

Our Service

OTHA tries to provide a good quality and cost effective repairs service to all our tenants. We also expect staff and workmen to be courteous at all times when they are dealing with you. We do accept that sometimes things can go wrong and you may not be happy with the service you have received. This leaflet tells you what to do if you are not happy and how we will approach dealing with your complaint.

General approach

We are committed to dealing with any complaint you may make in a positive way. Even if we can't change what happened to you, we can consider changing how we deal with the same situation arising in the future. We will investigate the points that you raise fully and give you the opportunity to have your say. If you want help in making a formal complaint, we will assist you by getting someone unconnected with your complaint to take the details down for you.

As well as making a complaint, you can appeal any decision that we have taken about your repair or the service offered to you.

To make an appeal or a complaint, you can choose to have an informal discussion with your Maintenance Officer in the first instance. They may be able to resolve your concerns and if not they can advise you about making a formal complaint or appeal.

To make a formal complaint or appeal either submit the details in writing or ask to make an appointment with your Housing Officer for them to take down the details in full. If the Maintenance Officer is the subject of the complaint, or the complaint is of a serious nature, but you still wish to discuss the issue informally, you should ask to speak to a Senior Maintenance Officer.

Ultimately, your complaint or appeal is dealt with by the Maintenance Manager and the Housing Services Sub-committee or Management Committee if you are not satisfied with the outcome. Full details of the Complaints Procedure will be supplied to you. You have recourse to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied by the association's internal procedures for dealing with complaints.

Why are you unhappy?

This section discusses some of the reasons you may not be happy with our repairs service.

Your repair took too long

Our target response times are generally as follows: Emergency repairs – 4 Hours; Urgent Repairs – 2 Working Days; Routine Repairs – Up to 5 Working days

We aim to carry out 95% of repairs within these timescales, but there are times when a repair may take longer than usual. This may be for a number of reasons:

- We have difficulty getting access to your home
- Parts are required or the scale of work is larger than normal
- We need to negotiate with other owners and try to obtain their consent to the works required
- We need to get competitive quotes

We should tell you if there is going to be a delay and we should keep you informed of progress made in getting the works on site. If we or the contractor has been at fault and you have experienced loss or significant inconvenience as a result, we may consider compensation. In most cases, we would offer an apology only.

You may be entitled to compensation under the Right to Repair scheme if the repair was a 'qualifying repair' and it was completed late. You should have been told if this scheme applied at the time you reported the repair.

The workmanship was not up to an accepted standard, the contractor left a mess or the contractor failed to keep an appointment

We expect a high standard of service from our contractors. If you raise a problem of this type, we would ask the contractor for their side of the story. If you say that workmanship was not up to an accepted standard, we would inspect the work to confirm this and get the contractor out to remedy the problem if necessary.

Sometimes missed appointments are inevitable if a high number of emergency calls are coming in, but we would expect the contractor to contact you and warn you that they may miss an appointment. Contractors should always clean up after themselves. If the contractor caused you loss, they would normally pay compensation. In other cases, an apology would be made.

We refused to carry out the repair

We reduce the costs of our repairs service by splitting the responsibility for repairs with the tenant. The split of responsibilities applies to all tenants and is only usually reviewed as a policy matter when the Maintenance policy is up for review. We would only use our discretion to carry out work, which is not our responsibility under the policy, if there was good reason (such as humanitarian concerns) to do so.

We are charging you for carrying out a repair because we say it is your responsibility

We specify that some repairs are the tenant's responsibility according to what we consider to be a fair way of dividing responsibilities. Where the need for a repair is caused by deliberate or accidental damage, we do charge you. This is because we can't otherwise control the costs and make you likely to stop causing the damage. Some rechargeable repairs are expensive – forcing entry where you have lost your keys, for example.

We should always inspect a rechargeable repair and discuss the decision to recharge you in person. Where possible, we will discuss the fact that the repair will be recharged before the repair is ordered, although at this point the costs may not be known.

We have repaired something when you think it needs replaced

We renew items such as kitchens, heating systems or bathroom suites according to a programme. This is more efficient as we can benefit from economies of scale. Where renewal work is scheduled in your home, we may choose to repair such an item until the renewal takes place. This should not happen where unreasonable inconvenience is being caused to you as a result. We should give you full information about our proposed programme on request and discuss any possible options and the reasons behind our decisions with you in full. Our Maintenance Officer should visit you at your home to do this.

Our staff have not been courteous to you or haven't treated your concerns seriously

We expect a high standard of service from our staff. If you make a complaint of this type we will speak to the staff member concerned to hear their side of the story. We will issue an apology unless we have formed a firm view that the complaint is unfounded.



OTHA Tenant Information Leaflet

Not Happy
With Your Repair?

This leaflet aims to tell you what to do if you are not happy with a repair or some other aspect of our repairs service.

This leaflet can be made available in large print, on tape or in an alternative language or format on request.