

1. Policy statement	<p>This policy is designed to reflect best practice and follow Housing Corporation guidelines on landlord and tenant repairing obligations. We have a procedure to help identify which repairs are rechargeable and to prevent unnecessary damage or neglect to customers' properties, caused either by themselves, their families, friends, or other people on the premises. The procedure is also in place to inform customers of what they are responsible for regarding the upkeep of their home.</p>
2. Scope	<p>The policy and procedure applies to all permanent general needs and supported housing customers whose properties are directly managed by us; this includes leaseholders and shared owners.</p>
3. Purpose and aims	<p>There are occasions when customers approach us to carry out repairs that are not our responsibility, or where we have no alternative but to carry out a repair that is the customer's responsibility. The procedure aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define rechargeable repairs• Reduce the number of rechargeable repairs arising from customer abuse and/or neglect• Provide clear guidance over repair responsibilities• Explain the circumstances where we will carry out rechargeable repairs• Provide guidance on payment methods for rechargeable repairs• Provide guidance for rechargeable repairs in void properties• Recover full costs of undertaking rechargeable repairs, allowing for very exceptional circumstances <p>*In many cases, it could prove to be more costly for Springboard to carry out a repair and recharge the customer, than for the customer to arrange a direct repair. We would normally advise customers in these circumstances in general need properties to carry out the repair themselves, or to employ their own contractors. For customers in Supported Housing see section 3b of Procedure.</p> <p>Wherever possible, unless there is a health & safety risk, the above* will apply.</p>
4. Recharge definitions	<p>There are obligations set out in our Customer Handbook and Tenancy Agreements with regard to maintenance of property. A rechargeable repair is a repair that is the responsibility of the customer, but one which has been carried out by us, the cost of which is recovered from the customer.</p> <p>Examples of this include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Urgent health & safety (emergency repairs)b) Impending voidsc) Damage or neglect caused by the resident, their family or visitors, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electrical faults caused by customers' appliances• Blocked drains or sewage pipes• Re-glazing broken windows• Overflowing baths, sinks or washing machines

- Deliberately broken fixtures or fittings
- Unauthorised improvements or alterations
- Deliberate acts of neglect or vandalism
- Forced entry where customer is locked out of property
- Lost or stolen keys

We will recharge where we carry out a repair that is the responsibility of the customer or where our emergency repair reporting line is misused, e.g.

- Continuously reporting non-existent repairs
- Making hoax phone calls to the repairs line

If the repair is not the fault of the customer e.g. vandalism, then the onus is on the customer to report the incident to the police and obtain a crime reference number. We can only carry out the repair once we have the crime reference number, except where it is necessary to ensure the customer's personal safety and the security of the property (e.g. customer being threatened, front door missing – other circumstances where the customer is made vulnerable). This decision will be made at the discretion of the Housing Manager.

Some repairs that are the customers' responsibility should be covered by their own household insurance. Customers should be encouraged to make an insurance claim as soon as possible when this is the case.

5. Lettings and home visits

When Housing Managers, Maintenance Surveyors or other officers attend a letting, home visit, inspection etc. they must use these occasions as opportunities to identify any misuse of the property. If any misuse is noted, the customer should be challenged immediately and details recorded in written form and kept on the customer file notes. If necessary a second officer with relevant repairs knowledge should be called to the property for confirmation of rechargeable repairs.