



Responsive Repairs and Voids Policy

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Responsive Repairs and Voids Policy



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1.0	CEC 24/01/2023	16/01/2023	16/01/2023	New Policy	Edith Shah
1.1	Julie Wittich	12/12/2023	12/12/2024	Annual review - updated template/approval route/change of owner & update to S2 References & S13 Monitoring ownership	Edith Shah/Fi Whitworth
1.2	CEC 16/07/2024	25/06/2024	25/06/2027	New template/extended review cycle to 3 yr/Updated to include damp and mould and amend void categories, author updated	Louise Barks

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to outline how we will provide a responsive repairs and voids service to our customers to ensure we meet our obligations as a landlord and our customers' expectations, while achieving value for money, and ensuring we continuously improve.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline how we will provide a responsive repairs and voids service to our customers to ensure we meet our obligations as a landlord and our customers' expectations, while achieving value for money, and ensuring we continuously improve the service provided to all our customers.

2. Scope

This policy is to define the key aspects of the responsive repairs and voids journey that we will follow to ensure that we provide a responsive and customer focused service for our customers.

Responsive repairs will be dealt with in accordance with our defined process, ensuring that we prioritise emergency repairs and those that may affect our customers' living conditions but also completing all repairs within a reasonable and acceptable timescale.

Void works will be carried out quickly and efficiently to ensure that empty homes can be brought back to a lettable standard and re-let quickly to support customers who need our homes. We will ensure that the standard of our homes when re-let is satisfactory for new customers and our re-letting timescales are kept to a minimum to prevent void rent loss and prolonged waiting times for new customers to be able to move into their new home.

3. References

- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Construction Act 1996
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations Act 1998
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Health & Safety at work Act 1974
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Fitness for Human Habitation act 2018
- Landlord and tenant act 1985
- Regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005
- Housing health and Safety rating system 2004
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Ombudsman spotlight report on damp and mould October 2021

Accent Policies and Procedures can be found in the [Corporate Library](#).

- Customer and Building Safety Policy
- Complaints and Compensation Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Damp and Mould procedure
- Empty Homes Void Procedure

4. Our responsibilities

Most repairs to the structure of the home are Accent's responsibility.

In addition, we will repair:

- ♦ Essential services, such as central heating and plumbing
- ♦ Damage or wear and tear in communal areas including replacement of light bulbs

Customers responsibilities:

All internal decoration and deliberate or accidental damage caused by a resident or caused by others.

A full list of tenant responsibilities can be found on our website.

5. Raising the repair

Accent has a dedicated Technical Hub ensuring that customers are able to report repairs to a dedicated team of repairs specialists. We will ensure customers are able to report a repair 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year using one of our contact channels:

- MyAccount
- Email
- Phone

It is the resident's responsibility to report any disrepair to Accent promptly. We will then make arrangements for the repairs for which we are responsible to be carried out.

Accent set target times dependent on the type of repair required. Performance in relation to meeting target times and the standard of repairs workmanship is subject to on-going monitoring.

6. Diagnosing the repair

We will have the tools in place to ensure that, no matter how customers contact us, we get a good diagnosis to our contractor so they can send the right tradesperson, with the right materials – so the repair is carried out as smoothly as possible, at the first opportunity. This will be via:

- Repairs trained staff in our Technical hub
- Use of a diagnostic tool
- for the use of photographs/videos

7. Making appointments

- We will make an appointment with based on the urgency of the work required and a customer's personal needs and circumstances.
- We will offer a choice of either a morning or afternoon appointment.
- We will, where possible, confirm the appointment on the day it is made, and we will send reminders the day before we are due to carry out the work.

- We will, where possible, advise that we are on our way, and the name of the operative who is attending.
- We will, where possible, aim to keep our initial appointment but will advise our customers if that is not possible.

Pre-repair inspections

In some instances, normally when there is a difficulty in determining the cause of a disrepair, we will arrange a surveyor visit to establish what work is required.

8. Repairs timescales: What you can expect

Emergency Repairs: Where repairs which are dangerous or pose an immediate risk to health and/or safety, we will deem it to be an emergency. We will attend to emergencies within 4 hours to make safe in the first instance.

Emergency repairs must be resolved within 24 hours of being attended by a member of the repairs team unless exceptional circumstances prevent this.

Routine repairs: where the repairs required do not pose an immediate risk to customers or the property, and/or possessions the repair will be carried out within 28 days.

9. Damp and Mould

Where damp and mould is reported we will understand the issue by diagnosis through discussion with our customer and through photographs if available. If not, we will inspect the property to understand the repair required.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any report of damp and mould and we will ensure that all reports are acted upon. We will provide damp and mould kits to customers who are able to support cleaning of damp /condensation. We will ask a contractor to attend if customers are not able to support themselves.

Our repairs timescales will be as set out above, but Accent understands the importance of supporting customers with damp and mould issues and these repairs will be fast-tracked wherever possible.

Damp and mould repairs will be followed up in line with our procedure to ensure that our actions have remedied the issue for customers long-term.

10. Resident's right to repair

Accent is committed to arranging repairs for which it is responsible, in accordance with target times. However, if Accent has, without good reason, failed to carry out a repair within twenty-eight days of receiving a written report from the resident, the resident has the right to arrange for the repair to be carried out.

This right may only be exercised in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State under Section 96 of the Housing Act 1985. The association will refund the cost of repairs carried out in accordance with these regulations.

11. Keeping you informed

We will keep customers informed every step of the way, from when a repair is reported, until the work is completed as set out below: Initial appointment notifications

- Appointment reminders
- On way notifications
- Appointment changes
- Cancellation notifications

12. Void Management

The void specification (Empty Homes – Void Procedure) provides guidance to the Void Contractor on the standards expected when an empty home is handed back and ready to let.

Customer satisfaction will be monitored by using the New Tenant Survey on Rant and Rave, and any issues will be addressed through Accent's complaints procedure.

Where reference is made to "the Contractor," this refers to the party who will lead the refurbishment works, in either of the respective procurement lots.

Void Timescales

Unless otherwise agreed, void works will be issued and returned in accordance with the following timelines (working days):

- a) Value up to £750.99 (3 working days)
- b) Value between £751 and £3199.99 (5 working days)
- c) Value between £3200 and £5999.99 (10 working days)
- d) Over £6000 (20 working days)
- e) LTV – As defined by Accent

If component replacement is not required to enable a new tenant to move in, then where possible, we will complete major component replacements once the new customer has moved in so they can choose their new kitchen or bathroom in the normal way. The planned works team would arrange for this work to be done as part of their project portfolio.

Where asbestos has been identified in a property and its removal requires notification to the HSE, a longer priority; considered reasonable; will be agreed between the Parties and may exceed 28 days.

13. Contractor selection/performance monitoring

Accent will tender all repairs and maintenance contracts in accordance with Public Contract Regulations.

We will always consider quality and cost as part of any tender exercise and the weighting will be adjusted as appropriate for each service.

We will consult and involve our customers during major procurement initiatives to ensure their views are taken into account before any new contracts are entered into.

14. Regulatory and Legal consideration

As landlord Accent is responsible for: -

- The structure of the property
- Maintenance of essential services
- Heating and hot water systems (including gas safety checks)
- Property safety and fitness
- Health and Safety issues (see below)
- Right to repair requirements

Accent will comply with all legal, statutory and regulatory requirements in relation to repairs.

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), Housing Health and Safety Ratings Systems (HHSRS)
Details of these can be found through this link:

[Regulatory standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards-for-social-housing)

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (section 11)

15. Monitoring, reviews and evaluation

The delivery of the policy objectives will be monitored through the Director of Assets and Compliance and the Director of Housing Services. Through our contractors, we will request customer feedback on completion of every repair and Accent's Maintenance team will aim to inspect 10% of all completed repairs.

The delivery of damp and mould repairs will be monitored separately including follow up calls to ensure our repairs are successful for our customers.

We will report all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to Executive Leadership Team on a regular basis and to the Board twice a year.