



# Repairs and Maintenance Policy

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<b>Policy developed by</b>	Head of Repairs and Maintenance
<b>Consultations</b>	Tenant Repair Group, Responsive Maintenance Group, Employees, Senior Managers, Executive Management Group
<b>Associated documents</b>	Tenants handbook, Housing Health and Safety Rating System' Construction Design and Management 2015 (CDM) and Contractor Assurance policy, Asset Management Strategy, Property Investment Works policy, Connexus Compensation Policy, Gas and Heating Policy, Electrical Test and Inspection Policy, , Complaints Policy, Fire Safety Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Lift Management Policy, Water Hygiene Policy, Code of conduct for visiting or working in customers homes, Reasonable Adjustment Policy

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# Introduction

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The delivery of a quality repair and maintenance service is of high importance to Connexus and is one of the most important services offered to customers. It is a key service that customers refer to when forming a view of the overall services provided by Connexus as their landlord. It is also a key component of our overall Homes Strategy, ensuring that the life of individual building components is maximised and value for money is optimised.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the measures Connexus has in place to ensure it maintains the properties it owns and manages and also that Connexus ensures compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Home Standard.

## 2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This policy sets out Connexus responsibilities and commitment to providing homes that are safe and well maintained.
- 2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Tenancy Agreement, which sets out the responsibility of Connexus and its customers in maintaining and looking after our properties and homes. Further guidance is also available on our website [www.connexus-group.co.uk](http://www.connexus-group.co.uk)
- 2.3 This policy should also be read in conjunction with the code of conduct for visiting or working in customers homes.

## 3. Policy Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to properties owned and/ or managed by Connexus where there is a repair obligation. It applies to all Connexus colleagues, contractors and customers affected by repairs and maintenance activities including cyclical maintenance but excluding home improvements.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 Responsive Repairs Service – Where Connexus endeavour to attend to a repair within a guided number of working days. We will endeavour to appoint all repairs at point of call, except where a specialist contractor may be required.

Emergency and out of hours	Respond within 4 hours to make safe.
Urgent	Completed with 1-5 working days.

Routine	Complete within 1 -20 working days.
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- 4.2 Cyclical Maintenance – periodic safety checks such as gas servicing and electrical checks, also external maintenance such as painting (Periodic meaning, weekly, monthly, 6 monthly, annual, 5 yearly and so on)
- 4.3 Out of Hours Service – Connexus response to customers with urgent repairs that cannot wait until the following day to be made safe completed outside of standard working hours.
- 4.4 Planned Work – where we replace or renew different parts of the home when they reach the end of their serviceable life.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Director of Property and Senior Managers will oversee the implementation of this policy in their respective business areas, through regular reporting.
- 5.2 All Connexus colleagues and contractors are required to adhere to this policy.

## 6. Connexus Responsibilities

- 6.1 We will provide a response repairs service that is flexible, cost effective and which maintains consistently high levels of customer satisfaction.
- 6.2 We will provide an out of hours service for customers with emergency repairs that cannot wait until the next working day. Misuse of this service will result in a recharge repair being raised.
- 6.3 We will work with customers, and take account of individual needs and preferences, to provide a range of options which ensure that all customers have access to the repairs service, in line with the reasonable adjustment policy.
- 6.4 We will ensure that the safety and wellbeing of customers, colleagues and contractors comes first and we will take whatever immediate action is required in a situation where a risk to life is identified.
- 6.5 We aim to carry out repairs at the time agreed with the customer, to a good standard of workmanship and in a safe manner.
- 6.7 We will carry out essential planned work so that homes are structurally sound and weather tight with hot water and heating. Investment in our properties will be made with consideration to cost effectiveness and value for money. Refer to our standards on investment works which sit outside this policy
- 6.8 We will repair and maintain communal areas and services provided for common use by customers, utilising service charges and depreciation funds as agreed and appropriate.

- 6.9 Repairs that are due on new build properties within the first 12 months of handover will ordinarily be dealt with by the developer.
- 6.10 We will seek to adopt operational procedures that respect the environment and use methods that improve our environmental sustainability performance.
- 6.11 We will engage with our customers in a participative and empowering manner so that they have the opportunity to contribute and influence the future direction of the repairs and maintenance service.

## 7. Customer Responsibilities

- 7.1 We require customers to report any repairs, faults or damage to us as soon as possible.
- 7.2 We expect properties to be kept in a good and clean condition in line with tenancy agreement, lease or license.
- 7.3 Customers are required to provide access for essential health and safety cyclical checks, so that we can keep homes safe and comply with our statutory duties. If access is not provided, formal legal proceedings will be taken and the tenancy may be at risk.
- 7.4 Customers should always obtain written permission prior to carrying out any work or permanent improvement to a property.
- 7.5 Customers should ensure that they have adequate insurance to cover all of their responsibilities and belongings in the event of damage being caused to their own, or Connexus owned, assets or equipment.
- 7.6 If a repair is the result of action by either a customer or a third party visiting a property, the customer will be charged before Connexus carries out the repair. If the damage poses a health and safety risk to the customer, the responsible officer may agree to add the charge to their account, subject to a payment plan being agreed. This is not limited to, but includes, accidental or deliberate damage, neglect or faulty appliances. In the event of damage caused by a criminal accident, the customer should report the incident to their local policing team, obtain an incident number and inform the Connexus housing team. Repairs relating to damage created by domestic abuse will be dealt with in line with the guidance in the Domestic Abuse Act 2023.
- 7.7 If customers do not comply with their tenancy conditions, subject to meeting our legal responsibilities as their landlord, we may introduce measures to the service that manage our approach.

## 8. Statutory Duties

8.1 This Policy will operate within all prevailing legal and regulatory standards.

## 9. Measurement

9.1 To ensure that the repairs and maintenance service continues to reach consistently high service standards Connexus will:

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

- Set challenging and realistic performance targets.
- Regular review by the Customer Repair Group
- Learning Outcomes from customer feedback, including complaints and dissatisfaction
- Performance will be benchmarked on an annual basis alongside other organisations in the sector

### **Reporting**

- Report performance monthly to Executive Management Team (EMT),
- Report Quarterly to Customer Services Committee and Board.
- Bimonthly to the Customer Repair Group

Appendix 1 – Connexus, Customer and Leaseholder Repair Responsibilities.

Appendix 2 – Connexus Fencing Standard

Appendix 3 – Connexus Repair Timescales

## Repairs Responsibilities

Once you're living in your home, this is what the Connexus will be responsible for and what you will be responsible for.

<b>Inside Your Home</b>			
<b>Repairs Service</b>	<b>Connexus Responsibility</b>	<b>Customer Responsibility</b>	<b>Leaseholder Responsibility</b>
Major Plasterwork	√		√
Plaster damage caused while decorating		√	√
Fill minor plaster cracks in walls		√	√
Internal decoration		√	√
Interior walls and floors	√		√
Loose floor covering and fitted carpets - unless you have been moved by Connexus		√	√
Skirting boards	√		√
Internal Doorstops where fitted by Connexus	√		√
Interior doors and frames including door furniture (not including painting and decorating)	√		√
Fire door removal to allow access for furniture – Chargeable repair to the customer	√		√
Altering doors for carpets including new builds		√	√
Chimneys, Stacks, Flues, Chimney Sweeping	√		√
Secondary Heating – Electric Fire Suite	√		√
Secondary Heating – Gas and Solid Fuel	√		√
Waste Pipes	√		√
Taps	√		√
Cleaning Shower heads		√	√
Renew plug and chain to bath and sink plugs (except for pop up plugs)		√	√
Pop up sink plugs	√		√
Baths basins and toilets	√		√
Toilet Seats		√	√
Sealed Steam Proof light units	√		√
Sealants around baths, sinks and wash hand basins including broken tiles	√		√
Alterations to install own appliances, fittings or fixtures (Landlords Permission needed).		√	√
Replacing kitchen cupboard child safety catches		√	√
Existing Kitchen cupboards	√		√
Cupboard drawers	√		√

Worktops	√		√
Central heating systems and radiators	√		√
Disconnection and reconnection of cookers to be completed by a gas safe or electrically qualified tradesperson	Unless Authorised by representative of Connexus	√	√
Gas and water pipes	√		√
Bleed radiators (Combi boilers)	√		√
Water heaters	√		√
Battery Operated smoke alarms (changing batteries)		√	√
Mould removal			
Customer responsibility to report non-working extraction which Connexus maintain.	√		√
Mains hard wired smoke alarms and ensuring compliance with Smoke detection regulations	√		√
Wiring sockets and fixtures that are supplied by Connexus	√		√
Fuse Boxes	√		√
Changing Light bulbs		√	√
Fuse Boxes tripping – except where fuse box is inaccessible		√	√
Strip lights, starters and diffusers for standard fittings		√	√
Electric Shower units if fitted by Connexus	√		√
Staircase, bannisters and handrails	√		√
Stairlifts and hoists that belong to Connexus	√		√
Chimney sweeps	√		√
TV, BT, Multimedia points and phone extensions		√	√
White goods, except where Connexus provide them as part of the service		√	√

<b>Outside your Home</b>			
<b>Repairs Service</b>	<b>Connexus Responsibility</b>	<b>Customer Responsibility</b>	<b>Leaseholder Responsibility</b>
Roof	√		
Facia Boards soffits and barge boards	√		
Shared drains on Connexus land within boundary of the property	√		
Shared Drains – Contact Severn Trent 08007834444 or Welsh Water 08000520130	√	√	√
Sewerage 08000853968			
Drains, gutters and downpipes	√		
Pipes – including water services from the curtilage of the property to the property.	√		
Cleaning leaves and garden waste from gullies		√	√
Blocked drains caused by tenant (chargeable repair)		√	√

Windows and window frames			
Broken glass – any breakage of glass will be chargeable if a crime number is not provided.	√		√
Exterior doors including all fire doors	√		
Adjust/replace letter box flaps (unless PVC-U or fire doors)		√	
Door bells		√	
Door numbers (unless PVC-U or fire doors)		√	
Draught excluders (unless PVC-U or fire doors)		√	
Foundations	√		
Exterior walls	√		
Gaining access to the property if locked out (recharge)		√	√
Lost and additional keys		√	√
Key snap in lock	√		√
Suited locks – we will recharge customers		√	√
General TV aerials		√	√
Garages, Outhouses or stores that are provided by Connexus as part of the property	√		√
Sheds		√	√
Fencing except privacy panel or next to public pathway, car park or public road. Gates within fencing not maintained by Connexus at front and rear of property (see separate fencing guide)		√	√
Garden and tree maintenance		√	
Driveways		√	
Patios and decking (landlord permission must be sought)		√	√
Washing lines and posts (unless communal space)		√	√
Removal of rats, mice, bees, wasps, ants, fleas or cockroaches		√	√
Graffiti Removal on Connexus Properties	√		

<b>Communal Areas</b>			
<b>Repairs Service</b>	<b>Connexus Responsibility</b>	<b>Customer Responsibility</b>	<b>Leaseholder Responsibility</b>
Balconies	√		
Roofing	√		
Walkways and pathways	√		
Hallways	√		
Steps	√		
Lifts	√		
Landings	√		
Lighting (including emergency)	√		
Parking areas	√		
Boundary walls and fences	√		
Door entry systems	√		



Communal TV aerials	√		
Intercoms	√		
Gardens and landscaping	√		
Rubbish chutes, bin stores and storage areas.	√		
Communal smoke alarms and other communal fire detection.	√		
Removal of rats, mice, bees, wasps, ants, fleas or cockroaches	√		
Security lights	√		
Playgrounds provided by Connexus	√		
Wet and dry Riser	√		
Water Hygiene Treatment	√		
Public Lifts and sliding doors	√		
External Painting	√		
Airconditioning	√		
Communal Windows	√		

### **Leaseholders**

As a general rule, repairs in the interior of the flat are the responsibility of the leaseholder and communal areas are the responsibility of the landlord.

### **Shared Owners**

Please check individual leases for repairs responsibilities.

## **Fencing Standard**

Fencing is the responsibility of the tenant unless it borders on to a public right of way or is part of a communal area

### **Some of the queries we get asked the most about fencing.**

#### **What is the tenant responsible for?**

- You must provide and maintain any fencing in your front garden
- You must repair any damage to your fence caused by you, your household, your visitors or your pets
- Providing enough secure fencing to prevent your pet causing a nuisance
- Maintaining your fence, even if we erected it. You should weatherproof your fence regularly (every two or three years) to protect the wood and prolong its life.
- Gates within fencing are not maintained by Connexus at either the front or rear of the property.

You must pay the cost of us removing any fence that you are responsible for, if we think it is a danger to others.

#### **What Connexus is responsible for:**

- If you have a corner plot bordering a public area, we will provide a rear and side fence and any gates that you need to reach your garden and home. The fence will be 1 metre or 1.8 metres high, depending on where your property is.
- We will provide a single 1.8 metre high fence panel between your property and your neighbour's, attached to the back wall, to give you both some privacy.
- We will erect chain link fence to mark the boundary rear gardens.

#### **How do I know which fence I am responsible for?**

To check whether the fence belongs to you or your neighbour, please contact us on **03332313233**

#### **What if I want to erect my own fence?**

You can erect your own fence or replace the existing fence, as long as you get our written permission and underground plans will need to be checked. We will not unreasonably refuse permission, but you will be responsible for maintaining and repairing the fence.

Front boundary fencing should be no higher than 3ft or 1 metre and coloured brown, dark brown or green. Here are some types of fencing we will approve:

- Timber hit and miss Close boarded/featheredge boarded (Concrete post preferred)
- Chain-link fencing
- Steel bow top

#### **Who is responsible for maintaining hedges and trees?**

The maintenance of all hedges, bushes and trees within your boundary will remain the responsibility of the tenant. If the tenant wishes to remove their existing boundary and replace it with a suitable alternative, Landlords Permission is required.

### Example Repairs Timescales

Adjustments to categories and timescales will be made to support vulnerable customers who have no available support to assist them.

#### 1. Emergency Repair

These are repairs that have an immediate health, safety or security risk. Connexus will respond and make safe and secure within 4 hours:

- Major disaster or fire
- Immediate danger to life or serious risk of damage to the property
- Severe storm damage
- Flooding
- Uncontrollable water leak in the dwelling

Connexus will make safe or complete the repair within 24 hours it may be that a component renewal is needed following the emergency make safe works, on such occasions a follow appointment will be arranged dependent upon the required works:

- Total loss of electric power (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Total loss of water supply (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Total or partial loss of gas supply (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.
- No hot water
- No Heating
- No central heating and main fire in lounge not working
- Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (only toilet in property).
- Blocked toilet where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling.
- Leaking toilet cistern, bath and basin, heating pipes, water tank or cylinder (none containable).
- Insecure external ground floor window, door or lock.
- Total loss of electric power to communal lights.
- Repairs to defective fire doors.
- Force entry and change locks.
- Unsafe rotten timber flooring or stairs.
- Stairs lifts or hoist not working.
- Unsafe fencing, walls, footpaths, communal drying areas, car parking areas or steps.
- Remove and board up broken and dangerous glazing.
- Missing manhole cover.
- Smoke detector (mains operated) not working or continuously sounding off (customer to check batteries first).
- Unsafe sockets, light switch or pendants.
- Running overflow in icy conditions.
- Loose stair treads handrails and/or banisters.
- Dangerous loose roof tiles, chimney pots and guttering.

Trade colleagues and contractors will not carry out any emergency work that will put them in danger, e.g. roof repairs after dark or in severe weather conditions.

## **2. Urgent Repairs**

These are very urgent repairs that do not fall into an emergency repair category. Connexus will complete the repair within one to five working days.

- Partial loss of electric power, including defective power points, sockets etc.
- Partial loss of water supply.
- Blocked sink, basin, bath or waste pipes.
- Leaking roof.
- Leak from water or heating pipes, tank, cistern, baths, toilets, basins, sinks or cylinders etc. (dripping and containable).
- Toilet not flushing.
- Leaking toilet cistern when flushed
- Sink or basin waste dripping (containable).
- Taps not working to kitchen sink, bath and hand basins.
- Reseal around bath or shower.
- Door entry system not working.
- Faulty shower (if installed by Connexus and only means of bathing). May be upgraded to emergency on case by case situation.
- Faulty immersion heaters.
- Faulty door lock (property secure).
- Renew letter box lock (communal flats or maisonettes).
- External underground water service leaking
- Removal of obscene and racist graffiti from Connexus properties. May be upgraded to emergency on case by case situation.
- Replace faulty lightbulbs or fittings in communal areas
- Urgent Health and Safety works.

## **3. Responsive Routine Repairs**

Connexus will complete these small routine repair jobs within 6 to 20 working days.

- Unblock second toilet in the property.
- Unblock gulley or repair surround.
- Repair running overflow
- Repair dripping tap.
- Repair loose toilet pan.
- Renew internal door to WC or bathroom.
- Repair internal doors, latches and door frames.
- Replace electric sockets, lamp holder rose, and lamp or batten holders.
- Replacing florescent tubes and their starters for non-standard light fittings fitted by Connexus.
- Repair stop tap.
- Remedy water hammering.
- Repair water tank/cylinder.
- Repair external door, locks and furniture.

- Repair windows, catches and furniture.
- Re-string communal rotary dryers.
- Repair communal TV aerials.
- Replace faulty light bulbs or fittings in communal areas
- Repair stairs and steps (no trip hazard).
- Replace storage tanks, hot water cylinders.
- Replace waste water pipes.
- Repair defective central heating appliances not covered by other priorities.
- Re-glazing of external windows and doors.
- Minor repairs to leaking gutters and rainwater pipes.
- Replace electrical night storage heater.
- Repair kitchen unit and worktop.
- Repair concrete floors and floorboards.
- Replace manhole cover and frame.
- Replace isolated area of wall and floor tiles.
- Remove graffiti (non-offensive).
- Replace/repair extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom.
- Repairs to garages, store sheds (roofs and doors).
- CCTV Survey of drains (repeated drain problems).
- Replace/repair waste disposal unit faulty.
- Replace/repair faulty shower (if installed by Connexus and a bath installed)
- Replace/repair smoke detector (when there is more than one detector working in the property).
- Minor plaster repairs.
- Replace/repair street lights

#### **4. Planned Maintenance Repairs**

Connexus will complete these larger type of repairs within 12 weeks. These are works that cannot wait for the investment works programme will be packaged together and dealt with on a programmed repairs basis.

- Renewal of bath, hand basin or complete bathroom suite.
- Replace glazed wall tile surrounds to baths, shower trays, hand basins and kitchen work tops.
- Resolving condensation problems to bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms etc.
- Renew internal, external or garage doors and frames.
- Removing open fireplaces and blocking up opening etc.
- Replace complete floors, concrete or timber flooring.
- Timber and dampness treatment to walls, floor or ceilings.
- Replace kitchen units, worktops (not including kitchen refurbishment or improvement works).
- Major plastering works to walls and ceilings.
- External repairs to brickwork, rendering, chimney's or garden walls.
- Replace or repairs to fascias, soffits and verges.
- Replace external steps, ramps, footpaths and hard standings.
- Overhaul of rainwater goods, downpipes
- Replacing roof sheeting, cladding or felt coverings.

- Internal doors
- Renew window frames and casements.
- Non-urgent Health and Safety works.