



SAXON WEALD

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Completing repairs quickly and effectively is a top priority for our customers. The responsive repairs service also has a key role to play in maintaining the quality and value of our property assets.
- 1.2 Failures and breakdowns can be costly to Saxon Weald and inconvenient for customers. The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that our repair service delivers value for money and achieves a high level of customer satisfaction.
- 1.3 This policy is supported by the Responsive Maintenance Procedure.

2.0 Definition and Scope

- 2.1 A responsive repair is maintenance arising from Saxon Weald's obligation as a landlord to carry out repairs to a property that have been requested by the customer or other person to an existing element of the property.
- 2.2 A responsive repair does not include:
 - Programmed renewal of building components;
 - Non-urgent repairs which can reasonably be included in a planned maintenance programme;
 - Pre-planned cyclical maintenance such as redecoration, or routine inspection and servicing;
 - Larger repairs, which require significant investigation, planning or organisation.

- 2.3 The scope of responsive repairs covered by this policy includes repairs to building elements, building services and hard landscaping such as fences, paths and driveways.

3.0 Legal and regulatory requirements

3.1 Legal requirements

- 3.1.1 Saxon Weald's statutory obligations are governed by a number of Acts of Parliament and subsidiary regulations. Saxon Weald will ensure that its responsibilities under relevant legislation are fulfilled. Core legislation that applies includes:

Repairs & Maintenance

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Right to Repair Regulation 1994
- The Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002

Health & Safety

- Building Regulations 2010
- Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015
- Gas Safety Regulations 1998
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Housing Health & Safety Rating System 2004
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

3.2 Regulatory requirements

- 3.2.1 Saxon Weald's services are regulated by the *Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2015*, published by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). In summary, this framework requires us to:

- Ensure that our homes continue to meet the Decent Homes standards, or any higher standards which applied when the home was built;
- Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service that responds to the needs of and offers choices to tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time;
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes;
- Demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money.

3.3 Repair obligations under tenancy agreements and leases

- 3.3.1 Saxon Weald will comply with its repair obligations, which are set out in its tenancy agreements and leases. At the same time, tenants and leaseholders are expected to

fulfil their respective obligation with regard to repairs. Guidance for customers is published in the current versions of the tenant's and leaseholder's handbooks.

4.0 Policy

- 4.1 Saxon Weald will, in accordance with its duties under the above legislation and standards of good practice, deliver a responsive, reliable and customer-focussed responsive repairs service which delivers high levels of customer satisfaction and value for money.
- 4.2 This policy is complementary to Saxon Weald's Asset Management Strategy and seeks to support a sustained effort to reduce demand for responsive repairs through the use of effective planned maintenance programmes.
- 4.3 Saxon Weald is committed to ensuring that disabled people are not disadvantaged in accessing its services. To this end, we will make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities in the implementing of this policy.

5.0 Implementation

- 5.1 To implement this policy, we will:
 - Establish and publish the respective duties and responsibilities of Saxon Weald, our tenants and leaseholders, with regard to responsive repairs;
 - Review these duties and responsibilities from time to time, in consultation with our customers;
 - We will exercise discretion, to provide a more flexible service for customers who are vulnerable;
 - Provide a variety of ways for customers to report repairs, including through the self-appointing repairs system;
 - Provide a rapid and effective system for responding to emergency repairs;
 - Offer a choice of appointments for all non-emergency repairs;
 - Ensure that repairs, and any necessary pre-inspections, are carried out within the shortest practicable timescale;
 - Aim to keep appointments that have been agreed with customers. Where this is not possible, we will contact customers to explain the reasons and rebook the appointment;
 - Ensure that our customers and their homes are treated with respect;
 - Wherever possible, complete a repair at the first visit;
 - In all cases, ensure that the problem is repaired properly;
 - Ensure that customers are kept informed about the progress of their repair, and any changes or delays;
 - Make effective arrangements for recharging repairs in appropriate circumstances;
 - Ensure there is a robust, prompt and effective process for the reporting and rectification of defects in new-build properties, or where major works have been carried out;
 - Involve our customers in the design and review of repair services.

5.2 The detailed arrangements for implementing this policy are set out in the company's Responsive Maintenance procedure, and in operational manuals.

6.0 Customer conduct and responsibilities

6.1 We expect our staff and contractors to be treated with respect and expect our customers to:

- Act courteously and reasonably towards our staff and contractors at all times;
- Provide reasonable access to their homes;
- Provide a reasonably clean and safe working environment;
- Wherever possible, move items away from the work area before work starts;
- Keep children and animals away from the work area;
- Refrain from smoking indoors when staff are visiting.

6.2 Saxon Weald reserves the right to suspend or withdraw its services in situations where a customer is unable to meet these expectations. This includes declining to carry out works due to insanitary or potentially hazardous working environments, where the health and safety of our staff or contractors could be compromised.

6.3 Saxon Weald has a duty of care to protect the health and safety of its workforce. If the condition of a property is such that it constitutes a breach of the tenancy agreement, all efforts should be made to encourage the tenant to bring the property into a suitable condition. Where the condition of the property is such as a result of the vulnerability of the customer (e.g. as a result of hoarding), we will provide appropriate support and signposting.

6.4 Copies of all correspondence and photographic evidence of the property condition must be retained on the file. If the problem is severe and persistent and it is felt that the health or safety of Saxon Weald operatives or contractors could be compromised by working in the property, the works should be declined and the Assistant Director - Housing may consider it appropriate to serve a Notice of Seeking Possession. However, this action should only be taken after all other solutions have been sought and the vulnerability of the tenant assessed.

7.0 Data protection, information exchange and confidentiality

7.1 All information regarding responsive repairs will be dealt with in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

8.0 Value for money

8.1 The implementation of this policy will contribute to Saxon Weald's requirements to deliver value for money and to maximise the financial, social and environmental return on its assets, in a number of ways. These will include:

- Maintaining the value of our property stock;
- Driving continuous improvements to productivity and supply chain efficiencies;
- Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction with our services.

9.0 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 We will establish indicators to monitor the operational performance and cost of our responsive repair services. Headline key performance indicators will be reported to Board.
- 9.2 We will benchmark service performance and costs against peer organisations.
- 9.3 We will monitor and report on customer satisfaction with our repair services.
- 9.4 We will ensure that prompt follow-up action is taken in response to expressions of dissatisfaction through customer surveys and Saxon Weald’s complaints system.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that it reflects the needs of our customers, good practice, and changes to legislation or regulation.

10.0 Equality and diversity

- 10.1 Equality and diversity affect all aspects of our business and, as such, its principles are integral to everything we do. As a landlord and an employer, Saxon Weald aims to recognise and respond positively to people’s differences, while providing equality of opportunity in relation to the services and careers we provide and support.

This means that no person or group of people, either working for Saxon Weald or seeking housing, services, employment or contracts from us, will be treated less favourably because of their or their partner’s, family’s, friend’s or associated person’s protected characteristics, which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, nationality, immigration status, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. This includes individuals either already serving on or applying to join our Board.

Version	Amendment	By	Date
5.0	Three-year review	Steven Dennis	February 2015
6.0	Three-year review	Steven Dennis	June 2018
7.0	Three-year review	Ian Bamforth	April 2021
7.1	Change to equality and diversity statement following review by ET	Nikki De Sousa	July 2021