

# Repairs and maintenance

**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**



**Phone**

020 7364 5015



**Email**

leasehold@  
towerhamletshomes.org.uk



**Website**

[www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk](http://www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

**For Leaseholders**

## If you need help, here's how to get in touch

### Contact us



#### Website

[www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk](http://www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

Find answers to your questions, learn about our services, find out what we can do for you and view all of our leaflets.



#### Phone

020 7364 5015

#### Text-phone

Call us with the help of BT Text Relay  
18001 020 7364 5015



#### Email

#### For general enquiries

[contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

#### For rents

[rents@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:rents@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

#### For service charges

[leasehold@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:leasehold@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)



#### Write to us

PO Box 66355  
London E14 1GU

Every care has been taken to make sure that information contained in this leaflet is correct as at May 2010.

Tower Hamlets Homes manages homes and estates owned by Tower Hamlets Council.

Tower Hamlets Homes is a trading name of Tower Hamlets Homes Limited. Registered in England and Wales.

### Repairs Helpline

For when you need to report a communal repair or ask us about the progress of a repair that has been already reported. Someone is available 24 hours, every day.



#### Phone

0800 376 1637  
(free from landlines)  
or 020 7364 7070

#### Bengali/Sylheti

call between 9am and 5pm  
on 0800 376 1638 free from  
landlines or 020 7364 5151

আপনি যদি বাংলাভাষায় কোন মেরামতের কথা  
রিপোর্ট করতে চান তবে সকাল ৯টা থেকে বিকাল  
৫টার মধ্যে ০৮০০ ৩৭৬ ১৬৩৮ নম্বরে যা  
ল্যান্ডলাইন থেকে ফ্রি বা ০২০ ৭৩৬৪ ৫১৫১  
নম্বরে ফোন করুন।



#### Email

[repairs@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:repairs@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)  
(not for emergency repairs)

### Anti-social behaviour

For when you need help or advice on anti-social behaviour



#### Phone

0800 917 5918  
(free from landlines)

### Your local Housing Office

#### 1 Rushmead

Bethnal Green  
London, E2 6NE

#### Open

— 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday  
(except the last Wednesday  
of every month 10am to 5pm)  
— 9am to 1pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

#### Cheviot House

227-233 Commercial Road  
London, E1 2BU

#### Open

— 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday  
(except the last Wednesday  
of every month 10am to 5pm)  
— 9am to 1pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

#### 542 Roman Road

London, E3 5ES

#### Open

— 9am to 7pm Monday  
— 9am to 5pm Tuesday to Friday  
— 9am to 1pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

In partnership  
with:



TOWER HAMLETS



Resident  
approved

**B**

---

## Refurbishments and repairs for leaseholders



As a leaseholder you are responsible for repairing and maintaining parts of your home. Your lease sets out exactly what you are responsible for repairing and maintaining.

In general, you're responsible for maintaining the interior of your property, while Tower Hamlets Homes is responsible for the structure and common parts of your block and neighbourhood.

---

**This leaflet tells you about what repairs you are responsible for as a leaseholder, and what is our responsibility. It also tells you about larger one-off refurbishment projects and how we consult with you when we carry out works above a certain value.**



## Your repair – who is responsible?

### In your block

Repair	You	Us
Gas, electricity and water mains, tanks, drains, pipes, gutters, rain water pipes, waste water and sewage ducts shared with other homes in the block.		✓
The main timbers and joists of the building or any of the walls or partitions (internal and external).		✓
Lighting and painting of internal and external parts to your block.		✓
Roof and lifts of your block.		✓
Communal TV aerials (but not aerial sockets).		✓
Communal heating systems (but not radiators or radiator valves in your home).		✓
Door entry system (but not handsets in your home).		✓
Fire-fighting equipment.		✓
Internal plastered coverings and plasterwork of the walls and ceilings which form your home's boundaries		✓
All window and door glass in your home.	✓	
All doors and door frames.	✓	
Drains, pipes, wires and cables, conduits that are laid in any part of the building and which serve your home exclusively.	✓	

Repair	You	Us
All floor surfaces in your home.	✓	
Boundary walls and fences of your garden.	✓	
Fixtures and fittings, including any sanitary ware, e.g. cisterns and tanks, as well as sewers, drains, pipes, cables, wires (but not those lying above the ceiling or below the floor), ducts and refuse chutes which are in your home and serve only your home.	✓	
Radiator and radiator valves and individual boiler systems in your home.	✓	
All health and safety-related works to gas and electricity in your home.	✓	
Stopcocks and surrounding pipe-work within the flat (you must ask permission from us to turn water off to the block and pay for any damage).	✓	

## Outside your block

Repair	You	Us
Lighting of roads, communal gardens and other external parts.		✓
Store sheds, laundry areas, garages or other external buildings.		✓
Communal boundary walls, fences, and gates.		✓
Private roads, paths and parking areas.		✓

## Reporting a repair

### Repairs Tower Hamlets Homes is responsible for

If you need to report a repair and it is our responsibility to carry it out, then contact our 24 hour Repairs Helpline.

### Repairs YOU are responsible for

For repairs that are your responsibility (e.g. inside your home) you will need to arrange for a qualified tradesperson to carry out the repair.

If you ask us to carry out a repair you are responsible for, we may carry out the work, but we will charge you for it (charges will include administration fees and VAT).

When we carry out a repair you are responsible for, we will:

- Write to you with an estimate of the cost of the repair before we carry out any work. For emergencies, we will tell you the cost over the phone and confirm in writing as soon as possible.
- Ask you if you want to go ahead with the repair. If you agree, we can arrange an appointment for the work to be carried out.
- Send you an invoice setting out the cost of the work. This has a payment slip that you can use to pay for the repair at any bank or post office.


### Emergency repairs

We will carry out emergency repairs to your property when:

- Not making it safe might put you or your neighbours in danger.
- You are elderly or vulnerable .
- Making it safe is part of a wider emergency for the block or a number of homes.
- Hazardous waste or a back surge of dirty water poses a health hazard to you or your neighbours.
- Problems with the communal heating system outside your property require remedial work inside your property.

We will only make it safe in dangerous situations. You will have to carry out any follow-up works yourself. You should, in these circumstances, call out your own contractors to do this. When we do carry out any follow-up work, we will charge you for it.


### Repairs Helpline – 24 hours

 **Phone**  
020 7364 7070 or  
0800 376 1637  
(free from landlines)

**Bengali/Sylheti**  
020 7364 5151 or  
0800 376 1638  
(free from landlines)

**Textphone**  
Call us with the help  
of BT Text Relay  
18001 020 7364 7070

 **Email**  
repairs@  
towerhamletshomes.org.uk  
(non-emergency repairs only)

 **Website**  
www.towerhamletshomes.  
org.uk



**Emergency  
repair?**

**We promise  
to respond  
within 24  
hours**

---

## Repairs we are responsible for – when we'll fix it

We have a repairs service dedicated to fixing repairs we are responsible for.

To make sure the most important repairs get carried out first we have given each type of repair a priority status:

### **Emergency repairs**

Emergency repairs are those that, if not dealt with quickly could cause injury, further damage or major inconvenience. Such as: no cold water, total loss of electricity, door entry system preventing entry/exit, no heating or hot water (15 September to 31 May), or removal of offensive and racist graffiti.

We provide a 'make safe' service for emergencies reported out of hours and we are only able to respond where the emergency poses genuine danger to residents or property. This includes flooding or where your home is insecure. All follow up repairs will usually be completed the next working day. For some emergency repairs we may respond within 2 hours. We will let you know when this is the case.

Maximum response time  
24 hours

### **Urgent repair**

Includes partial loss of electricity or water or no heating or hot water (1 June to 14 September).

Maximum response time  
3 working days

### **Priority repair**

Includes leaking roofs or an individual door entry phone not working.

Maximum response time  
7 working days

### **Normal repair**

Includes repairs to blocked or leaking gutters and removal of non-offensive graffiti. Most repairs (70%) that we need to fix fall into this category.

Maximum response time  
20 working days

## F

### Major works – What are they?

Major works are usually large 'one-off' projects designed to prolong and improve the life of your building. Examples of major works include the replacement of old windows, a leaking roof or a broken lift.

Unlike minor repairs, major works are not covered in your annual service charge and cost more than £250 per leaseholder - the amount under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 that tells us we must formally consult with you if we wish to charge you more than this amount. The way in which we have to consult with you is also set out in the Act and is referred to as a Section 20 Consultation.

As with your service charge, major works are payable as per the terms of your lease.

We try to set out all the major works we are doing to our blocks and estates in our 5 year plan so that leaseholders can prepare themselves for the works in advance. The decision to carry out major works is based on our stock condition survey which tells us the quality of the block and if it has any health and safety issues. It is also dependent upon the amount of funding available each year.

## G

### How is my contribution calculated?

#### For most major works

To ensure leaseholders pay only a fair share of the actual cost of major works, we work out your individual contribution based on the gross rateable value (GRV) of your property, taking into account its size and value. This is set out in your lease.

For example, if there are 10 properties in your block with an identical GRV of £330 and the cost of a new roof on your block is £147,200, the calculation would be:

$$10 \text{ properties} \times 330 \\ = \text{£}3,300 \text{ (block GRV)}$$

$$\text{£}147,200 \text{ (cost of new roof on your block)} \\ \div \text{£}3,300 \text{ (block GRV)} \\ \times 330 \text{ (property GRV)} \\ = \text{£}1,472$$

This is only an example, the amount you will have to pay towards a repair or improvement depends on:

- The cost of the works.
- The size of your block.
- The size of your home.

Some major works are not calculated by GRV. If this applies to you we will let you know.



Above  
Before and after major works  
on the Martineau Estate

## H

### How to pay?

We appreciate that it is not always easy to pay for major works in one go, so we have several ways that you can pay.

#### **One-off payment**

Make a one-off lump sum payment.

#### **Interest-free payments over 12, 24 or 36 months**

You can pay in monthly interest-free instalments. If the charge is under £1,000, you can pay over 12 months. If the charge is more than £1,000 you can pay over 24 months. If you are struggling to pay we can extend your payment period by 12 months. Please contact us for more details.

#### **Extended payment**

If you are not able to pay the full charge within the agreed period, you can ask us to extend your payments beyond the 12, 24 or 36 months. However, this will incur interest set at a local rate on the amount of the original bill and will only be given to a leaseholder in extreme hardship. Please contact us for more details.

## I

### What to do if you are finding it difficult to pay for major works

If you are having difficulty paying your contribution to the major works, let us know straight away to see how we can help. We offer a free in-house debt advice service run by qualified debt advisers. Free debt advice is also available from the National Debt Line.

#### **Capping schemes**

For certain leaseholders we are able to limit major works recharges for both government-funded and conventionally funded schemes at £10,000. We will let you know which major works qualify for this during the Section 20 consultation.

#### **Service charge loan**

We can provide a service charge loan to help people pay for large bills. You will have to meet certain criteria to be eligible.

#### **Voluntary charge**

If you are unable to pay for major works and are not eligible for any of the other methods of payment assistance, you may be eligible to have a voluntary charge put on your property. This means that the outstanding debt is secured against the value of your property. Contact us for more details.

#### **HouseProud Scheme**

The HouseProud Scheme was formed by a consortium of London boroughs to help owner-occupiers who are over 60 or disabled and are in financial hardship, to bring their homes up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard. Contact us for more details.

#### **National Debt Line**



**Phone**  
0808 808 4000



**Website**  
[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

# J

## Major works on your Section 125 notice

A Section 125 notice is issued when a property is purchased under the Right to Buy Scheme and details any upcoming major works expected to occur within five years of the date of the notice.

Major works listed on your s125 notice will be charged at the amount shown on your s125 notice plus an inflation allowance.

If we carry out major works that are not in the s125 notice within the five year period the maximum you will pay is the amount on your s125.

After the five year period you will be charged for all major works as per normal.



## K

### Major works consultation – Section 20

A Section 20 consultation is when we are required by law to talk with you about major works taking place on your block. A Section 20 notice contains information about what we plan to do and also give you the opportunity to provide your view and feedback on the proposed works.

## L

### How we will consult with you

Below is a guide to how we do Section 20 consultations. If you would like more detailed information on how we will consult you please contact us.

#### **When we carry out repairs and maintenance which will cost you more than £250.**

When we need to carry out work to your block, we will send you a Notice of Intention. This sets out the works we intend to carry out, why they are necessary, and provides a list of approved contractors who we will invite to tender for the work. It will also include a comments form for you to let us have any feedback or questions about the proposed works, and to nominate a contractor to tender for the works.

After 30 days and once we have considered your feedback we will tender the works. Once we get back the quotes from the companies we will send you a Notice of Estimates which will list the tenders we received as well as details of the two lowest tenders. The Notice will also include details of your estimated charge.

We will listen to what you say and carefully consider any comments in response to both the Notice of Intention and the Notice of Estimates.

#### **When we enter into long term agreements (longer than 12 months) which will cost you more than £100 a year.**

Examples of these long-term agreements would be contracts to maintain our door entry systems or lifts. We also enter into long term agreements with contractors to carry out maintenance of our buildings, such as roofing or concrete repairs.

When we want to enter into a long term agreement we will send you a Notice of Intention. This will advise you what the agreement is for and why we want to enter it. We will also invite you to make comments, and to nominate a contractor to tender for the work. You will have 30 days to respond to the Notice.

The regulations are slightly different for very large schemes which come under European procurement rules. We will advise you about this in the Notice of Intention.

We will listen to what you say and carefully consider any written comments we receive in the 30-day period. We will then ask contractors to submit their proposals for the work.

---

When we have received proposals from contractors we will send you a Notice of Proposals. This will include proposals from at least two providers. We will invite you to inspect the proposals and make comments within 30 days.

We will listen to what you say and carefully consider any comments in response to both the Notice of Intention and the Notice of Proposals. We will then make a decision on the best contractor for the work based on their proposal, the quote for the work and your comments. If we choose the contractor that did not submit the lowest estimate, we will let you know and tell you why we came to the decision we did.

For more details on how we consult with you when we enter into long term agreements contact us.

**When we carry out work under the long-term agreements which will cost you more than £250.**

When we have a long term agreement in place we will carry out day-to-day work under the agreement, for example communal repairs or lift maintenance. However, when we need to do work under the agreement that will cost you more than £250, you will have the opportunity to comment on the work, but not on the choice of contractor – because there will already be a contractor in place.

Before carrying out the work we will issue you with a Notice of Intention. This sets out the work we intend to carry out, why the work is necessary, and how much we expect it to cost. You will have 30 days to inspect the notice and make comments.

We will listen to what you say and carefully consider any comments in response to the Notice of Intention.

**M**

---

## **If we don't consult with you**

If we do not consult with you as is set out under Section 20, we are limited to recharging you £250. If the works were carried out under a long-term agreement that we did not consult you on, then we are limited to recharging you £100.

We will always do our utmost to comply with the legislation. Where we cannot (because of emergency works), we will seek dispensation from the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal or cap your charge at the appropriate level.

We will always try to keep you informed of what is going on.

**N**

---

## **If you disagree with the major works planned**

We value your feedback and listen to all your views on planned major works. When a significant number of leaseholders raise serious objections to planned major works, and the Consultation Manager considers the issues to be complex and require further exploration, we will set up a Due Regard Panel.

The panel will be made up of Tower Hamlets Homes staff and leaseholder representatives. They will examine the concerns of residents as well as relevant technical advice. They will then decide if the works go ahead as planned or go ahead with changes or we stop them completely.



## Want to know more?

Here's how to find out more about the services we provide and what we can offer you.



### **Talk to your housing advisers**

They can answer most of your questions or put you in touch with people who can.



### **Pick up our range of leaflets and publications**

They give you more information on all of our services. You can find these in our reception areas, on our website or by contacting a housing adviser.



### **Read our service standards**

They set out what we do so you know what to expect. We have a service standard for each of the services we provide. These are available on our website and in our offices, or you can ask a member of staff for more information.



### **Visit our website**

You can find lots of information about what we do, how we are performing, and our latest news and information. Also available online are our leaflets and publications as well as local information such as neighbourhood inspection timetables.



### **Check out your newsletters**

They contain news and information about our service and are delivered straight to your door.



### **Look at your local noticeboard**

It has information about your Neighbourhood Housing Team, neighbourhood inspection timetables and useful information for where you live.

## Translations

This leaflet tells you more about what repairs you are responsible for as a leaseholder, and what is our responsibility. It also tells you about larger one off refurbishment projects and how we must consult with you when we carry out works above a certain value.

If you need help to understand it or if you have any questions, please contact us by phone or email or visit one of our offices. We can arrange alternative formats including large print, and provide written information in your own language. We can also offer a meeting with a member of staff and an interpreter.

### Bengali

নীজহোল্ডার হিসেবে কোন্ কোন্ মেরামতের জন্য আপনারা দায়ী এবং আমাদের দায়িত্ব কি, এই প্রচারপত্র আপনাদের সেটা বলছে। এটা আপনাদের একবারের বড় ধরনের রিফারবিশমেন্ট প্রজেক্ট বা সংস্কার প্রকল্প সম্পর্কে বলছে এবং আমরা যদি নির্দিষ্ট মূল্যের বেশী মূল্যের কোন কাজ করি, তাহলে কিভাবে আপনাদের সাথে আমাদের শলা-পরামর্শ করা উচিত, এটা সে সম্পর্কেও বলছে - সেকশন ২০ কনসালটেশন। আপনাদের যদি এটা বোঝার ব্যাপারে সাহায্য দরকার হয় অথবা আপনারা কোন কিছু জানতে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে টেলিফোন বা ইমেইলে যোগাযোগ করুন কিংবা আমাদের কোন একটি অফিসে এসে দেখা করুন। আমরা আমাদের স্টাফদের কারো সাথে একজন ইন্টারপ্রিটারসহ আপনার একটা বৈঠকের আয়োজন করতে পারি অথবা আপনার নিজের অফিসে লিখিত তথ্য দিতে পারি।

### Somali

Qoraalkan waxa uu macluumaad kaa siinayaa nooca dayactirrada aad mas'uulka ka tahay markii aad ugu jirtid kirada muddada' dheer iyo mas'uuliyadda annaga na saaran. Waxa uu macluumaad kaa siinayaa mashaariicda waaweyn ee hagaajinta ee la sameeyo markii muddo la joogaba iyo sida ay tahay inaan kuula tashanno markii aan qabanayno shaqo qiime sare oo gaar ah leh – Qaybta 20aad wadatashiyada. Haddii aa du baahan tahay in lagaa caawiyo fahamka qoraalka ama aad su'aalo qabtid, fadlan

### Translations



**Phone**  
020 7364 5015



**Email**  
contactus@  
towerhamletshomes.org.uk