

Repairs handbook **for tenants**



North
Tyneside
Council

About this handbook

This handbook contains information about the repairs service that is available to you as a tenant of North Tyneside Council (NTC). This includes our responsibilities and commitment to you as your landlord and your responsibilities and commitment to us.

The service is provided through our in-house teams, or one of our appointed contractors, working on our behalf.

Access Statement

If you need us to do anything differently (reasonable adjustments) to help you access our services, including providing this information in another language or format, please contact **0345 2000 102** or email **repairs@northtyneside.gov.uk**

Reporting a repair

You can report a repair to our dedicated Repairs Contact Centre, Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm.

Telephone: 0345 2000 102

Email: repairs@northtyneside.gov.uk

Website: my.northtyneside.gov.uk

Emergency repairs

Can be reported on 0345 2000 102 during the following times:

Monday – Friday: 6pm – 8am

Friday – Monday: 6pm – 8am

All Bank Holidays

Depending on the emergency you may also need to contact:

- **National Grid on 0800 111 999:** Gas- smell, leak, or fumes
- **Ring 999:** Fire - Smoke fumes or smoke detector alarm activated
- **Northern Power Grid on 105:** No electricity
- **Northumbrian Water 0800 393 084:** Water- burst pipe, flooding, or no water

Emergencies

– where is it in your home

It is good to know where the following are in your home, particularly in case of an emergency.

- **Gas meter**

Use this space to make a note of the location of this item



- **Consumer unit**

(fuse box)

Use this space to make a note of the location of this item



- **Electric meter**

Use this space to make a note of the location of this item



- **Mains water stop tap**

(stop cock, usually located under kitchen sink)

Use this space to make a note of the location of this item



- **Service valves**

(service valves allow work to be carried out on an appliance without having to turn off water supply to the property)

Use this space to make a note of the location of this item



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Our commitment to you

Our key aim is to ensure our tenants and leaseholders live in homes that are safe, well maintained, high quality and free from harm or danger.

We are committed to providing an excellent customer service and to ensure that we meet this commitment our staff and appointed contractors will always be:

- **Professional**

We will provide a professional, high-quality service at all times.

- **Honest**

We will explain clearly what work is required, when it will be undertaken and estimate how long it will take to complete.

- **Trustworthy**

We will respect your privacy.

- **Reliable**

We will carry out what we said we would do within timescales provided.

- **Respectful**

We will respect you, your household, and your home. This includes any vulnerabilities within the household and cultural beliefs.

- **Polite**

We will ensure that we are always polite and courteous.

- **Clean and tidy**

We will work in a clean and efficient manner, removing all our rubbish, as necessary.

- **Safe**

We will work in a safe manner.

Your commitment to us

To ensure that you receive the service that we commit to provide, please follow the information below. If you do not, it will not be possible for the appointment to go ahead.

- Keep your repair or inspection appointments or let us know as soon as possible if you need to rearrange.
- Follow any safety advice and instructions provided to you by our staff and appointed contractors.
- Make sure someone over the age of 16 years of age is at the property for the appointment.
- If asked to do so, please remove any floor coverings, ornaments,

furniture and valuables from the area we need to work in.

- Keep pets and children away from the work area.
- Refrain from smoking or vaping in the property whilst our staff and appointed contractors are at your home.
- Treat our staff and appointed contractors as you expect to be treated. Please note that abusive language or behaviour will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and we may refuse to complete the work if this happens.

Before you report a repair

Before you report a repair to us, you should:

- Check who is responsible for the repair on page 17.
- If possible, refer to the self-help videos on the council's website.

Repair responsibilities

Making sure your home is kept in good condition is a shared responsibility between North Tyneside Council and yourself.

Which repairs are North Tyneside Council responsible for?

Keeping the outside of the property, the structure and items inside such as baths and toilets in good condition are our responsibility.

If these need to be repaired because of general 'wear and tear', it is our responsibility to ensure they are fixed.

Appendix One provides examples of some of our and your repair responsibilities. More information of your responsibilities can also be found in your Tenancy Agreement or on our website.



What you need to provide when reporting a repair



- Details of what needs repairing.
- If the problem is with your heating system, any error codes.
- Any information you think we may need to know, including your contact details and access to the property.

Our call handlers will talk to you about your repair and:

- Confirm who is responsible for the repair.
- If it is our responsibility, make an appointment for our staff or appointed contractor to call.
- To prioritise the repair, we may ask your permission to share a video diagnosis tool. If your mobile phone is compatible a link, a will be sent to your phone enabling us to see the repair you are reporting.

Emergency repairs

An emergency repair is a repair which:

- Presents a danger to life or limb.
- A major health and safety risk.
- A security risk.

Depending on the emergency you may also need to contact:

	Actions
Gas (smell, leak, or fumes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call National Grid on 0800 111 999. Ring from outside your home to minimise the risk of an explosion.• Turn off the gas through turning the handle at the meter to a horizontal position.• Open windows.• Do not smoke.• Do not switch anything electrical off or on until the problem is fixed.
Smoke, fumes or your smoke detector alarm is activated Carbon Monoxide alarm is activated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call 999 if you can see or smell smoke.• Carbon Monoxide Fumes – Call National Grid on 0800 111 999.• Check alarm if there are no visible signs of smoke or fire.



	Actions
<p>Electricity (fittings or appliances sparking, flickering or shocks)</p> <p>No electricity at all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn the mains switch at the fuse box to OFF. • Check the meter to see if there is anything on the display. If there is not and/or there is a power cut affecting more than one property call Northern Power Grid on 105.
<p>Water (burst pipe, flooding or no water at all)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To stop flooding, turn the water off at the mains stop tap, turn to the right. • If you need to turn the supply off to a fitting, such as a toilet or sink, use the service valve on the pipe leading to it. • If the issue is with the water supply to your home, contact Northumbrian Water on 0800 393 084.

We will take action to make the property safe and secure and ensure the safety and wellbeing of any household that includes someone with a vulnerability.

Your repair appointment

We are committed to carrying out all repairs in a timely manner and in accordance with our repair response times. Wherever possible, we will arrange an appointment that meets your availability.

You will receive regular text updates about your appointment.

If you are unable to keep the appointment, please let us know as soon as possible.

If we call and there is no one home, we will attempt to contact you. If we are unable to contact you or cannot access the property, a 'sorry we missed you' card will be left, which informs you of what to do next to enable the repair to be completed.

All our staff and appointed contractors have ID cards, confirming who they are. They will show you their card when they arrive at your home and explain why they are there.

If you are unsure, for our staff call **0191 643 6485** to confirm their identity.

Priority repair times

Our priority response times have been agreed with involved tenants. An appointment will be allocated and attendance will be in line with the following priorities:

- P0: Emergency out of hours repair time 2 hours.
- P1: target response time 24 hours.
- P2: target response time 3 working days.
- P3: target response time 7 working days.
- P4: target response time 30 working days.
- P5: target response time 45 working days.



Appointments

The following appointment windows are available:

- **ALL DAY:** between 8am and 4pm.
- **AM:** between 8am and 12 noon.
- **PM:** between 12 noon and 4pm.
- **School Run:** between 10am and 2pm (these appointments will be prioritised for households with school age children).

In certain circumstances the following households may be eligible for a priority service when, living in the property there is:

- A child under the age of 12 months.
- Anyone with a disability or a long-term health condition specifically effected by colder weather which would be exacerbated by no heating or hot water.

For external repairs, an appointment may not be required, but the tenant will be informed of the target response date. However, if the tenant requires an appointment for an external repair, they can request one.

Right to Repair

The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations SI. 1994 No 133, sets out that qualifying repairs should be completed within mandated timescales.

Appendix Two details this information on page 20.



Keeping your home safe

To ensure that your home is safe and remains compliant with legislation there are some works that we need to carry out on a periodic basis. We will inform you of the appointment, and access must be allowed to your home to enable the required work to be carried out.

More information about access to your home is explained in your Tenancy Agreement. This includes:



Gas: we are legally responsible for conducting an annual gas safety check to every property we own and manage that has a gas supply. This annual check also includes your smoke alarm being serviced and O2 detector being checked.



Electrical inspection and testing:

we must check the condition of the electrics in your home in accordance with the current UK standard for the safety of electrical installations, BS7671.



Water hygiene:

To help maintain water hygiene it is recommended that you carry out the following:

- Clean shower heads regularly.
- Flush outside taps during times of low or no use i.e. winter.
- Disconnect and drain down garden hoses after use.
- Run all taps for one (1) minute if your water systems have not been in use for more than seven (7) days.
- If you have a hot water cylinder, ensure that water is maintained at 60°C.

Home improvements

In line with your Tenancy Agreement, for any alteration or home improvement that you wish to make, you must request permission from us first. This includes:

- Replacing internal doors.
- Laying laminate and tiled flooring.
- Tiling to bathroom and kitchen walls.
- Replacing light fittings and electrical sockets.

Visit the Council website and search for fixtures and fittings for more information.

Support to stay in your home

We recognise that you may need some extra help to be able to remain living in your home. To enable this to happen, we will work with you and relevant agencies to identify what support and adaptations may be required.



For some adaptations, an Occupational Health assessment may be required but for others, such as a handrail or flashing doorbell, you can contact our Adaptations Team on **0191 643 7050** to discuss.

The Handyperson Scheme

This service is eligible to our tenants who are aged 60 years and over and/or have a disability that prevents tenant responsibility tasks being carried out.

This is a free service, and you are permitted two jobs within a 12-month period. A job must take no longer than two hours.

We will provide the labour and bring the tools to carry out the work. All we ask is that you supply the job materials, such as shelves, cabinets etc.

This service is not available for larger jobs, electrical or gas works, or jobs that require working at height.

Contact **0345 2000 102** for more information about the service.

The Garden Tool Loan scheme

This scheme is available to all tenants, over the age of 18 years. The aim of the scheme is to help you maintain your garden and is available April – October and there is no charge for the loan hire. The equipment will be provided for an agreed period of time and will be delivered to your home. You will be provided with guidance on how to use.

More information, including the application form is available here or telephone **0191 643 7515** or email:

Neighbourhood.Delivery@northtyneside.gov.uk

Planned improvements to your home

To ensure our properties meet the Decent Homes Standard, we carry out improvement works within required timescales. These schemes include:

- Roof replacements.
- Window replacements.
- Door replacements.
- Kitchen installations.
- Bathroom installations.
- Heating system upgrades.
- Painting to external areas and communal spaces.

We will notify you 21 days prior to any work scheduled for your home. You may be assigned a Customer Liaison Advisor to be your point of contact during the time the work is taking place. They will explain the process, receive your colour and style choices, and ensure that you are kept up to date with progress.



Important information

Condensation: is when excess moisture in the air changes to a liquid. It can occur anywhere in your home but most often appears in kitchens, bathrooms, and bedrooms. You can help to prevent condensation in your home through some simple actions. If condensation advice is not followed this may result in black spot mould.

Visit the Council website and search for "reducing condensation" to view our guide. You can contact the Repairs Contact Centre on **0345 200 102** to request a paper copy.

Chargeable costs: You must take care of your home, inside and out. You must repair any damage caused by you, your family, visitors or pets. We can carry out these repairs for you, but you will have to pay the cost to do so.

If the repair has been caused by vandalism, you need to report the incident to the police to get a crime reference number before reporting the repair to us. If you do not do this, you will be charged for the repair.

A cost may also be applied if the required work sits outside the responsibility of the landlord.

Home insurance: We strongly advise you to take out home contents insurance. This will cover you against damage to your personal belongings, carpets, furniture and other household items. This includes fire or flood damage.

More information on tenants content insurance is available on the Council's website.

Your feedback

We will always aim to provide the best possible service that we can. If you are not satisfied with the service that you have received then please contact us on **0345 2000 102** or email: **repairs@northtyneside.gov.uk** and we will work with you to resolve your issue.

If you remain dissatisfied with the service and our attempts to put things right, then you can make a complaint through the council's corporate complaint procedure. Visit the Council website and search for "complaints" for more information.

Appendix One:

Repair Responsibilities

Repair responsibilities		
Repair Type	Who is responsible?	
	Landlord	Tenant
Bathroom:		
Internal pipe work boxing (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Bath panels	•	
Toilet seats and lids		•
Bath and sink plugs and chains		•
Taps to sink and bath (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Shower (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Ceilings:		
Plaster ceilings	•	
Minor repairs to plaster work such as cracks and small holes (under 50mm2)		•
Larger repairs to plaster work (over 50mm2)	•	
Artex – patching ceiling following any repairs	•	
Decoration:		
Internal decoration		•
Curtain battens		•
Doors:		
Doorbell		•
Internal doors adjustment when new flooring fitted		•
External structures including doors and gates (fitted by you or previous tenants)		•
Door entry systems	•	
Door vents	•	
External doors – including ironmongery	•	
Storm door (normally fitted to side or rear of the property)		•
Gaining entry to the property (i.e. locked in, locked out, lost keys)		•
Internal doors – including ironmongery	•	
Maintenance of catches and locks		•

Repair responsibilities		
Repair Type	Who is responsible?	
	Landlord	Tenant
Drains and gutters		
Drain blockage (within the boundary of the property)	•	
Clearing and upkeep of ground level gulleys and grates		•
Clearing and upkeep of gutters	•	
Drains and gulley surrounds/gulley grids	•	
Inspection chambers	•	
Soil vent pipes, including clips	•	
Electrical items:		
Consumer unit (fuse box)	•	
Smoke alarms	•	
Carbon monoxide alarms	•	
Electric fires (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Electric storage heaters (only if supplied by NTC)	•	
Electric meter and supply (contact your utility supplier)		•
Extractor fans	•	
Immersion heater	•	
Internal light bulbs, fuses, and fluorescent tubes (unless in a bathroom or communal areas)		•
Wiring – sockets, light fittings, and switches	•	
Electric plugs fitted to tenant's appliances (not sockets)		•
External items:		
Maintenance of garden area (grass/paved areas/concrete)		•
Clothes posts and/or hooks		•
General upkeep of gardens and surrounding areas (including paving and concrete)		•
Paths – path to front door and 1m around property	•	
Boundary walls (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Boundary fences (if the responsibility of NTC)	•	
Maintenance of fencing	•	
Council owned garages and outbuildings	•	
Sheds, including clearance and moving for repairs to take place		•
Communal areas – basic maintenance	•	
Communal areas – lifts and stairs	•	

Repair responsibilities		
Repair Type	Who is responsible?	
	Landlord	Tenant
Floors:		
Laminate floors (lifting and relaying for repairs)		•
Loose floor coverings and carpets (including ceramic floor tiles)		•
Concrete floors	•	
Floorboards and joists	•	
Floor, wall, and fireplace tiles		•
Heating:		
Bleeding radiators		•
Gas meter and supply (excluding gas meter box doors)		•
Pipework	•	
Radiators, valves, time clocks, and thermostats	•	
Kitchen items:		
Cooker point change – following change of cooker		•
Maintenance of kitchen cupboards and drawers		•
Repairs to cupboard door catches, handles and hinges	•	
Plugs and bulbs:		
Energy efficiency		•
Low energy light bulbs		•
Plumbing:		
Removing and replacing radiators for decoration		•
Repairing plumbing after decoration		•
Washing machine plumbing and fitting (if not supplied by NTC)		•
Roofs:		
Aerials, satellite dishes, telephones and removing cables before and after maintenance work		•
Security:		
Extra door or window locks (not to be fitted to PVC doors)		•
Walls:		
Regrouting when discoloured		•
Minor repairs to plaster work such as cracks and small holes, (under 50mm2)		•
Larger repairs to plaster work over 50mm2	•	
Windows:		
Fitting, removing, and adjusting blinds		•
Releasing windows stuck after internal painting		•

Appendix Two:

Right to Repair

Qualifying repairs and associated timescales are detailed below:

Description of repair:	Response time (working days)
Total loss of electrical power	1
An unsafe electrical fitting	1
Total loss of your water supply	1
Total or partial loss of your gas supply	1
Blocked flue to an open fire or boiler	1
No heating or hot water (between November 1 and April 30)	1
Leak from a water pipe, tank or cistern	1
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	1
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
No heating or hot water (between May 1 and October 31)	3
Partial loss of your electrical supply	3
Partial loss of water supply	3
Blocked sink, basin or bath	3
A tap that cannot be turned	3
Loose or detached bannister or handrail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair treads	3
Leaking roof	7
Door-entry phone that is not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan that is not working	7

Should the Authority fail to complete the repair the tenant is entitled to follow the Right to Repair scheme as detailed on the next page.

Stage one – complete the repair

- Tenant provides Authority with the opportunity to complete the described repair within the stated response time.

Stage two – appoint second contractor

- If the repair is not completed within the stated response time, the tenant can request someone else to carry out the work.
- The Authority will instruct a contractor to complete the works and issue the tenant with a copy of this illustration.
- The appointed contractor will complete the repair within the same response time as the initially described repair.

Stage three – compensation

- If the repair remains outstanding after the stated response time has passed then the tenant should contact the Authority to report this.
- They can do so by:
Phone: 0345 2000 102
Email: repairs@northtyneside.gov.uk
Write to: Property Services, North Tyneside Council, The Killingworth Depot, Block A, Station Road, Killingworth, NE12 6QQ
- Unless there is a good reason why the works have not been completed in the stated response time, the tenant will be entitled to receive £10 compensation
- For every additional day the tenant waits for the described repair to be completed, they will be entitled to a further £2, up to a maximum of £50.

Stage four – your right to repair

- If the contractor appointed at Stage Two does not complete the repair within the stated response time, the tenant can appoint their own suitably qualified contractor to carry out the repair.
- The total cost of the repair must be less than £250
- It is the tenant's right to pass the relevant invoice to the Authority and the Authority will then pay it.

Notes

A large rectangular box with a yellow border, intended for writing. It contains 15 horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly apart, providing a guide for text alignment.

Tel: 0345 2000 102

Email: Repairs@northtyneside.gov.uk

www.northtyneside.gov.uk



NTCouncilTeam