



CHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY

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Executive Summary:
<p>The purpose of this policy is to promote the expectation that we require customers to look after and take care of their homes. The policy is designed to ensure there is a consistent and transparent approach to Rechargeable Repairs.</p>

Policy Grouping / Directorate	Customer and Communities	
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Notes:		

1 Introduction and Aims

1.1 This policy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's approach to Rechargeable Repairs. The purpose of this policy is to promote the expectation that RBH requires customers to look after and take care of the home they occupy. The policy is designed to ensure there is a consistent and transparent approach to the operation of Rechargeable Repairs and to define payment and recovery arrangements to ensure maximisation of income when such repairs are carried out.

1.2 The aims of the policy are:

- To promote the expectation that customers must value and take care of their home.
- To provide a clear and transparent statement that sets out how decisions to charge for repairs will be taken.
- To set out what factors will be taken into consideration when exercising discretion when operating this policy.

2 Context

2.1 The collection of Rechargeable Repairs accounts contributes to the delivery of the RBH strategy with regard to business sustainability and maintaining our income.

2.2 Recharging customers for repairs where applicable allows us to achieve and meet the following regulatory standards:

Economic Standards

[Governance & Financing Viability Standard](#)

[Value for Money Standard](#)

Consumer Standards

[Neighbourhood & Community Standard](#)

[Safety & Quality Standard](#)

[Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard](#)

3 Values

3.1 The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

Doing What We Say: RBH takes a responsible and balanced approach to recovering costs for rechargeable repairs and providing support to our diverse customer base.

Working As One: The Repairs team complete repairs that are required to maintain a decent standard of living for our customers and safeguard our stock condition, and where applicable identify the costs for this work as payable but the customer. Income then creates an invoice for the billing and collection of this money from the customer. In practice, this provides a return on repairs expenses incurred by the customer and contributes towards financial stability.

Delivering Quality: Delivering quality repairs to customer homes helps ensure the work is of the required standard and prevent customers paying more for repairs by

external bodies or not completing the repairs at all, which affects their quality of life and our stock condition.

Open & Transparent: Customers can request a breakdown of their recharges and photo evidence at any time, along with an explanation as to why the work was necessary and why it costs what it does.

4 Policy Statement

4.1 Definition of a Rechargeable Repair

If someone has caused damage to an RBH home, whether this was by neglect, by accident or on purpose, it is the customer's responsibility to fix it. Therefore, customers are liable for the costs of any repair required.

Rechargeable repairs will be identified in several ways including, but not limited to, conversations with customers when they call to request a repair, visits by RBH employees to homes for inspections/ tenancy audits/ income collection related visits, other repairs visits and for any other appointments with customers.

There are some repairs that customers may be able, if they prefer, to arrange their own suitably qualified contractor to complete. If the customer intends to arrange for the work to be completed themselves, they must ask for permission from RBH, and the works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified tradesperson. RBH will arrange for the work to be inspected once completed. A certification of work maybe required.

Rechargeable repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Replacing broken windows
- Renewing or repairing damaged internal doors
- Replacement of external doors
- Replacing locks/ lock changes,
- Making right cracks in sinks, damage to internal walls etc.,

Alterations to the property that have been carried out by the customer and need returning to their original state before they terminate their tenancy in preparation for re-letting.

There may be exceptional circumstances where RBH may want to waive any charges associated with such repair work. RBH will make decisions on a case-by-case basis. RBH will consider matters such as:

- Health
- Vulnerability
- Disability

We will discuss all circumstances with the customer and may carry out background checks and liaise with other agencies who may hold important information to help RBH make an informed decision. RBH will always explain to the customer how it has come to a decision.

There is a dispute process for cases when a customer believes they should not be charged for a repair or believe they aren't being charged correctly. Full details of this process can be found in the Rechargeable Repairs Procedure.

The Repairs operative that completes a rechargeable repair must identify the breakdown of costs/ charges for future reference. For 'out of hours' repairs, the Repairs

team must identify a cost for these once the job details are received from our external out of hours contractor. Inspections may be carried out to assess the cost of the work required and RBH will inform customers of the cost within 7 days of the original request.

Paying for Rechargeable Repairs

If a customer is unable to meet the full cost of the repair immediately, payment by instalments may be agreed as detailed in the Rechargeable Repairs procedure.

With the exception of emergency repairs or where there is a health and safety issue, the customer must accept responsibility for the full costs before any work is carried out.

Please note: before customers pay either in full or by instalment they must have a clear rent account with a suitable credit buffer. If their main rent account is in arrears, they will need to pay these off first before then paying for their rechargeable repair.

Recovery of Charges

In situations where the customer does not pay the charge, or fails to keep to an agreed payment plan, RBH will take recovery action as necessary in accordance with the Chargeables Repair Procedure Jan 24.

Whilst a rechargeable repair remains unpaid (once the customer's rent account is clear), any subsequent requests for rechargeable repairs could be delayed, unless the repair is considered urgent, until the customer accepts responsibility for the costs and agrees to a payment plan or pays for the repairs in full.

Outstanding rechargeable repairs may prevent requests for transfers or re-housing in line with RBH's Tenancy Policy.

Insurance

RBH offers Customers Contents Insurance which all customers are encouraged to join when they sign up for their tenancy. The cover provided is different to some private contents insurance policies in that it allows insured customers to claim for many rechargeable repairs under the Customers Liability element of the policy.

Visitors

If a customer, friend/ s or family have damaged the home or left unauthorised improvements/alterations or left items that require clearing or the home needs cleaning, RBH will charge the customer for putting these matters right.

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 Collection of rechargeable repairs under this policy will be monitored through the production of statistical data that includes year on year comparisons of cash collected, with a view to maximising the amount collected.

This policy will be monitored to ensure charges are not negatively impacting our vulnerable customers. We will do this by assessing how many vulnerable customers are able to afford their rechargeable repair alongside successfully managing their tenancies.

This policy will be monitored for how it affects people in the borough who need rehousing e.g., how many people needing a home are refused due to an outstanding rechargeables repair.

6 Review

- 6.1 All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.
- 6.2 This policy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

7 Links with Other RBH Documents

- 7.1 This policy links to the following policies and strategies:
- Income Policy
 - Arrears Recovery Full Procedure Feb 23
 - Chargeable Repairs Procedure Jan 24
 - Tenancy Agreements
 - Tenancy Policy
 - Responsive Repairs Policy
 - Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy

8 Inclusivity statement

- 8.1 We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all. We ensure that everyone is valued and respected. Our policies aim to be inclusive, and will comply with UK laws, including the Equality Act 2010, to create a diverse and supportive environment for people to thrive.
- 8.2 We understand not everyone absorbs information the same way. If you have any difficulty understanding or interpreting this document please email people@rbh.org.uk or call Freephone 0800 027 7769. We will work with you to ensure your individual needs are met.

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Limited is a charitable community benefit society.
FCA register number 31452R.
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