



RCH Policy: Repairs, Maintenance & Fencing Recharge Policy

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Policy Manager	Head of Property Services/Senior Assets and Compliance Manager
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This policy is available, on request, in different languages and in other formats such as large print, audio format and braille as required.

1. Scope

This is a River Clyde Homes policy and covers Responsive Repairs & Maintenance and Rechargeable Repairs to all River Clyde Homes properties, communal areas owned by them and blocks / homes of owners which they factor.

2. Introduction

River Clyde Homes are committed to delivering a customer focused, high quality and effective repairs service, providing homes that are in good repair, safe, wind and watertight and are comfortable to live in.

River Clyde Homes will ensure that all staff and their customers are aware, understand and are equipped to deliver an effective repairs service, and comply with all statutory, regulatory, legislative, and contractual obligations placed upon them.

River Clyde Homes will:

Meet the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework and ensure compliance with Regulatory Guidance regarding Notifiable Events in respect of this policy.

Maintain its housing stock in accordance with current legal and statutory requirements and continually update stock condition information and use this to develop the Planned Maintenance Programme to ensure that all their housing stock complies with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Ensure that all homes meet a minimum Scottish Housing Net Zero Standards for Social Housing (SHNZS) to provide good quality, comfortable and warm homes.

Ensure that the standards and outcomes set by the Scottish Social Housing Charter are achieved, to improve the quality and value of the services provided by them.

Provide a 24/7 Emergency Repairs Service.

Consult with their customers and involve them in decisions about the Repairs Service, including standards and monitoring of the service.

Benchmark the performance of its contractors against other similar providers and ensure that all contractors used by the Association comply with the code set out within the Code of Conduct for Contractors.

3. Responsive Repairs

3.1 Role Responsibility

The Head of Service / Asset Manager will have overall responsibility for the implementation, associated procedures, and delivery of the repairs service.

3.2 Repair Responsibility

The responsibility for repairing and maintaining homes is shared between River Clyde Homes and their customers. A list of these responsibilities can be found in Appendix 1.

All customers must report repairs that are the responsibility of River Clyde Homes in a timely manner to ensure the property does not fall into disrepair.

3.3 Hours of Working

Normal business hours are:

- Office Hours - Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 17:00.
- Repairs - Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 16:30.
- An Emergency Repair service is available out of hours.

3.4 Reporting Repairs

River Clyde Homes is committed to providing multiple ways of contacting them to report a repair. Repair requests can be made:

- by telephone to the Customer Experience Team on 0800 013 2196
- through our Customer Portal at www.riverclydehomes.org.uk for nonemergency repairs.
- by email to customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk for nonemergency repairs.
- in person at our Reception at Clydeview, 22 Pottery Street, Greenock.
- by written correspondence for non-emergency repairs.

3.5 Responsive Repair Categories and Timescales

River Clyde Homes offer 4 Responsive Repair categories with the following timescales.

Emergency - Up to 4 Hours.

Urgent - Up to 3 Working Days.

Routine - Up to 20 Working Days.

3.6 Right to Repair

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced the tenants' Right to Repair. The Right to Repair provides tenants with a statutory right to have certain repairs carried out within a specific timescale. Right to Repair covers certain repairs, known as 'qualifying repairs' as set out in the table below up to a value of £350.

A 'qualifying repair' is a small urgent repair which is the responsibility of River Clyde Homes to carry out, the qualifying repairs as set out in the schedule to the Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 2002 are set out in the table

the table below. The Right to Repair scheme covers repairs up to a maximum value of £350 for any single qualifying repair. When you report a repair to us, we will tell you if it is a 'qualifying repair'.

Qualifying Repair	Maximum period in working days from
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1 day
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks, toilet pans (where there is no other toilet in the property)	1 day
Blocked sink, bath or drain	1 day
Partial loss of electric power	3 days
Total loss of electric power	1 day
Insecure external window, door, lock	1 day
Unsafe access path or step	1 day
Leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks or cisterns	1 day
Loss or partial loss of gas supply	1 day
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available	1 day
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other toilet in the property)	1 day
Unsafe power of lighting socket or electrical fitting	1 day
Partial loss of water supply	3 days
Total loss of water supply	1 day
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3 days
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads	3 days
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom (where there is no external window or	7 Days

3.7 Repairs by Appointment

For all non-emergency works, River Clyde Homes offer an appointment system where possible and appropriate, to suits your needs. They are:

- An **AM** slot between 08:00 to 12:00
- A **PM** slot between 12:30 to 16:30
- An **ALL-DAY** slot from 08:00 – 16:30

3.7 Repair Confirmation

If you have a mobile telephone and have opted in to receive text messages as a communication, you will receive a text message to advise you of your repair appointment.

For non-emergency repairs, you will also receive a second text message the evening before the repair is due, as a reminder.

3.8 Cancellations and Access

If you wish to cancel an appointment, you should notify River Clyde Homes with a minimum of 24 hours' notice. Failure to do so may incur a cancellation fee.

If we require access to your home, we can do this by offering an appointment that suits you, either by telephone, email, or letter.

We would expect you as the resident or a delegated representative to be always at the property while repairs are being carried out at your home.

We will not enter the property if the person left in charge is under 16 years of age.

If we are unable to gain access to your home on the day of your appointment, we will attempt to call you by telephone before carding you and cancelling the works. As above, you may be charged a cancellation fee.

Should you still require the repair to be carried out, it will be your responsibility to start the process again by contacting River Clyde Homes.

3.9 Customer Responsibility

We ask all customers:

- to exercise good behaviour and conduct while work is being carried out at your home.
- to keep both outside and inside of the home clean and in good condition.

- to provide a non-smoking environment when our trades carry out works within your home.
- while carrying out any repairs at your home, we would expect the work area to be clean and clear of any furniture, and that there is no children or pets nearby.

3.10 Inspections

An initial inspection may be required to:

- Establish that a repair is required.
- Identify the scope of works and costs.
- Identify the cause of the repair.

River Clyde Homes will send a relevant tradesperson or Technical Officer to assess these works.

We will also carry out post inspections. This will be a percentage of works carried out within the specified period, to check quality of works and value for money.

3.11 Permission for Alterations and Improvements

Permission for alterations or improvements to your home must be requested using one of the contact methods above prior to any work undertaken.

You will be sent the relevant documents to complete which details responsibility and expectations. Once returned, a decision will be made in writing to you.

For any alterations or improvements completed without permission, you may be asked to return it to the original state at your cost and time.

For alterations or improvements that have been granted, you will be responsible for carrying out repairs and ongoing maintenance.

3.12 Compliance Works

River Clyde Homes have a statutory obligation to undertake an annual gas safety check and will write to you prior to this work commencing to make suitable access arrangements.

River Clyde Homes will also carry out every 5 years, an electrical safety test to all properties.

Other works include:

- Asbestos Management.
- Legionella Testing.
- Lift Servicing.

3.13 Cyclical Maintenance

River Clyde Homes will undertake certain works in pre-set cycles. These are not classed as responsive repairs, for example:

- External and common area decoration.
- Gutter cleaning.

3.14 Investment Works

River Clyde Homes will undertake larger works under contract, such as:

- Heating renewals.
- Roof renewals.
- Replacement kitchens.
- Replacement bathrooms.

3.15 Void Works

Properties which become void (empty) will be inspected, with works undertaken to ensure that they meet River Clyde Homes minimum lettable standard.

Any works required to make good or to bring back to an original state will be recharged back to the outgoing customer. This is covered under your tenancy agreement.

River Clyde Homes, at their discretion may upgrade components within the property if they are at the end of their life cycle, subject to condition and budget.

3.16 Aids and Adaptations

Minor medical adaptations (such as grab or handrails) can be requested by the customer, by completing a self-referral form.

For major medical adaptations (such as stairlifts, wet floor), an assessment must be carried out by the Centre of Independent Living who will refer the adaptation to River Clyde Homes for consideration.

For an accepted new tenancy, any adaptation in situ would not normally be considered for removal unless the tenant has been living in the property for at least 1 year.

Please refer to the Aids and Adaptations Policy for further information.

3.17 Fencing & Boundaries

The RCH Group is responsible for the repair of existing fencing that has been provided by RCH Group. Tenants who have installed their own fencing are responsible for its maintenance. Tenants must also receive written permission from RCH Group before installing any fencing.

Fencing repairs will normally be completed as part of a planned replacement fencing programme. These planned programmes are subject to budget availability, and customers will be informed in advance.

RCH Group will make exception to this rule in the following circumstances:

- The condition of the fence presents a health and safety risk in the opinion of RCH Group. If the fencing requires to be removed then new fencing will be installed of a type suitable to mitigate the risk.
- The customer has a disability where the condition or absence of a fence unreasonably restricts the full use of the property and garden grounds.

Requests for new or replacement fencing

RCH Group has no statutory responsibility to provide tenants with dividing fencing. We will not provide new fencing or replace existing fencing except in the following circumstances:

- RCH group may conduct planned replacement fencing programmes. These planned programmes are subject to budget availability and customers will be informed in advance.
- The new or existing fence separates a garden from hazards (such as a main road, streams or severe changes in ground level at the edge of a property) which would create a health and safety risk.

All requests will be surveyed to decide whether the fencing is required. If so, we will carry out works in the most economic and efficient way.

Where a decision is made to repair or replace fencing, the style of fencing will be based on that which offers best value for money. Refer to Appendix 1 for specification.

Fencing installed by a tenant

Following a successful permission request to install a new fence, all tenants are responsible for maintaining and upkeep of the fence at their own cost and time.

Any fence installed by a tenant that is in a state of disrepair, River Clyde Homes reserve the right to ask the tenant to make good within a reasonable timescale or remove at their own cost and time.

Hedges

Properties where hedges provide the defensible space to properties are the responsibility of the customer to maintain and keep in order. RCH Group does not remove established hedging to replace this with metal or wooden fencing.

RCH Group offers a garden tidy scheme (at a charge) and will offer customers advice and guidance on obtaining assistance to maintain their hedges where required. RCH Group may at its discretion cut back hedges which have not been maintained by a tenant where this is causing an obstruction or hazard, for example blocked access to a property or pathway. Tenants will be recharged for this service.

Boundary walls

Walls that provide the defensible space to properties are the responsibility of RCH Group to maintain. Metal or wooden fencing will not be installed to replace existing walls.

Open Spaces

Areas that are currently open plan i.e. where there is no obvious individual garden areas, or where fencing has never been in place and where there is no health and safety risk or hazard, will remain open plan. This information will be communicated to customers taking up tenancies on properties in these areas prior to sign up.

Owners

All requests for repairs, replacement and any issues regarding maintenance of hedges will be dealt with in line with property titles and managed in line with RCH Groups' Factoring Policy.

3.17 Complaints

As a customer, if you are dissatisfied with the Repairs Service provision, please contact River Clyde Homes in the first instance so they can put it right.

If River Clyde Homes are unable to provide a resolution at first point of contact, please follow their formal complaints process which is covered in our Complaints Policy.

3.18 Quality Control

The Repair Service that River Clyde Homes provides will always be under continuous improvement, and will use the following to drive this:

- customer feedback.
- customer satisfaction surveys.
- post quality checks.
- sector best practice.
- internal analytic tools.

3.19 Performance Reporting

Key performance indicators are:

- agreed annually.
- monitored at our Social Landlord Operations Committee.
- given as guidance to all staff, to drive the service quality.

3.20 Related documents and policies

- Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Customer Service Standards
- Fence and Boundary Policy
- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Void Management Policy
- Right to Repair Legislation
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Owners

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4. Rechargeable Repairs

4.1 Role Responsibility

- The Housing Manager will have overall responsibility for the implementation and associated procedures of rechargeable repairs for tenants as part of their tenancy agreement.
- The Finance Manager will have overall responsibility for the implementation and associated procedures of rechargeable repairs in relation to owners factored by River Clyde Homes.

4.2 Aims and Objectives

- To ensure River Clyde Homes has a process to identify, record and follow the relevant procedures to recover costs.
- To describe the activities and responsibilities involved in carrying out repairs in circumstances where the repair is the responsibility of the tenant or an owner.
- To give clear guidance on the circumstances where repair costs will be recharged.
- To confirm current rechargeable fees. See Appendix 5 for current charges.

4.3 Definition of a rechargeable repair

Defined as works or services that are required to be carried out by River Clyde Homes but not limited to the following:

- caused by neglect, misuse, wilful or accidental damage by the resident, a household member (including pets), or any visitors to the property.
- forced access to the property if you fail to respond when we require access to carry out compliance works e.g., Gas Servicing. Providing access on the day of a forced access will still incur a charge.
- A request to change locks due to missing or mislaid keys, or where there is a compromise to the security of the property due to potential unauthorised access.
- missed or carded appointments, where trades have been unable to access the property for a pre-arranged visit. A cancellation fee will apply.
- emergency / out of hours repair attendance where it is later confirmed these works are routine in nature. A callout fee will apply.
- blocked drains and stacks if found that the cause is due to hard foods, fats, toilet fresheners, wet wipes or kitchen roll or similar items.
- removal of goods or belongings from a void property, including the loft, cellar and garden.
- repairs to make good or restore items to River Clyde Homes standard, which include voids, alterations, or improvements.
- removal of items from communal area which can be connected to a tenant or owner.

- damaged caused by the Police following a lawful raid at a property which results in an arrest.

4.4 Recharge exemptions

There will be no recharge to a tenant in the following circumstances.

- Attendance of emergency services in relation to a tenant welfare check.
- A crime reference number is provided due to an incident in relation to damages to the property.

4.5 Appeals and Complaints

Tenants will have the right to appeal against the reason and / or amount of any recharge. This should be done in accordance with our existing Complaints Policy.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and all relevant requirements have been met.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless an earlier review is required due to changes in legal, regulatory, or best practice requirements, or because monitoring and reporting reveals that a change in policy is required sooner.

Appendix 1 Repair Responsibilities

River Clyde Homes is responsible for:

- Bath
- Shower unit fitted by River Clyde Homes
- WC
- Wash hand basin
- Internal doors
- Entrance doors (Front and Back)
- Windows
- Switches and sockets
- Ceiling light fittings
- Kitchen units
- Kitchen sink
- Water supply (Hot and Cold)
- Storage heaters / radiators

- Drains and soil stack
- Rainwater goods (gutters and downpipes)
- Roofline (facias / soffits)
- Roofs and chimneys

Tenant is responsible for:

- Decoration, including repairing minor cracks and holes in plasterwork.
- Fixtures and fittings installed by the customer, such as curtain rails and decorative light fittings.
- Shower unit fitted by customer.
- Internal doors and / or ironmongery fitted by the customer.
- Adapting doors to accommodate floor coverings.
- All floor coverings.
- Plugs and chains to sink, basin and bath.
- Toilet seats.
- Shower curtain.
- Shower head and hose.
- Light bulbs.
- Plugs and fuses connected to appliances.
- White goods and their installation.
- Dividing fences and garden sheds.

Appendix 2 Vulnerable Groups

- Those who are older and frail and may have adapted homes.
- Those with learning disabilities or mental health problems who may have difficulties with everyday tasks.
- Those with physical or sensory disabilities and may struggle with everyday tasks.
- Families with children under school age.
- Those who have a long-term illness.
- A victim of domestic violence and / or abuse.

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Appendix 3 Repair Type Examples

Emergency (Immediate risk to health, safety, or security; to prevent serious damage to the property or to reinstate the loss of an essential service).

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Electrical

Total loss of power.

Dangerous / exposed wires (make safe only) No communal stair lighting.

Smoke Alarms or Carbon Monoxide Detectors.

Plumbing

Uncontainable leak from pipes (make safe only) Water running constantly on full pressure.

Blocked toilet (if no other toilet)

Blocked or leaking foul drains / soil stacks.

Joinery

Insecure doors.

Insecure windows on ground floor.

Broken window safety catches.

Locked out / Gain entry (may be charged for this service) Broken glass (make safe only)

Other

Dangerous structure (make safe only) Blocked rubbish chute.

Lift breakdown.

Fire Alarm activation.

Severe water penetration.

Complete loss of heating and / or hot water (electric / gas / biomass).

Urgent (Major inconvenience or discomfort to the customer and may cause substantial damage to the property).

Electrical

Faulty sockets and switches if no others in same room. Faulty shower (if no bath)

Partial loss of communal lighting.

Plumbing

Leaking sanitary fittings.

Leaking waste pipe.

Continual water hammer (noisy pipes)

Joinery

Insecure window above ground floor.

—
Faulty locks

Other

TV Aerials

Commercial laundry equipment.

Minor roof leaks.

Routine (Minor inconvenience or discomfort to the customer, with minimal risk of damage to the property).

Electrical

Faulty sockets and switches if others in same room. Faulty over bath shower.

Plumbing

Renew tank or hot water cylinder.

Leaking or dripping taps

Running overflow

Joinery

Difficulty to open / close doors.

Difficulty to open / close windows.

Other

Dampness

Right to Repair

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs (up to the value of £350) carried out within a given timescale. This scheme is called “Right to Repair” and are classed as “qualifying” repairs.

Please visit <https://www.gov.scot/publications/right-repair/> for more information.

Appendix 4 – Service Standards

Your health and safety are our highest priority.

If we are unable to keep your appointment, we will let you know.

All tradespersons and contractors will show identification.

They will dress appropriately and use relevant PPE.

They will be polite and respectful.

They will keep disruption to a minimum.

They will clean up the work area when completed.

They may take before and after pictures.

They may ask for a tenant's signature to confirm works have been completed.

Appendix 5 – Rechargeable fees

- Emergency Callout Charge - £50.00
- Missed / Carded Appointment - £40.00
- Late Cancellation Fee - £40.00
- Access for Gas Compliance Works - £68.00