



Your guide to **Repairs & Maintenance**





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Residents should note that the information contained within this handbook is supported by the Gravesham Borough Council's policies.

Your responsibilities

Under the terms of the Housing Act 1988, unless you have recognised special needs, you are responsible for, and have to pay the cost of the following items.



Insurance

Why insurance matters:

Home and contents insurance safeguards your belongings and protects you financially when unexpected incidents occur. Without proper coverage, you'll be personally responsible for all repair costs.

Your responsibility includes damage caused by:

- Your own actions or negligence
- Family members, visitors, or pets
- Theft, flooding, or accidents
- Damage that spreads to neighbouring properties



Electrical

Your responsibilities include:

- Electrical plugs and fuses
- Changing light bulbs in pendants
- Maintaining domestic appliances (fridges, cookers)



Gas

Your gas responsibilities:

- Maintaining gas cookers and cooker connections.

Safety rules

- Never use a room with a gas boiler as a bedroom without prior permission from your neighbourhood officer.
- LPG heating is strictly prohibited inside the property under ALL circumstances.



Remember: Gas safety is not just about comfort – it's about protecting lives.



Plumbing

As a tenant, you're responsible for:

- Toilet seats
- Plugs and chains in baths, basins, and sinks
- Cleaning stains and clearing blockages within your property
- Sink and basin blockages in houses

Chargeable services

We can help with these items for a fee (unless related to drainage issues):

- Plumbing for washing machines and dishwashers
- Replacing damaged bathroom fixtures (sinks, baths, showers, toilets)



IMPORTANT!

If you smell gas or suspect a leak, call SGN immediately on 0800 111 999



Lock outs / Lock changes

Lost your keys? We understand it happens. Here's what you need to know:

- Lock changes are generally your responsibility
- If keys were stolen, we'll help (a crime reference number is required)

Charges for assistance:

Service	Cost
Emergency lock changes for lost keys	£112
Booked lock changes for lost keys	£90
Gain entry for keys inside the property	£40

All charges must be paid before we can assist you.



Carpentry & Glazing

You're responsible for keeping these items in good repair:

Doors & Fittings

- Internal doors and cupboard catches
- Curtain rails and shelving
- Security chains and doorbells

Windows & Glass

- Glass in internal doors

Surfaces & Flooring

- Internal decorations and finishes
- Surface plaster cracks (walls/ceilings)
- Floor coverings



Inside your home

It is your responsibility to keep the inside of your home in good decorative order. When you move out, you must leave it in good condition.



Outside your home

You're responsible for keeping these items in good repair:

- Garden Maintenance
- Sheds
- Garden paths
- Fencing
- Gates



Damage caused by, neglect, misuse or abuse will be charged for.

Having a clean and tidy outside space will reduce the risk of attracting pests.

Reporting a repair

You can report a repair using any of the following channels:



Online at

gravesham.gov.uk/council-tenants-leaseholders/report-repair



By Phone

01474 337777



By Email

housing.repairs.team@gravesham.gov.uk



Repairs caused by damage, neglect, misuse or abuse will be charged for.



Missed appointments & No access

When we book your repair appointment (pre-inspection, repair work, or post-inspection), we'll confirm the details immediately and send you a reminder by email or text (except for emergency callouts).

Access requirements:

- Our teams need prompt access to complete your repairs
- Ensure someone (18+ years) is home during your scheduled window
- Reschedule in advance if you can't make it



Important: Missing three consecutive appointments or refusing access will result in a £40 charge.



Out of hours

Our Out of Hours service handles genuine emergencies that occur outside normal working hours.

How to reach us:

Simply call our standard council telephone number—no special number needed!

What to expect:

- We will "make safe" any genuine emergency situations
- Full repairs will be scheduled for the next working day
- Only true emergencies will receive immediate attention



This service is for emergencies only—situations that present immediate danger to people or property.

If it is not found to be a genuine emergency, you may be charged.

Repair Timescales

We prioritise repairs based on how urgent they are.



Emergency

We will respond within 24 hours and make safe (including out of hours).

This category is used when there is an immediate danger to a person or serious risk of damage to the property. A follow up appointment will be booked if further work is required.



Right to Repair

We will respond within the legislative guidelines. This category is used when the repair being reported is listed within the guidelines. The tenant will be advised at what time and date they should ensure their property is accessible.



Routine

We will book an appointment with the tenant at a convenient time, and within 28 working days. Follow-up work may require an additional appointment.



Major

We aim to complete the work within a three-month period.

We do not charge for emergency repairs. However, if we come to your property and find that you are responsible for causing the problem, we will charge you £40 for the call out.



If your repair is not deemed to be an emergency, you will be advised to call back during normal working hours.

Example repair issue	Priority
Total loss of electric power	Emergency
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	Emergency
Total loss of water supply	Emergency
Leaking from water heating pump, tank or cistern	Emergency
Total or partial loss of gas supply	Emergency
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	Emergency
Total or partial loss of water or heating (between 31 October and 30 April)	Emergency
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack (where there is no other toilet in the home)	Emergency
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the home)	Emergency
Insecure external window, door or lock	Emergency
Partial loss of electrical power	Right to Repair
Partial loss of water supply	Right to Repair
Total or partial loss of space or water heating (between 1 May and 1 November)	Right to Repair
Blocked sink, bath or basin	Right to Repair
Tap which cannot be turned	Right to Repair
Leaking roof	Right to Repair
Door entry phone not working	Right to Repair

Our Responsibilities



Right to Repair

The Right to Repair scheme ensures urgent small repairs which might affect your health, safety, or security are completed promptly.



These repairs are legally required within specific timeframes



Only applies to council-responsible repairs costing under £250



Covers repairs that impact your wellbeing and security



The scheme doesn't cover damage caused by you, household members, or visitors that violates your tenancy agreement.



Building structure

We are responsible for maintaining the structure of the building. This includes:

- Roof and roof tiles
- Boundary walls
- Door entry systems
- Lifts



Water supply

We are responsible for the water supply distribution pipe work from the water company main supply pipe to the internal property supply points which you connect to appliances and fittings that use water inside your home.



Gas supply

We are responsible for the gas supply pipe from the gas meter to the appliances it serves.

We are NOT responsible for:

- ⊗ Faults on cookers or cooker connections
- ⊗ The failure of gas companies to supply gas



Electricity supply

We are responsible for the electricity supply cable between the meter and the electrical sockets in your home.

We are NOT responsible for:

- ⊗ Faults on cookers or cooker connections (excluding the control unit)
- ⊗ Faults on other domestic electrical appliances, such as kettles and fridges
- ⊗ The failure of electricity companies to supply electricity or maintain their equipment



Heating & Water

We repair and maintain appliances we have installed to provide heat and hot water.

We carry out an annual gas safety inspection of all gas heating and hot water installations and appliances.

- ✓ Total or partial loss of heating (31 Oct – 30 Apr) attended as a 24hr emergency response
- ✓ Total or partial loss of heating (1 May – 1 Nov) attended as a three-day response

IMPORTANT!
Please note we
are not
responsible for
your own
appliances.

Pest control



Reporting pests

Report pest issues to the Council immediately to allow us to investigate using professional pest control contractors. If we determine you're responsible, we'll provide guidance on addressing the problem.

Prevention is key

- Maintain your property and garden to discourage pests
- Use recycling bins correctly
- Don't leave rubbish bags in gardens or communal areas
- Prevent repeat infestations that could affect neighbouring properties

Access requirements

We need access to treat pest issues that fall under our responsibility. Refusing access in serious cases affecting health may result in legal action, including injunctions to force entry.

Our responsibility

Gravesham Council will assist with certain pest issues—report these the same way you would any repair (see page 5 Reporting a Repair).



Early reporting prevents small pest problems from becoming serious infestations that are more difficult and costly to treat.

Alterations



Making changes

As a secure tenant, you have rights to make certain improvements to your property, but you must obtain written consent from the council first.

What's included

- New kitchens
- New bathrooms
- Internal improvements

What's excluded

- External decoration
- Alterations to installations, fixtures, and fittings

Getting approval

We won't unreasonably withhold consent, but work must meet appropriate standards.



You will be responsible for maintaining any fixtures / fittings you have installed. The council will not maintain items left by previous tenants and may remove them as an alternative to repairs unless we have agreed responsibility to do so.



Right to Buy



Repairs during application

Once you've submitted a Right to Buy application, the council's repair obligations change significantly.

What we will provide:

- Emergency repairs
- Urgent works
- Repairs required by law

Legal repair obligations:

- Structure and exterior repairs
- Landlord's heating and hot water appliances
- Pipes and wiring within the property
- Sanitary ware



Other non-essential repairs and improvements will not be carried out during the Right to Buy application process.



Planning ahead

Consider this limited maintenance period when timing your Right to Buy application, especially if you're aware of non-urgent issues that may need attention.



Gravesham
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