



Repairs Charter

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LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

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1. Our Commitment

The Repairs Charter has been co-produced by council officers and residents to give residents living in a Council property information and guidance about the London Borough of Harrow's (LBH) repairs service. The Charter relates to both secure and non-secure tenants living in a LBH council owned property.

Council officers and service providers will work together to deliver the Charter and we accept that this document will need to be regularly reviewed and updated.

The vision for Housing Services at the London Borough of Harrow is:

“Working together to deliver affordable housing and a high-quality customer experience that puts the needs and wellbeing of residents first”.

The Repairs Charter supports the delivery of the following strategic objectives:

- Customer focused
- Provides high quality, safe homes
- Meets legal and statutory requirements

Our Commitment

We will provide a repairs service which:

- ✓ Supports our tenants, especially those that are vulnerable or with special requirements
- ✓ Meets high standards
- ✓ Ensures you are safe in your home
- ✓ Safeguards the future of your home
- ✓ Protects the environment and supports the commitment to zero carbon homes by 2050
- ✓ Is accessible and which provides up to date information on the status of repairs

We can do this by:

- ✓ Continuously adapting the repairs service to reflect changes in legislation, customer feedback, technical innovations and changes to our contractors
- ✓ Providing different ways in which you can report a repair
- ✓ Offering various appointment slots to suit the resident
- ✓ Where possible, aim to complete your repair on our first visit
- ✓ Consider any particular needs of those living in the property
- ✓ Keeping you informed about the repair
- ✓ Confirming to you by phone, email, text, or letter that your repair has been ordered and also the details of any appointment
- ✓ Letting you know if your repair is going to be delayed as soon as is reasonably practicable, and how long you may have to wait
- ✓ When needed, providing the support of a surveyor, depending on the nature of the repair. Not all repairs need a technical inspection first
- ✓ Making sure our contractors take care not to damage your home or belongings.

2. Report a repair

To report a repair, the quickest way is to register or log into the Housing Online Account. This will allow you to report and log your repair, get a reference number, and track its progress.

To register you will need your activation code (you can find this at the bottom of your quarterly rent statement), or you can call Customer Services or you can attend a drop-in session – dates are publicised in Homing In magazine – see www.Harrow.gov.uk/homingin

Ways to report your repair

- Complete our online repairs form at: www.harrow.gov.uk/repairs
- Call: **020 8901 2630**
- Write to us at:
London Borough of Harrow
Housing repairs helpdesk
PO Box 1367
Forward Drive
Harrow
HA3 3QT

Our Customer Services helpdesk is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

If you have an emergency out-of-hours, please call the same number and our emergency service will pick it up. Please gather as much information as you can before reporting a repair. This helps us to identify the issue and try to resolve it on the first visit.

Out of hours – for Emergency repairs only

Between 5pm and 9am and weekends we provide a service for emergency repairs only. In these cases, we will only carry out a temporary repair to make it safe. We'll then raise a further job and make an appointment with you on the next working day, so that the repair can be completed. Please see Section 5 for clarification for emergency repairs response times.

If it's a serious incident like a fire or a threat to life, contact emergency services on 999.

Gas reporting

For individual internal boilers

Liberty Group provides domestic gas servicing and maintenance for residents who have an individual gas boiler. They carry out landlords' gas safety checks, essential repairs, and annual safety checks to smoke alarms.

Call: **0330 333 8390** or **0800 614 456**

Email: harrowcouncil@liberty-group.co.uk

For communal heating and hot water

ThermoServ provides communal gas servicing and maintenance to communal boilers such as to council sheltered schemes. For issues where there is no heating and/or no hot water

Call: **020 8901 2630**

If anyone smells gas

If anyone smells gas in properties or out in the street, then you should call the Gas Emergency number (National Grid – 0800 111 999 – our area is Cadent). They will attend and if the gas leak is in the Council's property, then they will make safe.

If National Grid cap off the gas supply within the property, then the tenant will need to ring Liberty on 0330 333 8390 or 0800 614 456 to investigate the issue, quoting the National Grid reference number. If the gas leak is outside the property, then National Grid are responsible for repairing it.

Reporting Sheltered repairs

Residents living in council sheltered schemes should report repairs by calling the freephone number: 0800 614 456 or using the Housing Online Account.

However, if you are having trouble or are unable to report a repair, please speak to your Scheme Co-ordinator who will support you.

3. Council responsibility

What repairs the council is responsible for

By law, the council has an obligation to look after the structure of your home and all shared areas of your building and ensure it is in a reasonable state of repair such as walls, floors and ceilings inside the building.

Repairs must be carried out to make sure that fixtures and fittings for water, sanitation, gas and electricity are safe and in working order. The council must also maintain any equipment it has installed to provide hot water and heating, and communal facilities, such as lifts and door entry phones.

We are responsible for checking repairs needed in the communal areas and rely on residents to report repairs inside their home. We carry out regular estate inspections. However, if you see anything that needs repairing, please report the repair on the Housing Online Account or call Customer Services to report it. In sheltered housing schemes, please tell your scheme Co-ordinator.

LBH works to the Decent Homes Standard laid out by the government and which is under review. You can read this online: **Decent Homes Standard 2006**.

Do I have the Right to Repair?

The Right to Repair scheme gives you the right to have a small emergency or urgent repair done quickly and to be paid compensation if we fail to do it. In some cases, the council may have to inspect the repair before work begins to make sure that it is covered by the Right to Repair Scheme.

To qualify for this, a repair must be what is known as a 'Qualifying Repair'.

This means a repair:

- Is classed as an emergency or urgent repair (priority 1 and priority 2)
- Has an estimated value of less than £250
- We are responsible for the repair

The Right to Repair does not apply if:

- You choose to have the repair completed by appointment outside the target date
- The repair has an estimated value of £250 or more
- You have not provided access for inspection or for the repair to be carried out, having been given a reasonable opportunity to do so.

If any of the repairs listed in the Table in Appendix 1 are not completed within the set time, you are entitled to £10 compensation immediately plus a further £2 per day for every working day the repair remains outstanding, up to a maximum of £50.

Examples of repairs the council is responsible for

We are responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure and many of the components in your home. These include all external parts and internal fixtures and fittings originally provided by us, unless we have told you they are your responsibility.

Regarding compliance, we also carry out an annual gas safety check in every home where there is a gas supply and carry out a five yearly electrical check in every home. You must let us into your home to carry out this safety check in line with Section D of your Tenancy Conditions, and to carry out any work identified resulting from this safety check. To avoid any additional charges being added to your rent account, please ensure we can access your home for scheduled work as a result of a safety check. If we incur costs because we're unable to get in, we may need to pass these on to you.

Council responsibility	Comment
Aerials (communal only)	Where installed by the council such as communal aerials
Central heating	Gas boilers, storage heaters, radiators, hot water
Charging points	New build is council responsibility and seek approval for adding charging points
Chimneys	Brickwork, replacement pots, etc
Cookers and fridges	Only for temporary tenants
Decoration (paint and retile)	The council will redecorate after we have carried out repair work
Doors and locks (external)	Except lost or stolen keys, door numbers and battery-operated doorbells
Drainage	Blocked drains and gullies
Electrical wiring and consumer unit	Except where tenants have installed their own fittings, appliances, plugs, fuses, light bulbs and meters
Fire and smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors	Including battery operated alarms
Fixtures and fittings within the property	Normal wear and team to items such as kitchen units, sinks, work tops, baths, taps etc.
Floors	Concrete structure and floorboards and repairs to bathroom flooring (council will replace only if flooring has to be removed). Carpets can be lifted and refitted.
Gutters	Clearance and repairs to gutters, soffits and fascia boards
Heating systems	We will maintain your central-heating system – including pipes, radiators, boilers, gas fires and storage heaters
Immersion heaters	Repair or replacement
Lifts	Including stair lifts that Harrow has installed
Lofts and roof spaces	
Paths	Leading to front or back doors but not patios
Pipes, water tanks and cylinders	

Council responsibility	Comment
Plumbing and fittings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of toilets, sinks, baths, wash hand basins (including refixing brackets) • Taps running continuously, tap replacement and other tap repairs • Blocked toilet, bath, sink or wash hand basin (except for tenant misuse when it will be recharged) • Toilet not flushing properly
Roof, porches and canopies	Loose or damaged roof tiles, rain penetration, flashings, etc (unless the porch or canopy has been gifted to the tenant)
Sheds/lean-to's/pram sheds	If the council has built it, we will maintain it
Stairs, banisters and balustrades	Steps and passageways and main access and exit to the property
Walls	Rendering, brickwork, pointing and internal plastering
Wet rooms	
Windows and window restrictors (first floor and above)	

4. Tenant responsibility

As a tenant, you are responsible for any general wear and tear inside your home.

Tenancy Conditions

You're responsible for any damage to your home caused by you, anyone in your household, or your visitors, and you must cover the cost of these repairs. We won't carry out repairs for damage you or those you're responsible for have caused, unless it's a health and safety issue. In such cases, we'll fix it, but you'll be recharged for the cost.

And when you leave your home at the end of your tenancy, you must make sure that it is in reasonable condition (allowing for wear and tear) so we can relet it to another person or family straight away.

Examples of repairs the tenant is responsible for

Tenant responsibility	Comment
Clothes lines and rotary driers	Except communal areas
Cookers	Gas and electric, including connections (gas cookers must be installed by a Gas Safe qualified engineer)
Doors (internal)	Damaged frame included if repairing the internal door
Fencing - if owned by the council	You must keep them in a reasonable condition. Unless health and safety or it's communal or it leads to a public alleyway at the bottom of the garden
Floor coverings	All floor coverings, apart from a wet room
Locks and keys	Changing locks or replacing broken keys, and this includes garage, shed, store cupboards and window keys
Plumbing and fittings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replacement of toilet seats and toilet chains• Replacement of kitchen and bathroom tiles (unless fitted by the council)• Replacement of plugs and plug chains
Utilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gas• Electricity• Water• Any internet, phone or cable television provision	Tenant to contact supplier directly for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gas and electricity meters (including key and card types)• water meters
Paving and decking in gardens / patios / ponds	

Decorating your home

As per your Tenancy Conditions you are responsible for decorating the inside of your home regarding any general wear and tear. This includes repairing minor cracks in plasterwork and preparing surfaces before you paper or paint.

The council will maintain stairs, banisters and balustrades inside your home (apart from decoration).

Garden (soft and hard areas)

Gardening is always the tenant's responsibility. You must keep any outbuilding, yard or garden clean and free from rubbish. You must keep any trees, hedges, bushes, ivy, or grass at a reasonable height and size, unless causing structural damage or subsidence in which case, please inform LBH. You must inform the council if you identify any Japanese knotweed– see photo.

Please contact the Customer Services Team:

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/housing

Call: 020 8901 2630



What you can do to help us help you

- Allow the council access to your home to carry out a gas safety check every year, plus any other inspections we feel are necessary. This includes an electrical safety check.
- Be at home for your appointment, and advise us as soon as possible if you are not able to be at home for the appointment
- Treat staff and contractors with respect
- Keep your home clean and decorated inside
- Report any repairs as soon as possible
- Repair anything that is your responsibility
- Ensure clear access to the repair area
- Damp and mould
 - As per your Tenancy Conditions, you are responsible for ventilating and heating your home to prevent condensation (constant air flow is good - do not block air vents, trickle vents and use your extractor fans)
 - It helps to regularly wipe down condensation and keep furniture away from external facing walls. Further advice can be found here www.harrow.gov.uk/dampandmould
- Test and maintain smoke detectors (except Sheltered) and replace batteries in battery-operated smoke alarms
- Provide your own TV aerial (unless you pay a service charge in your rent to use the shared aerial)
- Report criminal damage or vandalism to the police and get a police crime number for the report
- Replace keys/fobs or get back into your house if you have been locked out, but if it's a main entrance door, you have to contact us

- Replace broken or cracked glass
- Reset trip-switches
- Repair hairline cracks to plasterwork or holes in walls or ceilings
- Replace washers on taps
- Bleed radiators
- Replace toilet seat (except Sheltered tenants)
- Replace clothes posts or rotary driers (except communal ones)
- Decorate the walls, ceilings, woodwork and pipework inside your home
- Fix curtain rails and replace light bulbs
- Keep grates, grids, drains, gullies, toilets, baths, sinks and waste outlets clean and free of debris and taking care not to cause blockages
- Take reasonable care to make sure that your pipes do not freeze (this may include making sure you have a reasonable level of background heating during the winter if you are away from the property)

What happens if a tenant misses an appointment?

- If you aren't at home when we attend the appointment, we'll try to reach you by phone or email. This includes our contractors and any sub-contractors
- We'll try to reach you using alternative numbers on our records. We'll only contact a third party if we have your permission to speak to someone other than you.
- If we're unable to reach you, we'll leave a card asking you to contact us or the contractor/ subcontractor. If we don't hear from you within 2 attempts and one visit, the repair will no longer be prioritised.
- In an emergency, where there is a health and safety issue or there's likely to be considerable damage to your or your neighbour's home, we'll gain access to your home in line with your Tenancy Agreement or current legislation.

Home Contents Insurance

We encourage all tenants and leaseholders to take out home contents insurance.

Many council tenants and leaseholders believe that we automatically insure their furniture, belongings and decorations against theft, fire, vandalism or burst pipes, but this is not the case. Unfortunately, many people only realise this after the damage has been done.

The council offers a Pay as you Go home contents insurance, where premiums can be paid alongside your rent, provided by Thistle Insurance Services, underwritten by Great Lakes Insurance UK Limited. They offer a choice of cover with competitive premium rates. You can of course choose to make your own arrangements through any other insurer.

To access this service

You can contact LBH, Insurance Services directly with any questions regarding their scheme on 020 8424 1064. You can also call them if you need help filling in the form as they can complete the application process over the phone with you.

You can also apply via the LBH website at www.harrow.gov.uk/homeinsurance. New Tenant packs also include a copy of this form. If you would like a Policy Document, they can be requested from LBH, Insurance Services.

What if I lose my keys or fob?

It is your responsibility to replace any lost or stolen keys. If you have lost a key or fob to a main entrance door, please contact us to purchase a replacement. We will need identification before we can hand over any replacements.

If you become locked out of your home, you are responsible for regaining entry or you can report it and we will send a locksmith to change the lock and provide a new key. This is rechargeable. For loss of the main entrance fob you will need to pay £25 up front or we will add this to your rent account.

If you would like additional copies of a main entrance door key, you need written consent from us.

Please contact the Customer Services Team:

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/housing

Call: **020 8901 2630**

Do I have to pay for repairs?

Rechargeable repairs

When reporting a repair, you will be informed if you have to pay for it and we will tell you how much the repair will cost. This will be done over the phone or after a surveyor has carried out an inspection. You may decide to make your own arrangements for the rechargeable repair work.

For repairs that you are responsible for, if you decide for the council to do these, you will be required to pay and we may add it to your rent account.

The council charges for repairs in the following circumstances

- Works that the council carries out and which are the tenant's responsibility
- Any improvements/alterations carried out by residents without the prior consent from the council, or changes that do not conform to the conditions of the consent and require work to restore the home to its original state
- Repairing damage in adjacent homes caused by the negligence of a tenant
- The work is needed because of damage caused by the tenant, their family or visitors to their property
- The council has to force entry to a tenant's home due to their negligence, for instance if the tenant loses front door keys or the council has to enter the property to carry out an emergency repair that is the tenant's responsibility
- Lock changes

- When a tenant requests a move, a visit is made to the tenant. During this visit an inspection will be made and any rechargeable works will be identified before termination
- To clear rubbish and belongings from your home when you move out
- Prior to a tenant leaving a property an exit inspection will be completed and during this inspection any rechargeable works will be identified. The tenant will be expected to pay these recharges identified or work must be undertaken to a standard acceptable to the council
- False or unrelated crime reference number for a repair was reported as a result of a crime
- If you repeatedly call the out-of-hours emergency repairs service without a good reason.

Additional services to support tenants

Gardening support

There is a Garden Assisted Scheme for tenants' with particular vulnerabilities which tenants can apply for. To check if you are eligible and for further details, please contact Customer Services and you will be asked to complete a form. This will be assessed by your Housing Officer.

Call: **020 8901 2630**

5. When will my repair be done?

Regarding assessing priorities for reported repairs, we will take into account tenants' views and diverse needs. This may include, for example, increasing the priority of repairs for some older tenants and where a household member has a disability. For tenants experiencing domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour, we can install extra locks and security lights in order to help safeguard them.

These are the LBHs timescales for carrying out repairs to council homes:

4-hour in or out of hours emergency repair	Priority 1 – attend within 4 hours
Urgent 24-hour repair	Priority 2 – attend within 24 hours
Routine repair	Priority 3 – attend within 2 working days to 5 working days
Lengthy repair	Priority 4 – attend within 6 working days to 20 working days
Complex repair	Priority 5 – attend within 21 working days or longer

If you suspect a fire, call the Fire Brigade on 999.

If you suspect a gas leak, report to Cadent on 0800 111 999 and inform the council.

If lights are out for the block: check UK power network for an outage / then inform the council who will contact the utility company.

Priority 1 – a 4-hour in or out of hours emergency repair

A Priority 1 repair is a '4-hour in or out of hours emergency repair' and relates to an emergency to the property that causes an immediate risk to life or major risk to property. You should report it the council by phone.

A 4-hour repair with the conditions above will be attended to within 4 hours to make safe. Please be available to give access and note that, as per your Tenancy Conditions, if there is an emergency and we need to get into your home immediately, we have the right to force entry without giving you notice.

If the Priority 1 is reported out of hours, the out of hours period operates from 5pm to 9am weekdays, and from 5pm on Friday to 9am on Monday.

Examples include:

- Loss of power
- Uncontainable water leak (i.e. bucket fills within 20 minutes)

- No heating and hot water from boiler – depending on vulnerability of resident
- Imminent risk of/ or collapsed ceiling
- Faulty block entry door – won't open (only for blocks without a separate emergency exit)
- Any communal fire panel issue/fault that may be affecting functionality
- Lift entrapment
- Communal/sheltered passenger lift breakdown (only for blocks with one lift)
- Breakdown of stairlift, hoist or domestic disability lift equipment (once DDA repairs and maintenance contract is in place)
- If on the ground floor, making the property secure by boarding up

Priority 2 – urgent 24-hour repair

A Priority 2 is an urgent 24-hour repair, and we will attend the property and try and fix the problem within 24 hours. If the repair is reported after 3pm, the 24 hours starts from 9am the following day.

These should be reported by the resident by phone.

Examples include:

- Partial loss of electrical power
- Failure of all lighting on communal stairways (not loss of power)
- Total loss of cold water supply
- Making the property secure by boarding up (if not on the ground floor), unless being investigated
- Containable water leak (i.e. bucket takes longer than 20 minutes to fill)
- Faulty block entry door
- Locked in or out of individual property (Lost keys - rechargeable service)
- Communal/Sheltered - a passenger lift or a personal mobility lift breakdown where we remain responsible for repairs/servicing (if more than one lift/stair lift)
- Anti-fungal mould treatment (investigation)
- Back surge blocked drain - internal
- A blocked toilet (if it's the only accessible one in your home)
- Overflowing sewage within grounds (back surge)
- Blocked drain – blocked sink, bath or basin
- Loose or lost roof tiles

Priority 3 – routine repair

A Priority 3 routine repair is classified as a repair which seriously affects the comfort of the resident or causes potential damage to the property and the repair will be actioned within 2 to 5 working days.

Examples include:

- Remedial repairs to any heating system and hot water
- Insecure or detached banister or handrail
- External overflow pipe constantly leaking
- Non-functional extractor fan
- Issues with external walkways
- Sheltered communal laundry equipment

Priority 4 – lengthy repair

A Priority 4 lengthy repair will be completed within 6 to 20 working days.

Examples include:

- Plaster repair
- Faulty kitchen unit(s)
- Fencing (where council responsibility, see Section 4)
- Brickwork to external walls

Priority 5 – a complex repair

A Priority 5 is a complex repair that will take longer than 20 days to complete. This may be identified by the operative when they first arrive on site.

Examples include:

- Work that requires planning permission
- Work that needs to include consultation with other residents such as leaseholders or other landlords
- Extensive or specialist work such as renewing underfloor drainage to custom made level access showers
- Planned preventative maintenance such as clearing gutters

What if I have to move out of my home for the repair?

Where we consider it necessary for you to leave your home temporarily:

- We will provide suitable alternative temporary accommodation and in return you'll leave your home for as long as is necessary for us to carry out the works, and
- You must return to your home when we ask you to and you must leave your temporary home clean and tidy.

Some jobs are larger than a simple repair and may require further works

Examples of this can be:

- where scaffold is required
- where parts have to be ordered
- where works affect the whole building and not just your home
- where work is weather dependant e.g. roof repairs

Some work will also be subject to the statutory leaseholder consultation which will delay progress.

Cables

Hanging cables on houses and blocks are the responsibility of the service provider, unless they are the council's communal aerial.

Meters

Utility meters and the associated equipment are the responsibility of the supplier. If you have any issues with your meter, or meter cupboard, please contact your supplier directly.

6. Service standards

What service standards can I expect?

We are committed to improving the customer experience in the delivery of the repairs service. It is important to us that you are fully satisfied with the service. We will manage this process through a combination of contractor and LBH performance statistics, quality inspections and resident surveys.

You can expect the following:

- All Emergency repairs (Priority 1) will be responded to within 4 hours
- Percentage of customers satisfied with repairs service: 90%
- Percentage of all repairs completed within time: 90%
- Percentage of repairs completed on the first attendance: 90%
- Percentage of appointments kept: 90%
- Damp and mould orders completed within time: 95%
- We will complete a domestic electrical test on the property every 5 years
- Meeting the Building and Safety Act requirements regarding fire safety
- Meeting the regulatory compliance standards
- We will service gas appliances every 12 months
- We will give the utmost importance to any issue that affects the tenant's health and safety
- We will take all complaints and service failure seriously and fully investigate them to put them right and learn from them to improve the service
- We will give you a reference number when you report a repair so you can track its progress
- We will aim to respond to all stage 1 complaints in 10 working days
- We are quality inspecting at least 10% of works after completion
- Going forward, at least 90% satisfaction with any planned improvement works carried out in your home

7. Damp and mould

Our staff and service providers will work together with residents to deliver this service, which aligns with the latest statutory regulation.

Awaab's Law was introduced in the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and requires landlords to investigate and fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes.

Government led consultation is underway to determine the timescales:

- Within 24 hours of notification (Priority 2) the resident will be contacted
- Within 48 hours the resident will receive an attendance by a damp and mould surveyor
- Within 72 hours, the damp and mould survey will be issued to the resident outlining the works needed

Our aim is to provide dry, safe homes for our residents which are free from any hazards. We will comply with legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations (including both tenancy and lease).

- Treat residents reporting damp and mould with empathy and respect; we will not prejudge the cause of the damp.
- Take responsibility for diagnosing and resolving damp and mould in a timely and effective way where the problem is a result from issues that require repair.
- Support residents on resolving damp and mould where they result from the use of the home, and provide our residents with appropriate, clear, sensitive, practical and accessible advice.
- Communicate with our residents clearly and regularly regarding any actions we plan to take and any actions our residents are advised to take concerning damp.
- Ensure staff are trained to enable them to spot potential causes of damp, mould and condensation so they can advise residents, diagnose problems and provide solutions.
- In applying this policy, make reasonable adjustments for people who have a disability and will take into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Here is our **damp and mould leaflet** and **video** for more information. We have included a few useful tips how to reduce condensation in your home to help prevent the growth of mould.

How to report damp and mould

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/housing

Call: **020 8901 2630**

8. Tenant alterations and improvements

Can I carry out my own improvements?

You must not carry out alterations to the internal / external area to your property without seeking council authorisation and only secure tenants can carry out improvements. The alteration may impact your health and safety and the integrity of the structure. If you employ someone to carry out the work for you, once the works are authorised, you must ensure the contractor employed is suitably qualified and has the appropriate insurance. There may be a charge for larger, structural works.

Examples of alterations include:

- refitting kitchens or bathrooms
- installing laminate or tiled flooring
- erecting a conservatory, shed or greenhouse
- altering or adding garden fencing
- dropping curbs for vehicle access
- rewiring
- installing a new aerial or satellite dish
- altering the layout of a property
- removing chimney breasts
- building an extension

How to request an alteration to your home

Web form: www.harrow.gov.uk/alterations

Call: **020 8901 2630** to log your request, and the Housing Officer will investigate

9. Leaseholders and shared owners

Generally regarding flats, the council will organise repairs and improvements to the structure of the building and the common parts. For any work costing more than £250 for each individual leaseholder, then Section 20 consultation will be undertaken.

The leaseholder will be responsible for the internal repairs and decorations. In cases of emergency communal repairs such as water / sewage leakage then the council will respond in line with the 'Priority' status and agree the repair liability at a later stage.

We are developing the Housing Online Account to enable leaseholders to view and report communal repairs for their block / scheme. We will inform leaseholders when this is ready.

Contact the Customer Services Team to report a communal repair:

Call: **020 8901 2630**

For other leasehold enquiries:

Email: **LeaseHoldandRTBServices@harrow.gov.uk**

10. Involving residents

Residents' Board

We continue to develop and review the Repairs Charter, repairs standard and repairs performance with members of the Residents' Board along with other changes to housing services. The Board meets face to face once a month, it is chaired by a resident, it sets its own meeting agenda and the Board can request any performance data relating to the delivery of the housing service, which helps to ensure a full understanding of what is going well and what improvements are underway. We are always encouraging new members to join. You can find the Meeting Notes on our website.

Resident feedback and complaints

We continue to listen and learn from resident feedback and to adapt the repairs service where needed. This feedback can be in the form of a phone call, home visit, letter, email, a drop-in session feedback, estate walkabout, service request or a complaint or due to a contractor's recommendation. We will reflect this in continuous changes and updates to the Repairs Charter.

Estate Champions

We have a number of tenants volunteering as an Estate Champion for their estate. The Champions can fast track issues they see on the estate, from bulk waste, communal lighting not working, unsafe pathways, communal repairs to making suggestions to improve their estate such as requesting additional external bike storage or changes to bin areas. They meet as a group bi-monthly.

Annual tenant survey and Week of Action

We value the feedback we receive from the annual tenant perception survey and the door knocking we carry out on several of our estates during our annual Week of Action campaign. During the Week of Action we make a note of any outstanding repairs issues that require following up and report any damp and mould concerns.

If you would like more information about how to be more involved or to find out who is your Estate Champion, please contact:

Email: rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk

11. Associated services

Investment programme/ planned works

LBH has a continued programme of improvement works to make sure all our homes reach, and are maintained, at a good standard. As a minimum all properties will meet the government set Decent Homes standard.

Our planned work programmes include items that require substantial repairs or replacements to the building. This is to improve the condition of our buildings both internally and externally. It includes both major project work and planned replacements to our buildings, as well as works to individual homes. Examples include renewal of roofs, front doors, windows, electrical rewiring, kitchens and bathrooms.

This programme of works is being planned over the coming years to keep our buildings in a good state of repair.

Compliance

We are responsible for compliance health and safety checks within your home. All health and safety statutory checks are a free service to tenants.

These include:

- Gas
- Water hygiene
- Electrical tests
- Asbestos
- Lifts
- Fire safety

When your home is due for a gas safety inspection, our gas contractor will contact you directly to make an appointment. You must let us into your home to carry out this safety check in line with Section D of your Tenancy Conditions, and to carry out any work identified resulting from this safety check. If we are charged money because you don't let us into your home to carry out any work, we may charge you those costs and add that amount to your rent account. You must pay us any costs we add to your rent account.

Aids and Adaptations

If you or someone living with you has a disability, there are a number of ways we can help you live more independently in your home. These include providing equipment to make daily tasks easier, and adapting your home to improve access or helping you to use bathing facilities, etc. You can see the policy on the website.

To see if you qualify, contact our Adult Social Care Team

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/aidsandadaptationspolicy

Call: **020 8901 2680**

Email: ahadults@harrow.gov.uk

Voids Standard

For tenants who are moving into a council property

We have developed a standard for a council property which has become vacant. The process is the property is inspected, relevant repairs carried out and it is re-let – based on the Voids Standard. Please note you will need to have paid any outstanding utility costs.

Mutual Exchange

For tenants who want to swap their home

In the event of you agreeing a mutual exchange, an inspection will be completed prior to approval to ensure the property is in an acceptable condition. You will need to put right any damage or unauthorised work before you can exchange. The council is responsible for carrying out statutory health and safety compliance checks.

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/mutualexchange

12. Customer care

We aim to deliver an excellent service by putting residents at the centre of everything we do.

What can I do if I'm not happy?

Step 1: Who do I contact if I wish to raise an issue?

We always try to get things right first time but appreciate that this does not always happen.

If you feel that a member of staff or trades person has not delivered the high-quality service you expect from us, please contact Customer Services on 020 8901 2630.

Trained staff are there to help resolve your issues as quickly as possible. If necessary, we will refer your query on to a manager, specific trade team or the relevant council department.

Step 2: What do I do if I am still not happy?

If you are still unhappy, or think what you have been told will not help, you can make a formal complaint:

Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/housingcomplaints

Call: **020 8901 2630**

You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman for independent advice and mediation. If your complaint has not been resolved via the council's complaints procedure, the Ombudsman will then liaise with you and the council to seek satisfaction.

Web: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Call: **030 0111 3000**

What you can expect from Housing Services' contractors

We employ a number of contractors to carry out your repairs. When our contractors work in your home, they must:

- Carry identification and show it to you before entering your home
- Take care of your property and possessions, protecting it from damage, dust and paint
- Keep your home secure at all times
- Clear up their rubbish at the end of each day
- Make sure essential services (for example water and gas) are connected at the end of each day
- Be polite, courteous, diligent and professional at all times
- Explain what work they are going to do before they start, offering you choices where appropriate.

Please also be aware that:

- You should make arrangements that allow contractors to get on with their work
- Contractors cannot be left alone in your home, or with children under 18 years old
- You should not leave your keys hidden, or with someone else, for the contractor to pick up because you can't be at home to meet them
- In bad weather contractors cannot, for their own safety, work at height
- If furniture or carpets need to be moved before repair work can be done, you must do this or arrange for it to be done
- We will inspect a proportion of repairs which are completed. This is to make sure that contractors' work is to a high standard.



Appendix A

Right to Repair

Type of repair	Time to make safe or to repair (working days)
Total loss or electric power	1 day
Partial loss of electricity	3 days
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1 day
Total Loss of water supply	1 day
Partial Loss of water supply	3 days
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1 day
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1 day
Heating or hot water not working between 31 October and 3 May	1 day
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1 day
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	1 day
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3 days
Tap cannot be turned	3 days
Leak from water pipe, tank or cistern	1 day
Leaking roof	7 days
Insecure external window, door or lock	1 day
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3 days
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3 days
Door entry phone not working	7 days
Mechanical extractor fan not working	7 days