

A close-up photograph of a person's hands working on a white radiator. The person is wearing a blue shirt. A red adjustable wrench is resting on the radiator's top grille. A silver ball valve is visible on the right side of the radiator. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The image is overlaid with large, semi-transparent circular shapes in shades of blue, purple, and green.

Repairs, Maintenance and Safety Guide

This handy guide tells you all you need to know about our repairs and maintenance service, along with important advice about how you can help us keep you and your family safe.

If you need this guide in a different format
please contact: diversity@platformhg.com

platform
●●●● housing group

Looking after your home

Looking after your home is a joint responsibility between you and Platform. It's your responsibility to take care of your home, report repairs as soon as possible and allow us access to your home to undertake the work.

Our responsibilities are those repairs that are set out in your tenancy agreement, including the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure and common parts of your home, for example:

- Repairs to the structure and exterior (including drains, gutters and external pipes and any other fixtures and fittings provided by us).
- External paintwork.
- Repair and working order of installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity.
- Repair and working order of installations for space heating and heating water.
- Internal walls, floors and ceilings, doors and door frames, door hinges and skirting boards (but not including internal painting and decoration).
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues.
- All fixtures and fittings including kitchen cabinets and bathroom suites and showers.
- Boundary walls and boundary fencing, privacy panel fencing and storage sheds if provided by us.

Your Responsibilities

You are responsible for the repair, maintenance and replacement of certain items within your home, for example:

- Minor wall and ceiling plasterwork cracks suitable for filling with polly filler.
- All flooring apart from the kitchen, bathroom and toilet.
- Managing moisture in your home.
- Internal painting and decoration.
- Blocked basins, sinks, baths, showers and level access shower wet room gullies.
- Replacement of plug, chain, bath panel and toilet seats.
- Repair or replacement of curtain pole, rail or track.
- Maintenance of timber sheds or their removal if no longer required.
- Repair or replacement of TV aerials or satellite dishes (unless communal).
- Replacement of light bulbs within your home.
- Maintenance of trees, grass, hedges, shrubs in your garden.
- Repair or replacement of washing lines and rotary dryers (unless communal).
- Bleeding radiators.
- Repair or fitting of cookers and cooker connections.

You can view a full list of what you are responsible for and what we are responsible for on our website: www.platformhg.com/your-repair-and-maintenance-responsibilities.



Improving your home

Each year we spend nearly **£40 million** carrying out home improvements.

This includes fitting new bathrooms, kitchens and doors, along with replacing old heating systems with new energy efficient boilers and rewiring properties.

Work to replace kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and external doors is based on the age of these components within your home.

If your fixtures do not fit the age criteria, they will continue to be repaired until they are old enough for replacement.



Access to your home

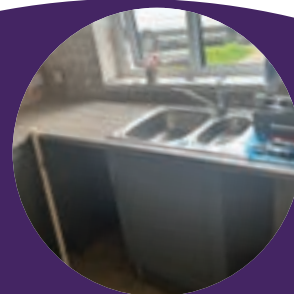
While we understand that having improvements carried out in your home may cause disruption, it's really important that you let us carry out this work as we cannot guarantee that we will be able to continue to source and repair old parts.

Counting the cost of missed appointments

Last year, more than **£927,000** was lost due to customers missing pre-arranged repairs appointments.

This is money that could have been spent on fitting, either:

120 kitchens
154 bathrooms
185 boilers



You can help us cut this cost by always letting us know if you can no longer make an appointment.

When we send you an automated appointment reminder you are given the option to let us know that you cannot make your appointment. By selecting No, you will automatically be put in contact with our planning team, who will be able to change your appointment to a time that suits you and enable us to offer your appointment to another customer who is waiting for a repair.

You can also call our Customer Hub on **0333 200 7304** to change your appointment.

Looking after communal grounds

Keeping our communal grounds clean, tidy and well maintained is the responsibility of our in-house Property Care Grounds Maintenance team.

They have set out a clear service standard for their work, along with a schedule of when this work will be completed, which can depend on the season and **suitable weather conditions**.

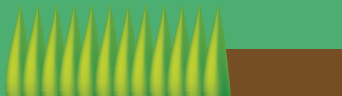


Grass cutting



In a new, greener approach, the team will be cutting and mulching grass. Mulching is where grass cuttings are recycled and returned to the turf in the form of tiny fragments of grass. These recycled fragments then act as protective 'mulch' and help to conserve soil moisture, prevent weed growth and moderate soil temperature.

Grass edging



All grass edgings to lawns, beds and borders, along with areas around trees and buildings will be trimmed and edged to the same height as the mowed grass.

Hedges and shrubs



All hedges and shrubs will be kept tidy, pruned or cut to maintain a neat line and definition and to remove any health and safety obstruction.

Under the Wildlife & Country Act 1981, we are unable to cut hedges between March and July, or beyond that time if there is visible evidence of nesting birds.

Weed control



All hard standing areas and planted beds will be inspected and spot treatments applied where required.

Litter picking



All hard surfaces, beds and borders will be inspected and any litter removed.

Our work schedule across the year

| Month | Grass cutting and edging | Hedges and shrubs | Weed control | Litter picking |
|-----------|---|--|---|---|
| January | |  |  |  |
| February | |  |  |  |
| March |  * | |  |  |
| April |  | |  |  |
| May |  | |  |  |
| June |  | |  |  |
| July |  | |  |  |
| August |  |  ** |  |  |
| September |  |  ** |  |  |
| October |  |  |  |  |
| November |  * |  |  |  |
| December | |  |  |  |

* subject to requirements. ** subject to nesting.

Getting in touch

If you have any further questions or concerns about our communal grounds maintenance service, please don't hesitate to contact our Customer Hub on **0333 200 7304** or visit our website: www.platformhg.com/grounds-maintenance to find out more.



Want to help us to improve your communal areas?

Our Estate Inspectors are a team of volunteer customers who act as our eyes and ears on the ground and let us know about any issues so that we can work together to put them right.

You can find out more about our Estate Inspectors role and how to register using the QR code below or visiting our website:

www.platformhg.com/estate-inspectors.



Grounds maintenance - service level problems

Due to the ongoing unseasonal wet weather, we are experiencing problems with the delivery of our grounds maintenance service, particularly grass cutting.

Platform is committed to providing a quality service to all of our customers so please accept our sincere apologies. We understand your frustrations, share your concerns, and are doing all we can to solve outstanding issues as a matter of urgency.

Surveying your home

So we can get a clear understanding of the condition of your home, we aim to carry out a property stock condition survey every five years.

A stock condition survey looks at the structure of your home, such as the roof and the loft (if you have one), windows and doors, as well as the main fittings such as the kitchen and bathroom.

This then enables us to decide how long these major elements are likely to last before they need replacing and helps us plan any future improvement works your home may need.

When your home is due for a stock condition survey we will contact you, giving you at least two weeks' written notice of when we are planning to visit.

The survey only takes around 20 - 25 minutes to complete and our surveyors try to keep any inconvenience to a minimum.



DIY and Home improvements

You may want to carry out improvements or alterations to your home. Before you start work, under the terms of your tenancy agreement, you need to obtain our permission.

We will not unreasonably withhold consent. However, if consent is given, you will become responsible for any subsequent repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement/alteration.

At the end of your tenancy you may claim compensation for certain eligible improvements you have carried out, provided they have the relevant consent.

Full details are provided in our Guide to undertaking your own home improvements, which can be found on our website.

How can I apply?

Please visit our website to find out more and complete our online website form: www.platformhg.com/maintaining-and-improving-your-home.

You need to provide as much information as you can about your proposed alterations. Alternatively, you can call us on **0333 200 7304**.

Once we have received your application, we will reply to you informing you of our decision, subject to any appropriate conditions. If we refuse permission, we will let you know why.



Reporting an emergency repair

An emergency repair is classed as something that is a threat to life or property and includes the following:

- A complete loss of water supply.
- Major leaks which cannot be contained.
- A blocked toilet where there is only one toilet in your home.
- A complete power failure.
- An unsecured home, for example, external doors or windows broken or damage to the actual structure of the house.
- Failed smoke or CO alarms.
- A complete loss of heating between 1 November and 1 April.

You can find out more on our website:

www.platformhg.com/emergencies.



Emergency repairs timescale.

- within 24 hours (Immediate risk to safety, security or health)

Reporting a repair

Emergency repairs can be reported 24/7 by calling 0333 200 7304.

Non-emergency, routine repairs can be reported:

Using our online website form:

www.platformhg.com/report-repair

Via the Your Platform customer portal -

<https://your.platformhg.com/register-tenancy/>

By calling 0333 200 7304



Aids and Adaptations

We provide a high-quality aids and adaptations service to help you live safely and more independently in your home.

If you or a family member has a long term illness, disability or specific need that prevents you from living independently, you can apply for an adaptation to be made to your home.

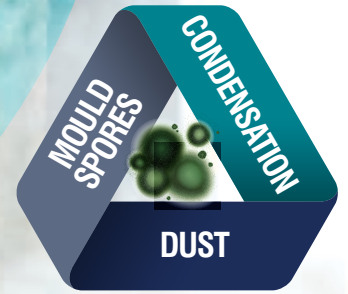
If there is a lot of work needed usually costing over £1,000 you will need to contact your local authority to request a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and an Occupational Therapist assessment. If you are unsure who your local authority is, you can check here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council.

There is usually a high demand for this service and the £1,000 limit varies by local authority, along with the average waiting time, which can be a few months or up to a year.

Further information explaining the difference between a minor and major adaptation is also available on our website:

www.platformhg.com/aids-and-adaptions. You can also contact our Customer Hub on 0333 200 7304 for further advice.

Damp and Condensation Mould in your home



What is condensation?

Condensation happens when moist air meets air or a surface that is at a lower temperature. This causes water droplets to form.

When this happens on your window, the glass mists up and drops of water run down the window. When it happens on a wall, the wall soaks up the moisture and becomes damp.

How does mould form?

Mould spores need two things to grow, water and food. Food can be any organic matter such as dust and this is why mould is often found in moist areas and why it is so important to reduce the levels of moisture in the home.

To tackle condensation mould, we need to work together. As your landlord it's our responsibility to make sure your home is free from defects. If your home has damp and mould, we will fix it if it is caused by:



A problem with the structure of your home.



Inadequate ventilation e.g. broken or missing extractor fans, windows or trickle vents that can't be opened or blocked air bricks.



Leaky internal pipe.



Broken boilers and heating systems.



Cracked walls or rotten window frames.



Leaking roofs, missing roof tiles or faulty guttering.



An inadequate level of loft insulation.



We will also replace damaged plaster, skirting boards, and flooring.



And service your heating system on an annual basis to ensure that it works efficiently.

In the same way that it's our responsibility to maintain the structure of your home, it is your responsibility to keep the amount of moisture in your home as low as possible. This can be tricky as there are a lot of things to think about such as the moisture you generate in cooking, washing, bathing and so on, and your heating, ventilation and maintenance.

Here are a few ways to reduce moisture levels:



Open windows regularly to replace moist air with dry air.



Cover pans when you're cooking.



Dry clothes outdoors, in a properly vented dryer or, if not possible, in a heated and ventilated room, such as the bathroom.



Use extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom and close the door when cooking or bathing.



Open windows when bathing and cooking during steam production.



Wipe away condensation from shower screens and bathroom walls.



Leave a 10cm gap between furniture and external walls (any gap is better than none!).



Wipe away condensation from windows each morning.



Remove as much moisture as possible from wet pets, bikes, or umbrellas before bringing them into the home.



Maintain a temperature of between 18-21 degrees within the home where possible.

How do I report damp and condensation mould in my home?

The quickest and easier way to report damp and/or condensation mould is to use our customer portal: <https://your.platformhg.com> and complete the short reporting form.

You will need to log into your account on the portal to be able to submit the form, which can be found on the 'Repairs and Maintenance' page.

If you are unable to report through the Your Platform portal, you can call our Customer Hub on **0333 200 7304**.

Find out more

You can read further guidance advice by visiting our dedicated website area www.platformhg.com/damp-and-condensation-mould.



Energy Efficient Homes

We are committed to improving the energy efficiency of our homes and have a long-term plan to move all homes to an Energy Rating Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or above by 2030.

Our Plan

We have identified over **9,000 homes** that need upgrading to EPC C and have already started to carry out retrofit works in some of these homes. In basic terms, we aim to make your home warmer and cheaper to run as well as reduce our carbon footprint.



What is Retrofit?

Retrofit is simply the process of making changes to existing buildings so that energy consumption and emissions are reduced. These changes should also provide the benefit of a healthier and more comfortable home with lower energy consumption, which also means lower bills.

By taking a fabric-first approach, which means focusing on reducing a home's heat loss, we can achieve a low carbon, sustainable home that is affordable to heat.

Improvements works typically include:

- Insulation.
- Highly efficient windows and doors.
- Ventilation.
- Heat pumps.
- Solar PV panels.

Further information is available on our website: www.platformhg.com/retrofit.



Home Detectors

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors are two of the most important items a home can have. Both alarms prevent life-threatening dangers that are often silent and appear without warning.



What you can do to keep yourself safe:

- Test your detector(s) at least once a month by pushing the device's test button.
- Do not damage, relocate, remove, or cover detectors in your home – they are there for your safety and can save you and your family's lives.
- Keep it clean – dust and dirt can build up on the surface reducing its effectiveness, dust it and wipe it with a moist cloth regularly. Please do not use cleaning goods and chemicals because they can harm the device.
- Do not cover vents, especially in windows and the room where your appliance is located, they are there to ensure effective ventilation to prevent build-up of fumes.

Home Safety

Important Safety Checks

As your landlord we have important legal duties and obligations. Most of these responsibilities involve safeguarding you, your home and family.

By law, we must carry out a range of safety inspections and it's an important condition of your tenancy that you give us access to your home to carry out this vital work.

We must ensure that all gas appliances, flues and pipework are safely maintained and checked at least once a year and carry out regular electrical inspections because electrical installations can deteriorate.

We will send you an appointment when your home is due these important safety checks. These inspections are free and once complete you can have peace of mind knowing that a competent and qualified engineer has checked that your gas and electrical installations remain in good working order and any repair work has been identified.

What if I need to rearrange my appointment?

If for any reason you need to rearrange your appointment, please call **0121 788 7884** immediately and we will arrange another appointment for you.

WIN a £100 High Street Voucher

If you let us in to carry out an inspection on the first appointment date, you will be in with a chance of winning £100 in high street vouchers. To find out more visit www.platformhg.com/electrical-safety.

What should I do if I smell gas?

- Open all your doors and windows.
- Do not turn any electrical items or switches on or off.
- If any gas appliances have been left on, turn them off.
- If the pilot light is still on and your gas appliances are all off, there may be a leak.
- Turn off the gas at the mains.

Phone the National Gas Emergency Number immediately on 0800 111 999. (This is a free phone number unless you are calling from a mobile phone).

Batteries, e-scooter and e-bike Safety

It's important when charging e-bikes and e-scooters that you do it safely to avoid the risk of a fire, so we have put together some guidance to help you charge them safely:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Always** unplug your charger when its finished charging.
- **Don't** charge e-bikes and e-scooters in bedrooms or where escape routes can be blocked - for example, hallways.
- **Don't** leave your battery charging unattended when you are out or while you are asleep.
- **Don't** cover chargers or battery packs when charging.
- **Don't** overload sockets or use inappropriate extension leads.
- **Don't** charge or store batteries in direct sunlight or in hot locations (above 45°C).
- **Don't** charge batteries close to combustible materials or hazardous substances.
- **Don't** store or charge e-scooters and e-bikes in communal areas.
- If your battery can be removed from your e-bike or e-scooter and charged separately, it should be charged on a hard flat surface where heat can disperse and in an area with good ventilation.

For more information visit: www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/e-scooters-and-e-bikes/.

Are you insured?

What would you do if you lost everything because of a fire or flood in your home?

As your landlord, it's our responsibility to insure the building in which you live, this insurance does not include your personal belongings.

It's your responsibility to arrange home contents insurance, to cover the cost of replacing your belongings in the event of accidental damage, fire, flooding or theft.

We have teamed up with **Thistle** who provide **My Home Contents** Insurance that anyone living in social and affordable housing is eligible to apply for.

Find out more on our website:

www.platformhg.com/home-contents.

Fire safety in communal areas

We take fire safety very seriously and you should too.

In communal areas, we have a legal responsibility to make sure you and your neighbours are safe from key hazards, including fire.

Our Zero Tolerance approach

Zero Tolerance

means

NO storage,
NO disposals,
NO rubbish,
NO exceptions.



We must ensure communal areas are free from flammable materials, ignition sources, obstructions, trip hazards, or any other fire risks.

If items are found in communal areas, we will try to identify who owns them and ask you to immediately remove them.

Where we are not able to identify the owner of the item or if they are not willing to remove them, in line with Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977 we will:

- **IMMEDIATELY** remove high-risk items, such as flammables or items obstructing escape routes.
- Sticker other items advising that they must be removed within 7 days.
- Record and photograph items to be removed.
- Return after 7 days to check items have been removed. If they have not been removed, then **WE WILL REMOVE** them without further notice.
- Permanently **DISPOSE** of items irrespective of their value.
- Not return disposed items.

Report it!

If you notice items causing blockages in hallways, please report them to us on **0333 200 7304** so they can be removed as soon as possible.

Communal areas fire doors

Fire doors play an essential part in reducing fire risk and saving lives.

Fire doors keep fire or smoke in the room or 'compartment' in which it started. They stop it from spreading to other areas of the building and prevent the spread of fire for a specified time.

You can help by:

- Keeping fire doors closed.
- Ensuring doors, accessories, and self-closing devices are not tampered with.
- Report any faults or damage to a fire door immediately by calling **0333 200 7304**.

