

Rechargeable Repairs Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy sets out the approach to be adopted by all employees of Platform Housing Group (the Group) in dealing with repairs that are not the responsibility of the Group.

Applicability

The policy applies to all members of the Group.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The overall aim of this policy is to contribute to the efficient maintenance of the Group's housing stock and to ensure that expenditure is managed effectively.

Our intention is to ensure that our approach to making recharges for repairs is consistent, transparent and communicated to customers and other stakeholders.

- 1.2 The specific objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To define what is meant by a rechargeable repair.
- To give clear guidance for customers as to when we will recharge for a repair.
- To outline the arrangements we will put in place to recharge for such repairs.
- To advise customers of the action we will take to recover payments.

- 1.3 The policy will be supported by detailed operational procedures.

- 1.4 We will **not** normally undertake those repairs that are rechargeable. However, we recognise that, in certain circumstances, we may need to exercise discretion and undertake repairs to protect vulnerable customers or undertake emergency work to ensure safety and health of occupants, visitors or the general public. In these circumstances we will consider whether the customer is recharged.

- 1.5 There may be circumstances where a customer refuses to, or is incapable of, undertake rechargeable repairs and we may decide that, in order to protect the asset, our reputation, occupants, visitors or the general public, we will undertake the repair and apply a recharge fairly and robustly.

Examples of these circumstances include:

- **Criminal damage to a property** - where damage is as a result of a reported crime, we will usually only undertake the repair when a crime reference is provided to us. However, if it is necessary to ensure the safety of a customer or security of the property, we will apply discretion as to whether we complete the repair without a crime number.

- **Repairs that are the responsibility of the customer** - and if not undertaken may impact on the structure or affect neighbouring properties e.g., removal of large quantities of rubbish, servicing or isolation of dangerous appliances, reinstatement of the property to former condition following an unauthorised or dangerous customer alteration.
- **Former tenant recharges** - when a tenancy has been terminated and there is damage to a property which is the responsibility of the customer.

1.6 This policy will apply in all circumstances that cannot be attributed to normal wear and tear by the occupants or their visitors.

2. Context

2.1 We use the following definitions:

- **Rechargeable repair** means any repair caused by customer (tenant/leaseholder) damage or neglect. This includes both deliberate and accidental damage and reasonable costs incurred by us through neglect or omission by the customer.
- **Fair wear and tear** is the reasonable deterioration in the condition of household components, caused by normal everyday usage, and not as a result of a customer's act or negligence.

2.2 A **rechargeable repair** arises where the repair:

- is undertaken by us and is the customer's responsibility.
- is the consequence of wilful damage, neglect, misuse or abuse by the customer or third party.
- is needed to return the property to the agreed quality standard both during and at the end of an occupancy.
- is needed to immediately make safe any authorised or unauthorised work undertaken by the customer.
- is needed to gain access to the property and to change the locks in order to evict the customer from the property.

This policy is set within the context of the relevant tenancy agreement or lease and the following legislation:

- Housing Act 1985, 1988 and 1996
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and 1987
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

3. Our Approach to Rechargeable Repairs

- 3.1 We are generally responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of properties and any fixtures or fittings that were originally provided, as outlined in the relevant tenancy agreements and related customer handbook.
- 3.2 We have certain responsibilities to maintain and repair our properties. These responsibilities are set out in the various Housing Acts, Landlord and Tenant Acts and the Human Rights Act 1998 and are detailed in our tenancy agreements.
- 3.3 Under the terms and conditions of the Tenancy Agreement the customer is responsible for certain items of repair. **Appendix A: Rechargeable Repairs Guide** provides a summary list of repair responsibilities.

3.4 Exceptions

We will not recharge the customer for undertaking repairs if:

- damage is the result of a criminal act and a crime reference number has been obtained from the police and provided to us.
- damage has occurred and it is considered to be fair wear and tear.

4. Vulnerability

- 4.1 If we are aware of, or identify, a vulnerability that may mean the customer cannot reasonably be held accountable for the cost of certain repairs, we will act sympathetically and sensitively, ensuring that the service offered is appropriate and reflective of their needs and circumstances. In some cases, this may mean recharges are waived.

5. Emergency Repairs

In the case of emergency repairs needed that are rechargeable, the customer is free to book their own contractor to complete the repair to our required standard. If the customer is unable to do this, and we are required to complete the repair, we will notify the customer of the cost for us to carry out the repair and arrange for the collection of the cost. If the customer is in financial difficulty, we may occasionally be prepared to agree an affordable payment option after reviewing the case with the relevant Rent Officer.

6. Ending a Tenancy

- 6.1 When a customer gives notice to terminate their tenancy, details including approximate costs will be included in the Notice to Quit (NTQ) documentation and the property must be returned to us in a lettable standard.

A text message will be sent to the registered mobile listed approximately two weeks before the termination to remind the customer of the details in the NTQ document.

All keys should be returned on the agreed vacation date, as failure to do so will result in the cost of changing the locks, and any associated work, being recharged to the outgoing customer. Any recharges incurred by the customer not completing the required actions to prevent recharges will be raised and followed up by our Former Tenant Arrears Officers when the property becomes void.

7. Recovery of Rechargeable Repairs

7.1 Where recharges are raised as an emergency repair whilst the customer's tenancy is current, we will notify the customer of the cost and arrange payment terms.

7.2 Where rechargeable repairs occur as a result of works carried out once the property becomes vacant, an invoice will be raised once works have been completed and sent by the Former Tenant Arrears team to pursue payment. Where a customer is in financial difficulty, in either of the above two scenarios, we may occasionally be prepared to agree an affordable payment option, the cost of the recharge will be added to the sub account on the customer's rent account.

If recharges remain unpaid at the end of a tenancy, they will be treated as former tenant debt and chased by the Former Tenant Arrears Officers.

8. Equality and Diversity

8.1 We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our relevant Group policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

8.2 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken in respect of this policy and which identified no negative impact on any person/group with a protected characteristic as a result of this policy.

9. Complaints

9.1 We aim to meet the needs of our customers by providing an excellent service. However, it is acknowledged that occasionally things go wrong and customers may wish to complain. Should the need arise to make a complaint, please refer to our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy.

10. Monitoring and Review

10.1 We will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and recommend policy changes to improve service delivery. Performance will be reported through the respective

Boards, senior management teams and customer panels to identify any areas for review and improvement.

- 10.2 We will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years.
- 10.3 Approved documents are valid for use after their approval date and remain in force beyond any expiry of their review date until a new version is available.

11. Associated Documents

- 11.1 List of documents - associated policies, procedures and publications:

- Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
- Customer Experience Strategy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Respective tenancy agreements and customer handbooks
- Appendix A: Rechargeable Repairs Guide
- Regulator of Social Housing – Consumer Standards:
 - Neighbourhood and Community
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
 - Tenancy

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Rechargeable Repairs Guide



At Platform Housing Group (PHG) we aim to provide an excellent and cost effective repairs service to our Customers.

Most Customers maintain their property to a high standard and help us to keep the inconvenience of needing repairs and repairs visits to a minimum that is why we feel it is unfair for all customers to pay towards other people's neglect or intentional damage of their home.

Where appropriate, we will charge for repairs which have not resulted from fair wear and tear and for occasions where customers have persistently failed to honour the appointments we have agreed with them.

Please remember our repairs operatives and contractors are not responsible for raising charges and they are not authorised to waiver any costs.

What is a rechargeable repair?

As a Customer of PHG, you have the responsibility under your tenancy agreement to undertake repairs which have been caused to your home by damage or neglect, or by visitors who have been invited to your home.

You will normally be recharged for repairs undertaken by the Group in the following circumstances:

- Where the repair is not the result of fair wear and tear and is not the Group's legal responsibility
- When a contractor has attended and it is found that the repair is the responsibility of the Customer



What type of things might I be charged for?

A more detailed list of who is responsible for different type of repairs is provided at the end of this guide.

The most common types of rechargeable repairs we undertake are:

- Accidental damage to windows, doors and internal fixtures or fittings
- Non-accidental breakages of glass where a crime reference number has not been obtained
- Breakages to sanitary ware - baths, wash basins, toilet basins and cisterns
- Floods from washing machines, basins, baths and toilet basins
- Blocked sinks or toilets
- Damage to doors and windows (where board up only would initially be actioned)
- Lost keys
- Removal of items after a Customer has moved out and subsequent cleaning of the property
- Damage caused during the execution of a warrant i.e. Police forced entry
- Overgrown and untidy gardens

The list at the end of this guide provides a useful breakdown of PHG's responsibilities and customers responsibilities.

What if I cannot afford to pay in full?

If you cannot pay for the repair all in one go.

We operate a tariff for the most common rechargeable repairs we undertake a repayment plan over a longer period. Once you have paid for the rechargeable repair in full the job will be raised and repair completed.

As always, you have the option to complete your own repairs that are your responsibility, as long as you use a certified/qualified contractor. We may ask to survey works once completed.

This change does not affect your normal day to day repairs, and you can continue to request those as normal where there are property defects or fair wear and tear. This change only applies to rechargeable repairs where you or a visitor has caused damage or neglect, whether accidentally or intentionally.

Former Customers will be recharged by the Group if expenses are incurred for repairing, clearing or cleaning a property when it has been vacated, including if expense is incurred in redecoration due to the poor decorative order in which the property has been left.

It is advisable that Customers have their own contents insurance to cover any damage caused by them that the Group would deem as rechargeable.

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Roofing	Roof	Roof structure, roof covering and chimney repairs & Leaks	PHG
	Gutters	Gutter & gully repairs and clearance blockages	PHG
	RWP	Make safe defective rain water goods, soffit and fascia	PHG
External Finishes	Structural	Major structural defects	PHG
	Brickwork	Significant render & brickwork repairs	PHG
	Cladding	External façade including wooden cladding	PHG
	DPC	Failed DPC repairs	PHG
	Dampness	Penetrating dampness repairs	PHG
External Areas	Fencing	Removal of H&S dangers to fencing, gates, gate posts and boundary walls	PHG
		Repair or replacement of communal area fencing, gates gate posts and boundary walls	PHG
	Paving (General Stock)	Make safe H&S related hazards to paving and tarmac – only responsible for the path leading to the front entrance door, 1 flag wide, and around property to a side or rear entrance door 1 flag wide	PHG
		Repair, replacement or upgrade of paving, tarmac – only responsible for the path leading to the front entrance door, 1 flag wide, and around the property to a side or rear entrance door 1 flag wide	PHG
		Repair, replacement or upgrade of communal area paving, tarmac, turf	PHG - Check with Assets re: lease
	Garages	Repair or replacement of garage, external items inclusive of roof, rain water goods, brickwork, door	PHG
		Repair or replacement of garage internal and ironmongery elements inclusive of door locks and fittings, finishes	If wear & tear PHG, if caused by damage by the customer or visitor - customer
	Bins	Repair or replacement of bins to individual house or flat	Customer
	TV Aerials	Repair or replacement of TV aerials or satellite dishes serving an individual house or flat	Customer
	Washing lines	Repair or replacement of washing lines and rotary dryers to an individual house or flat	Customer

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
External Areas (cont)	Garden	Maintenance of trees, grass, hedges, shrubs	Customer
		Maintenance of trees causing structural damage	PHG
		Removal or control of invasive weeds i.e. Japanese Knotweed	PHG
	Brick Outhouses	Repair or replacement of out-house items inclusive of locks and fittings, windows, doors, finishes	PHG
	Timber Sheds	Maintenance of timber sheds or of its removal if no longer required	Customer
Drainage	Within boundary	Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack etc. within property boundary	PHG - Unless this has been caused by damage or neglect by the customer
	Outside boundary	Blocked or leaking shared foul drain outside property boundary	Customer via utility company
External Joinery	Glazing	Board up of broken glazing (this will be carried out by PHG but is rechargeable item)	PHG
		Re-glaze windows if crime reference number provided, if no crime reference provided customer reimburses via recharge	PHG
		Replacement of failed double glazed units	PHG
	Windows & ironmongery	Repair or replacement of window inclusive of frame, external sealant, sash, sill, window board, operating mechanisms, restrictor catch, window handle, casement fastener, repair or replacement of internal sealant, window ironmongery inclusive of locks, replacement keys, casement stay	PHG
		Replacement of window keys if lost	Customer
	Doors & ironmongery	Repair or replacement of external doors inclusive of frame, threshold, weather board, hinges and operating mechanisms such as door handles, multi point locks and suited lock systems	PHG
		Repair or replacement of door locks, replacement of keys, letter plate, number plate, security chain, spy hole and other associated door ironmongery	Customer
		Replacement keys if door is vandalised - customer MUST report with a CRIME No from Police	PHG
	Fire doors - external and internal i.e. Kitchen	Repairs or replacement of fire doors inclusive of fittings and fixtures that provide fire protection i.e. letter box, spy hole, emergency latch, spring door closer, single push bar, overhead door closer, intumescent fire strip and smoke seals	PHG

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Communal Areas	Lifts	Lift breakdown repairs	PHG
	Door entry	Repair or replacement of door entry equipment	PHG
	Security lighting	Repair or replacement of communal security lighting	PHG
	General lighting	Repair of general lighting appliances	PHG
	AOV	Automatic opening vents	PHG
	Fire alarm	Repair and replacement of fire alarm equipment	PHG
	Fire fighting	Repair or replacement of firefighting equipment i.e. extinguishers	PHG
	CCTV	Repair or replacement of CCTV equipment	PHG
	TV aerial	Repair or replacement of communal TV aerials	PHG
	Gates barriers	Repair or replacement of gates and barriers	PHG
	Laundry equipment	Repair or replacement of laundry equipment	PHG
	White goods	Repair or replacement of white goods	PHG
	Communal Kitchen	Repair or fitting of cookers and cooker connections such as bayonet fittings	PHG
	Warden call system	Repair or replacement of warden call systems	PHG
	Pest control	Removal/destruction of mice, rats and other vermin in communal areas	PHG
	W.C. Repairs	Repair or replacement of W.C. including seat	PHG
	General repairs	Repair or replacement of general maintenance items	PHG
	Asbestos	Assessment and removal of asbestos containing materials	PHG
Water	Water supply	Loss of water supply	PHG
	Leaks	Leaks to water pipes and water tanks	PHG

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Gas & Heating	Gas leak	Gas leak	PHG
	Pipework leaks	Leaks to heating pipes and radiators	PHG
	Flues	Blocked flues - boiler, fire	PHG
	Boilers/ fires	Repairs to heating appliances - boiler, electric fire, storage heaters	PHG
	Radiators	Bleeding of radiators	Customer
	Cookers	Repair or fitting of cookers and cooker connections such as bayonet fittings	Customer
	Meter cupboards	Internal meter cupboards i.e. located in Customer hallway	PHG
		Communal area meter cupboards including lock (cupboard to be fire compliant)	PHG
		External meter cupboards servicing individual tenancy (cupboard lock tenants responsibility)	PHG
Electrics	Power supply	Unsafe electrical power supply or fittings e.g. unsafe wiring, sockets, light fittings, extractor fans	PHG
	Sockets	Repair or replacement of laundry equipment	PHG
	Light fittings	Repair of essential electrical items - consumer units, sockets, light fittings, starter motors, extractor fans, TV sockets	PHG
	Light bulbs	Replacement of light bulbs - general need properties	Customer
		Replacement of light bulbs - Older persons schemes	PHG
	Doorbells	If hard wired and fitted by PHG (mainly newbuild)	PHG
		If battery operated or fitted by a previous Customer	Customer
	Security & alarms	Repair or replacement of security lights, burglar alarms or other security devices	Customer

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Smoke/CO Alarms	Mains detectors	Repair or replacement of mains-operated interlinked smoke detectors	PHG
	Battery detectors	Repair or replacement of battery operated smoke detectors	PHG is responsible for the replacement of faulty or damaged detectors, Customer is responsible for replacing the batteries in the detectors
	CO detector	Repair or replacement of CO detectors where solid fuel appliances are present	PHG
		Repair or replacement of CO detectors where solid fuel appliances are not present	PHG
Sanitation	Leaks to items	Leaks to basins, sinks, baths, showers and toilets, and associated internal pipework	PHG
	Repairs to items	Repair or replacement of basins, sinks, baths, showers and toilets	PHG
	Blocked W.C.	Blocked W.C.(unless caused by misuse)	PHG
	Blocked sink etc.	Blocked basins, sinks, baths, showers and level access shower wet room gullies	Customer
	Taps	Repair or replacement of taps and tap washers	PHG
	Plug, tap washer	Replacement of plug, chain, bath panel	Customer
	Showers	Repair or replacement of shower inclusive of riser rail, shower head (not including curtain) were shower is primary form of bathing facility i.e. there is no bath in property	PHG
		Repair or replacement of shower inclusive of curtain, riser rail, shower head were shower is not primary form of bathing facility i.e. there is a bath in property	PHG
		Repair or replacement of level access shower wet room non slip flooring	PHG
	W.C. Seats	Repair or replacement of W.C. seat - general needs	Customer
		Repair or replacement of communal W.C. seat	PHG
		Replacement of W.C. seat - Older Persons Schemes	PHG

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Internal Finishes	Plasterwork	Major wall and ceiling plaster work defects i.e. scratch coat repairs, holes greater than 1cm, cracks greater than 5mm wide	PHG
		Minor wall and ceiling plaster work suitable for filling with pollyfiller	Customer
	Tiling	Repair or replace wall and floor tiling finishes inclusive of bathroom and kitchen splash back tiles	If through wear & tear PHG, if through damaged caused by Customer or visitor - Customer
	DPM	Repair or replacement of floor damp-proof membrane and associated concrete repairs	PHG
	Flooring	PHG Install floor coverings in Kitchens, Bathroom, and WC ONLY During planned works – these we will repair for fair wear & Tear	PHG
		Customer must have contents insurance to cover in case of Damage done by any workman, whilst accessing a repair. A disclaimer will be asked to be signed before work commences	
		Other floor coverings - customers own responsibility	Customer
	Kitchen Appliances	Communal kitchen appliances. Repair or fitting of cookers and cooker connections	PHG
		General Kitchen appliances	Customer
		Market/Intermediate Rent appliances if provided i.e. cookers etc. Repairs or fitting of cookers and cooker connections	PHG
	Flooring	Repair or replace communal floor finishes	PHG
	Condensation	Customer is responsible for managing condensation in their home – please send attached leaflet	Customer
		Appropriate cleaning materials should be used on small areas of black mould on sealant etc.	Customer
		A spread of black spot mould on walls and ceilings may require an inspection/treatment by PHG, and education on condensation management	PHG
	Decoration	Painting and decoration (General Needs)	Customer

Area of Property	Component	Maintenance Item	Responsibility
Internal Joinery	Kitchen units	Cupboard doors/drawers that become loose due to fair wear and tear	Customer
		Other repairs – broken drawer/damaged cupboard doors – maybe recharged	PHG/Recharge
		Repair or replacement of kitchen sinks and taps	PHG
	Doors	Make safe H&S related internal door repairs	PHG
		Repair or replacement of internal doors and door ironmongery	PHG - Where caused by fair wear & tear. Where caused by damage or neglect - Customer
		Door changes to accommodate carpets including re-fixing of any draught excluders	Customer
	Door frames	Repair or replacement of internal door frames	PHG
	Curtain rails	Repair or replacement of curtain pole, rail or track replacement	Customer
	Handrails	Repair of H&S hazards to handrails, balusters, newel post, stair tread	PHG
	Skirting	Repair or replacement of skirting	PHG
	Stairs	Repair or replacement of stair treads, risers and nosing's	PHG
	Flooring	Make safe H&S related timber flooring repairs	PHG
		Repair or replacement of timber flooring i.e. floor boards	PHG
Vermin & Infestations	Vermin	Removal of mice, rats and other vermin in communal areas	PHG
		Removal of mice, rats and other vermin in non-communal areas	Customer
Adaptations	Minor adapts	Minor repair and replacement adaptations < £1,000	PHG
	Major adapts	Major repair and new adaptations > £1,000	PHG
Cleaning	Void Clean	Small environmental clean if former tenant not carried out	Former Customer
	Void Clean	Large environmental clean if former tenant not carried out	Former Customer
Upgrades		Upgrading of new or additional components outside of PHG replacement timescales or to a higher specification than standard	Customer