighting,
- Roof leaks,
- No heating,
- Extractor fan not working.

### 15. Improvements

15.1 Tenants are welcome to personalise their homes, but it is important that any changes are made safely and with the right permissions.

#### 15.2 What You Can Do

You have the right to make improvements to your home—such as installing new fixtures or redecorating—provided you:

- Get **written consent** from Southway before starting any work.
- Obtain any necessary **planning permission or building regulation approval**.
- Follow any reasonable conditions Southway sets, including standards for the work.

#### If you make improvements:

15.3 You are responsible for **maintaining and repairing** them in the future.

- You may need to **remove or replace** improvements (e.g. laminate flooring) if they block access to essential fittings.

15.4 Southway may agree to maintain certain improvements, but your **rent may increase** to cover the cost.

15.5 If work is not completed properly, Southway may step in and recharge for any additional work required.

- Certified professionals (Gas Safe or NICEIC) must complete gas and electrical repairs.

Improvements will be refused if the work would cause Southway to incur expenditure which it would not incur if the improvement were not carried out.

**15.6 Unauthorised Improvements** - If you make changes without permission:

- You will be **recharged** for the cost of removing or correcting the work.
- This applies both during your tenancy and when you move out.

## **16. Performance Monitoring**

16.1 We are committed to delivering a Repairs Service that meets high standards and keeps improving each year. To make sure we are on track, we monitor performance and have set the following targets:

- 100% of emergency repairs will be completed on time.
- 95% of routine repairs will be completed on time, as part of our 5-year corporate plan (90% 2025/26 with annual improvements set).
- 95% customer satisfaction with the Repairs Service at the point of repair.
- At least 80% of customers are satisfied that our homes are well-maintained (Tenant Satisfaction Measure)
- 90% surveyor visits attended within 10 working days

16.2 Performance is regularly reported to Tenants, People and Places Committee and the Southway Board.

16.3 We will also inspect at least 5% of all repairs to make sure the quality is good and that the customer is satisfied.

## **17. Value for Money**

17.1 Delivering a high-quality repairs service while making the best use of resources is central to our approach to delivering Repairs.

17.2 We use a range of tools and processes to monitor and improve value for money, including:

**Benchmarking:** we compare our costs and performance against other social housing providers.

**Service Reviews:** we regularly review our systems, processes, to ensure they remain efficient, and customer focused.

**Data Analysis:** we track repair trends; this helps us to decide when to replace rather than complete a repair and helps us to plan better for future investment.

**Productivity Monitoring:** we measure and review individual operative, team and trade performance to ensure resources are used effectively and that we are working efficiently.

## **18. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

- 18.1 Southway is committed to ensuring that every customer receives fair and equitable service and we recognise and respond sensitively to the **diverse needs** of individuals and communities.
- 18.2 An Equality Impact assessment has been completed for this Policy and details the potential implications and mitigations.
- 18.3 Southway may assist certain customer groups due to their specific circumstances and complete some repairs sooner than our published timescales, for example due to ill health or age-related conditions.
- 18.4 This policy and any related documents can be provided in **alternative formats** on request, including:
  - Large print
  - Audio
  - Translations into other languages.

## **19. Customer Voice and Influence**

- 19.1 We will include customers involved in drafting policy once completed.
- 19.2 To deliver the best service that we can, we need to know what our tenants think about them. That is why we actively encourage people to share their views, experiences, and ideas to help us improve the Repairs service. You can get involved by:

- Joining the Repairs Service Influence Group to help shape how we deliver repairs to you.

19.3 Giving feedback on the quality and care taken on the repairs we have carried out through satisfaction surveys and questionnaires.

## **20. Customer Care**

20.1 At Southway, repairs aren't just about fixing things – they're about looking after you and your home. We will always:

- Carry Southway ID badges so you know who we are.
- Treat you with respect and be polite, professional, and approachable.
- Explain what we're doing and why, so you're never left guessing.
- If you'd like us to, we'll pop on foot coverings to keep your home clean.
- We'll take care of your space and leave it tidy when we're done.

## **21. Accountability**

21.1 The Executive Director of Homes and Communities is responsible for making sure this policy is implemented effectively.

21.2 All staff involved in delivering repairs are trained in the relevant procedures to ensure consistency and quality.

## **22. Policy Review**

22.1 This policy is reviewed every **three years**, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or regulation.

## **23. Links to Other Policies and Strategies**

23.1 This Responsive Repairs Policy works alongside several other Southway policies and strategies to ensure a consistent, safe, and customer-focused approach to managing homes including:

- [Asbestos Management Policy](#)

- [Asset Management Strategy](#)
- [Boundary Treatment Policy](#)
- [Complaints Handling Policy](#)
- [Control of Legionella and Water Hygiene Policy](#)
- [Customer Compensation Policy](#)
- [Damp and Mould Policy](#)
- [Electrical Safety Policy](#)
- [Empty Homes Standard](#)
- [Equalities Scheme](#)
- [Equipment and Adaptations Policy](#)
- [Fire Safety Policy](#)
- [Gas Safety Management Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Lifting Equipment Safety Policy](#)