

MACE HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD

What you should know About Repairs

A User's Guide to Mace Housing Co-operative's
Maintenance Service

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Mace Housing is committed to keeping all the homes it manages in excellent condition. We do this by managing a central repairs and maintenance service for all our members.

This leaflet provides details on the service provided by our maintenance section and on how this service can be used effectively. It also explains what types of repairs members are responsible for themselves.

What are Mace Housing responsibilities?

Mace Housing is responsible for nearly all of the repairs to your home, which is caused by wear and tear or breakdown.

In these cases, you have a legal 'Right To Repair' and should expect Mace Housing to provide you with prompt and efficient service described later in this leaflet. However, the promptness depends on the nature of the repairs.

What are my responsibilities?

You have a general responsibility to take care of your home.

You are also responsible for reporting any necessary repairs to Mace Housing. Any faults, which are likely to cause injury and damage to people or property, should be reported immediately.

After reporting the repair, you must make sure that we can get into your home to inspect and carry out the necessary work. Mace Housing may require immediate access to your home in an emergency to carry out essential repairs.

You must keep appointments, which you make with Mace Housing or its contractors. **Failing to keep appointments will lead to repairs being delayed or non-essential works being cancelled. If you fail to keep an appointment and the contractor charges Mace for a failed appointment, this will be recharged to you. You must also report contractors who fail to keep their appointments.**

There are also certain types of repair, which you are responsible for carrying out yourself:

- **Damage caused by you** – If you damage any part of your home either intentionally, it is your responsibility to put that damage right.
- **Damage caused by friends, family or visitors** – Likewise, if any body that you invite into the property such as your friends, family or visitors cause damage you must make sure that you get the necessary repairs carried.

- **Repairs to items you own** – If any item you own (such as washing machine, television or fridge) breaks down you must make arrangements to have it repaired.

There is more information available in the **Tenancy Agreement, which** you signed when you moved into your home.

Over the next pages we will detail what we have responsibility for and what types of work you will need to carry out for yourself.

The outside of your home

Mace Housing will organise necessary repairs to ensure that:

- Drains, gutters and outside pipes do not leak and are able to carry away waste products and rainwater.
- The roof and chimney don't allow water to leak into your home.
- The walls on the outside of your home are structurally safe and free from graffiti.
- All paths and steps are safe, even and in a generally good condition.
- All external walls and fences are in a safe condition.
- You are able to open, close and secure external gates easily.
- Any trees and shrubs in your garden do not block the light for either yourselves or your neighbours.

However there are some parts of the outside of your home that you will need to care for yourself.

- If your home has a garden, you are responsible for keeping it well maintained.

In addition to repairing the outside of your home as and when necessary, we also have a planned programme of external maintenance. As part of this programme, we will repaint external doors and windows approximately once every five years and check the condition of roofs and brickwork.

Doors and windows

Good condition doors and windows are vital in order to keep your home safe and secure.

You can expect us to make sure that:

- All doors and windows can easily be opened, closed and locked.
- All window and doors locks are in good working order.
- Any rotten or rusted windows, doors, latch or locks are repaired or replaced.

Sometimes, however, you may be responsible for such repairs:

- If you, any member of your family or visitor to your house accidentally smash a window or the glass in a door, you must arrange for this to be repaired yourself.
- If a crime is committed and the windows, doors or door locks of your home are damaged, you must report this to the police and obtain a crime reference number. If you fail to do this, we will ask you to arrange and pay for the repair yourself.
- If you lose the key to the lock on any of the doors or windows to your home, you are responsible for replacing that lock or getting another key cut.

In all cases where your home is not secure we will send someone to make an emergency repair as soon as possible (always within 24 hours) subject to the availability of contractors.

If it turns out that you are responsible for the repair, we will recharge you for the cost of the repair and our administration. We will also expect you to complete any outstanding work.

For example, if you accidentally smash a window in your home, we will board it up but we will charge you for this and expect you to make arrangements to have a new pane of glass fitted.

Internal walls and floors

- We are responsible for making sure that all internal walls and floors are structurally sound.
- In the case of internal floors, we will make sure that they are in a suitable condition for you to lay carpet or vinyl.
- In the case of internal walls, we will make sure that the plasterwork is intact and that the wall is in a suitable condition to be painted.
- We always try everything possible to ensure walls are free from damp and mould.

However, there are some things that remain your responsibility:

- The decoration of the walls and floors of your home is entirely your responsibility. We will not paint, hang wallpaper or fit carpets in your home after you have moved in.
- In new homes, any ‘hairline’ cracks, which appear in the walls, are a natural part of the ‘drying out’ of the house. Mace Housing will not repair these cracks.
- Keeping your home adequately ventilated and heated so that condensation, the major cause of damp, cannot build up.

- If you fit your own carpets you are responsible for altering internal and external doors so that they can open and close normally.

Gas, heating and hot water

Heating and hot water are essential services which everyone has the right to expect.

The repairs we will carry out include:

- Making sure all the gas pipe work in your home is safe and free from leaks
- Repairing faults on gas, electrical fires, water heaters and central heating systems.
- Carrying out an annual check on gas pipe work, fires, water heaters and central heating systems and supplying you with a safety certificates.

If you haven't had a gas safety check in the last year, contact our maintenance section on 0207 254 9560 to arrange an appointment. Mace Housing Co-operative is bound by the **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994** to carry out an annual safety check in all the properties we manage.

But there some kinds of work you will need to arrange for yourself:

- The repair and servicing of gas appliances you have fitted yourself. This includes gas cookers and additional gas fires that you install.
- All maintenance on additional electrical appliances supplied by you, such as fan heaters and portable radiators.
- You must ensure that you keep your gas/electric card charged at all times and to pay your gas bill regularly. If you experience problems with your card, meter or paying bills you must contact your gas supplier directly. **Always check that your gas/electric card is charged before reporting a problem with your heating or hot water.**
- **You must give contractors access to your home to carry out an annual gas service. If you do not do this you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement. In such cases the Co-op will take legal action against you to enable us to carry out this essential work.**

Electrical wiring, lighting, sockets and switches

Mace Housing promises to carry out repairs in order that:

- The wiring in your home is safe and the supply of electricity is constant.
- All wall sockets are safe and in good working order.
- All light switches and light fittings are in full working order.
- All extractor fans fitted at the property work properly.
- All door bells and smoke alarms supplied by mains are in good working order.

There are elements of the electrical supply, which you must take responsibility for?

- The maintenance of all your electrical appliances including fridges, freezers, washing machines and televisions. **If your electricity is constantly ‘tripping’ you should always check to see if any of your appliances are causing the problem before calling Mace Housing Co-operative Ltd.**
- Keeping your electricity charged at all times and paying your electricity bills regularly. If you experience problems with your key, meter or paying bills you must contact your electricity supplier directly. **Always check that your electricity key is charged before reporting a problem.**
- Replacing light bulbs, including fluorescent tubes, when they blow.
- The maintenance of any electrical ‘white goods’ such as washing machines, fridges and cookers which may have been in place when you moved into the property. Whether these items were supplied by us or have been left by previous tenants, they are ‘gifts’ and should you choose to accept them you become responsible for their repair.

The kitchen

Mace Housing Co-operative guarantees to put right any problems, which affect the following standards:

- All kitchen units should be in a reasonable condition, with securely fitted doors supplied to cupboards where appropriate.
- A kitchen sink should be available, with full running water and a drainage system that is clear from blockages and leaks.
- Any wall tiles around the sink or in any other part of the kitchen should be firmly secured.
- Extractor fans fitted by the Co-op should be in full working order
- A vinyl covering should be fitted and in a reasonable condition.

As a member you remain responsible for certain kinds of repair:

- Clearing waste pipes to a blocked sink where you have caused the blockage by disposing of fat, grease and other rubbish. If you have a blocked sink you should always try to clear it before calling Mace Housing. **If a contractor is sent to your home to clear a blocked sink and he reports that you caused the blocked, you will be re-charged the cost of his visit.**
- Repairing cupboards, cupboard doors or shelves damaged by yourself, your family or visitor to your home. This includes damage caused by small children climbing or swinging on cupboard doors.
- Keep kitchen clean at all times to prevent rodents and insects infestation.

The bathroom and toilet

We promise to carry out necessary repairs to ensure that:

- Hot and cold running water is supplied to all baths, wash hand basins and showers.

- Baths, hand basins and shower trays are free from cracks and leaks and are in a generally good condition.
- Taps, wastes and pipe work are free from leaks and airlocks.
- A vinyl floor covering should be fitted and in a reasonable condition.
- The toilet flushes adequately and waste is removed through pipes and drains free from leaks or blockages.

Works you will need to arrange

- Repairs to cracked baths, hand basins, toilets or shower trays where the damage has been caused by you, your family or visitors to your home. This includes accidental damage e.g. if a heavy object is dropped onto a ceramic toilet bowl.
- Constant repairs to toilet seats and lids, which frequently become loose or broken due to misuse.
- Unblocking of toilets or other waste pipes where the blockage has been caused by you disposing of nappies or other inappropriate items. If you have blocked a toilet or waste pipe you should always try to clear it yourself before calling Mace Housing. **If a contractor is sent to your home to clear a blocked waste pipe and he reports that the blockage was caused by you, you will be re-charged the cost of his visit.**
- If you install a shower in your bathroom it is essential that you inform Mace Housing, and that you ensure that you tile all walls that may be splashed by water. If you fail to do this you risk causing substantial damage to your home and those of your neighbours and we will re-charge you for the cost of carrying out any repairs.

Common areas, facilities and infestations

Many members share vital facilities and areas from entry-phones and bin stores to hallways and common rooms. We are committed to ensuring that these areas and facilities are maintained in the same excellent conditions as possible.

We will always make sure that

- Doors, floors, walls, windows, ceilings and electrics in communal areas meet the required standards. Especially that they are safe, secure and well lit.
- All light fittings work, even down to changing fluorescent tubes and bulbs in properties where a service charge is paid.
- Entry-phone systems are working correctly both at the main street door and in individual tenant's homes, allowing access at all times.
- Infestations of insects and animals, which carry disease or are harmful to health, are reported to Pest Control. This specifically includes rats, cockroaches and certain types of ant.

Works you will need to arrange

- The clearance of excess rubbish from bin stores and other communal areas. If you have large items, which need to be disposed of, it is your responsibility to arrange their removal with your local authority's refuse department.
- The replacement and renewal of your own external rubbish bin.
- Maintenance and replacement of washing lines, even if they were originally at the premises when you moved in.
- Installing and repairing your own television aerial or satellite dish.
- Getting rid of the majority of pests, which every home has from time to time. This includes mice, woodlice, beetles and nearly all types of ant.
- You will also need to ensure that your home is clean and hygienic and that it is not acting to encourage infestation of insects or animals.

How do I report a repair?

The best way to report a repair is by calling our main line on **0207 254 9560** and ask for **Maintenance section**.

- The office is open from 10.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday for all types of repair requests.

If you don't have a telephone you can:

- Report outstanding repairs to any member of staff visiting your home.
- If you prefer, you can report non-urgent repairs to us in writing:*
- Please remember that it will take longer for us to receive details of repairs reported in this way, which in turn will mean that the problem won't be solved straight away.

How quickly will the work be carried out?

When you report a repair it will immediately be given a priority. This tells you how long it will take to have the work carried out.

Emergency Repairs - 48 Hours

- Serious flooding and leaks
- Loss of all water supply
- Complete loss of electricity
- Blocked toilet, if there's only one
- Insecure front or back doors

Urgent Repairs - 5 Working days

- No hot water*

- No heating*
- Blocked sinks, baths and basins
- Leaking roofs, toilets, pipes and drains
- Faulty front or back doors
- Repairs collapsed ceilings and doors
- Single lights or sockets not working

Routine Repairs - 28 Working days

- Leaking gutters
- Dripping overflows
- Sticking doors and windows
- Slow draining sinks, baths and basins
- Works to trees, shrubs, gates, fences and boundary walls
- Replacement of basins, baths and sinks with ‘slow leaks’
- If you are without heating and hot water during the winter months we will always try to attend on or before the next day. However, if parts or a new appliance are required, it may take up to five working days to complete a full repair.

Will I be given an appointment?

Whenever possible, the contractor responsible for carrying out the work will make an appointment for the repairs to be carried out at a convenient time.

Unfortunately, we cannot make appointments for a set time. This may mean that you need to arrange for someone to be at home all morning or afternoon on the day the works are due to be carried out.

If you want to cancel an appointment that you have arranged with us, you should always telephone the office at least 24 hours beforehand.

What standards can I expect from contractors?

All contractors working for Mace Housing Co-op are expected to reach a consistently high standard both in the quality of the repairs they carry out and their behaviour whilst in your home.

This is why we have a ‘Code of Conduct’, which sets out our contractors’ duties and responsibilities. These include:

- Treating you politely
- Not acting in a racist, sexist or otherwise offensive manner
- Being sensitive to any special needs you may have
- Not endangering your safety
- Not damaging your personal property

When contactors do not act in line with their 'Code of Conduct' we take serious action against them. This will normally take the form of the contactor being suspended from work or permanently removed from the list of companies we use.

What if I'm not happy with the service I receive?

If you are not happy, please contact us immediately and we will try to set the matter right promptly.

If you have done this and we still fail to meet the standard of service, which we have laid out in this leaflet, you can use our complaint procedure to make a formal complaint.

The best way to make a maintenance complaint is by writing to:

The Director of Operations
Mace Housing Co-operative Ltd
The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street London E8 3DL

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