

# Your new repairs, maintenance and improvement service



New in-house repairs  
& maintenance service  
starting on **1 April 2020**

# Our new in-house repairs & maintenance service starts on 1 April.

The changes to the delivery of repairs, maintenance and improvement services for council housing come following the end of our ten-year partnership contract with Mears on 31 March 2020.

The changes were agreed in 2018 following consultation with tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders about their experiences and their priorities for the service in the future.

We've been working hard alongside our resident 'task and finish group' to make sure the change goes as smoothly as possible.

We're committed to making sure our new service continues to deliver the same excellent levels of customer service you've come to expect.

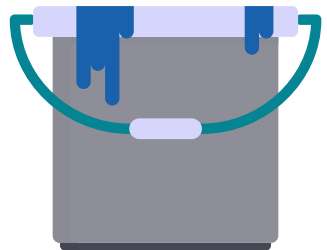
## What the changes will mean

### Responsive repairs

- You will still report repairs in the same way, by phoning us on the same numbers **0800 0526140** or **01273 294409** if calling from a mobile.
- Our commitment to start work on a repair within a set time is not changing. We'll still start emergency repairs within 24 hours, and routine repairs within 20 working days.
- Staff will wear new charcoal or blue uniforms, carry council identity cards and vans will be council-branded.

### Planned maintenance and improvement programmes

- We're putting individual contracts for different types of work in place. We've encouraged local companies to tender for these to support local business wherever we can.
- We've received a high level of interest and will be inviting contractors with the highest scoring bids to tender for contracts, due to be awarded in July this year.



- The contracts will last for five years, instead of ten, with an option for us to extend by two years.
- Contracts for gas, door entry systems, lifts and other services are managed separately and aren't changing.

## Major work

- We're setting up a list of approved contractors who will be able to tender for major works.
- Competitive tendering between contractors will help to ensure we get the best price at the best standard.
- Our agreement with these approved contractors will last for four years, instead of ten.



## Reporting a repair

### To report a repair:

- complete our online repairs reporting form at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs)
- call 0800 052 6140 or 01273 294409 (if calling from a mobile)
- write to us at Repairs Helpdesk, Housing Centre, Unit 1, Fairway Trading Estate, Eastergate Road, Brighton, BN2 4QL

**Our repairs helpdesk is open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday.**

**If you have an emergency out-of-hours, call the same numbers 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.**

## Shaping the new service

Since our partnership contract with Mears started in 2010, we have successfully brought all council homes up to the government's Decent Homes Standard and delivered savings for the council. The partnership has also provided excellent levels of customer service for our residents.

The feedback we received in 2018 set out several key objectives we've used to plan the new service.

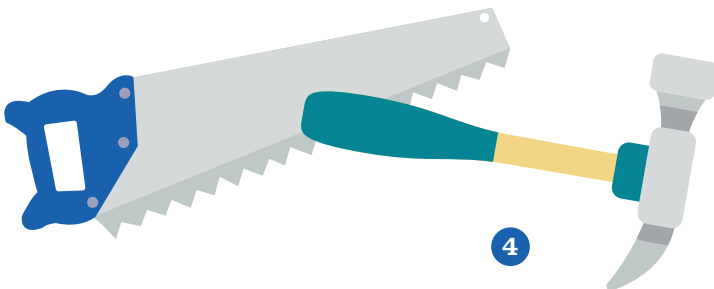
### These are:

- excellent customer service
- the ability to self-serve when reporting repairs
- a strong focus on maintaining existing homes and buildings
- a clear demonstration of value for money
- added economic, social and environmental benefits for the city

The 'task and finish' group helping us shape the new service is made up of 16 residents from across the city, including tenants, leaseholders and a seniors housing representative.

They've been sharing their views on issues such as measuring performance in the service, waste management, contracts, the uniforms and how residents will be involved in feeding back on the service in the future.

Thanks very much to the group for all their hard work to date. The group will continue to meet to oversee the first few months of the new service.



## Apprenticeships

One of the main objectives of our partnership contract was around community regeneration and added value – including offering apprenticeships.

It included a commitment to one apprenticeship per £1 million spend, totalling almost 200 over the term of the partnership.

We're matching this commitment, with one apprentice for every £1 million spend across repairs, planned maintenance and major projects.

Due to the way we will be managing planned and major work, we're looking to recruiting new types of apprenticeships, which could include clerks of works, quantity surveyors and engineers.

## Planned maintenance and major work

Planned maintenance and improvement programmes will be delivered through a number of new contracts covering kitchens and bathrooms, roofing, windows, doors and rewires. We're working on setting these up to be in place from July this year and will let you know about new contractors through Homing In.

For larger major projects, we're setting up new frameworks with a list of approved suppliers who will tender for each project.

All tenders will be run on a competitive basis, which will allow us to get the best value for money for the council and our residents on all major projects.

Following feedback from residents, we're now engaging with tenants and leaseholders ahead of formal consultation on major work to make sure they have a chance to influence any proposed work at an earlier stage.

We aim to do this as early as possible, in proportion to the impact, size and complexity of the project.



## What the new service will look like

While the van branding and uniforms will change, you may well recognise some of the faces carrying out repairs and voices on the phone, as a majority of staff will be coming over to join the council.

Our new uniforms have black jackets and charcoal tops, with supervisors wearing blue.



Our vans will be branded with the Brighton & Hove City Council logo and the service name 'Housing Repairs & Maintenance'.



Staff will now carry Brighton & Hove City Council identity cards as below. Please do always ask to check staff identity cards.

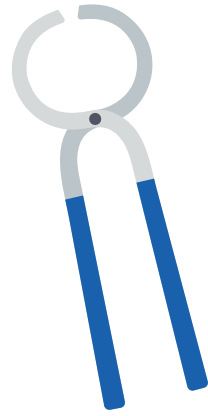


# Responsibility for repairs

Here are some examples of responsibilities for common repairs.

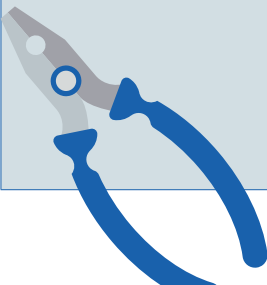
A fuller guide is included in the repairs handbook, available from [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs).

If we do need to visit your home, we ask for you to be at home for your appointment, to ensure we have clear access to the repair area and to always treat staff with respect.



## What repairs are the council responsible for?

Council responsibility	Comment
Aerials (communal)	Where installed by the council
Central heating	Boilers, storage heaters, radiators, hot water
Drains	Blocked drains and gullies
Electricity	Except where tenants have installed their own appliances, plugs, fuses, bulbs and meters
Fire and smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors	Unless battery operated, which are a tenant responsibility
Lifts	
Plumbing and fittings	Replacement of toilets, sinks, baths, wash hand basins (including refixing brackets) Tap replacement and other tap repairs Blocked toilet, bath, sink or wash hand basin Toilet not flushing properly
Roofs	Loose tiles, rain penetration, flashings
Windows	Glazing (except wilful damage, which requires a crime reference number) Misted or fogged windows Secure window frame Window not opening and closing Window catches, handles, hinges and locks New window frame sills



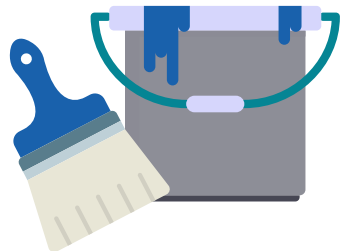


## What repairs are tenants responsible for?

You are expected to make sure that your home, garden and balcony are kept safe, clean and free from rubbish.

Tenant responsibility	Comment
Cookers	Gas and electric, including connections <b>(gas cookers must be installed by a Gas Safe qualified engineer)</b>
Internal decoration, including the inside of the front door	The council doesn't redecorate after we've carried out repair work, although we do make good and prepare surfaces ready for your decoration
Floor coverings	Unless fitted by the council
Home contents insurance	You are responsible for insuring your home's contents - this is not covered by the council
Keys	Including garage keys and window keys
Plumbing and fittings	Replacement of WC seats and toilet chains Replacement of kitchen and bathroom tiles (unless fitted by the council) Replacement of plugs and plug chains
Utilities Gas Electricity Water TV / broadband	<b>Tenant to contact supplier directly for:</b> gas and electricity meters (including key and card types) water meters cable television / internet

Exceptions are made in individual cases for vulnerable tenants, including people over 70 years of age, people who are registered disabled, and seniors housing tenants.



# When repairs get done

## Routine repairs



A **routine** repair will be completed within **20 working days** and you will be offered an appointment.

### Examples include:

- anti-fungal wash down for mould on walls
- adjusting a communal door closer
- broken kitchen units
- broken paths and paving
- flashing light in communal area
- a dripping tap

## Complex repairs



A **complex** repair is work that will **take longer than 20 days to complete**.

This may be identified by the operative when they first visit.

### 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

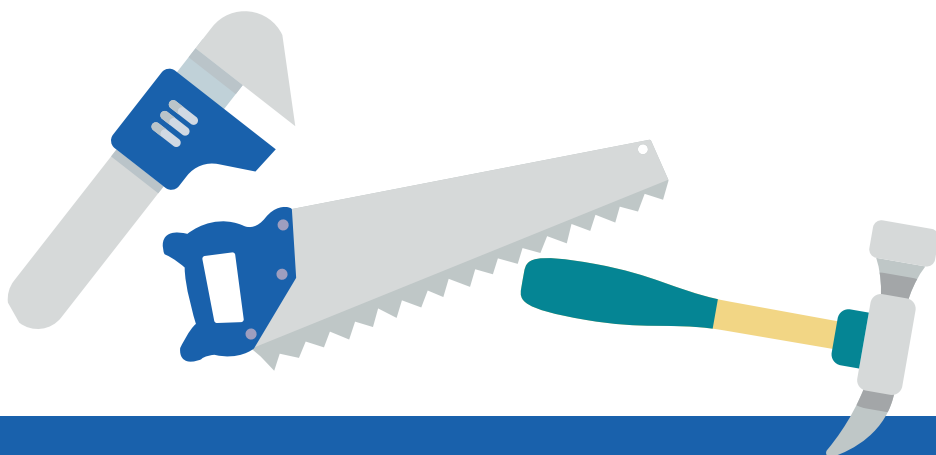
## Emergency repairs



An **emergency** repair is one which needs to be carried out quickly to avoid danger or serious damage to the building. An emergency repair will be attended to **within 24 hours**, so please be available to give access.

### Examples include:

- serious water leak
- no power in property
- no heating and hot water from boiler (November to April only)
- overflowing drains
- collapsed ceiling or roof
- ground floor window not closing
- attending a lift breakdown
- a blocked toilet (if it's the only accessible one in your home)





# Contact

## To report a repair

- complete our online repairs reporting form at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs)
- call **0800 052 6140** or **01273 294409** (if calling from a mobile) 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday

## Emergency out-of-hours

- call **0800 052 6140** or **01273 294409** (if calling from a mobile)

**You can find more information, including the repairs handbook, at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs)**

Thanks to Nick, Tony, Tracey, Kevin, Shane, Harry and Paul for appearing in the photos!



6871 Brighton & Hove City Council Communications Team

