



Repairs Handbook



Introduction

Welcome to your Repairs Handbook

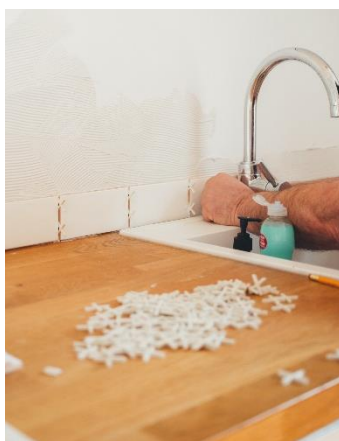
Keeping your home a safe and enjoyable place to live is important to us.

This handy guide sets out the service that you can expect to receive from Osborne Property Services and Sun Realm, our repairs and maintenance partners. It also tells you how we can support you with repairs that are your responsibility.

We understand that repairs and maintenance can sometimes be disruptive. Our partners' skilled tradespeople will always try to carry out repairs at a time to suit you. We value the security of your home and ensure that all our contractors carry identification, which they must show before entering your home.

The quickest and easiest way to report a non-urgent repair is to visit our website and report online. All out-of-hours emergency repairs need to be reported by phone. We will always prioritise carrying out emergency repairs.

- You can request repairs online at www.dacorum.gov.uk/repairs
- or call our Free phone number 0800 018 6050
 - Select option 1 for Sun Realm (gas and central heating repairs and boiler servicing)
 - Select option 2 for Osborne (repairs)



The service you can expect

- We will try to carry out emergency repairs 24 hours a day, every day of the year. They will be carried out within 24 hours of you reporting the problem, or within four hours, if there is a health and safety risk.
- We will try to complete all other repairs within 20 working days, except where we need specialist materials or we need to get into your home to carry out the work.
- You may be charged for repairs if they are needed because of neglect or wilful damage or you have deliberately given us incorrect information.

To report a repair within office hours

8am to 5.15pm, Monday to Friday online:

Go to our online repairs ordering service at www.dacorum.gov.uk/repairs

Do not use the online repairs ordering service if you need to report an emergency repair.

Repairs reported online will be raised within 2 working days.

You can register to use 'My Dacorum' portal at www.dacorum.gov.uk/mydacorum for repairs (but not emergencies).

By phone:

Use the Free phone number 0800 018 6050.

Option 1 for gas and central heating repairs and Option 2 for all other repairs.

Your call may be recorded.

Emergency repairs out of office hours

Between 5.15pm and 8am, every day of the year, weekends and public holidays.

By phone:

Use the Free phone number 0800 018 6050. Your call will be recorded.

Do not use the online repairs ordering service if you need an emergency repair.

If you smell gas or your carbon monoxide alarm sounds, contact Cadent immediately on **0800 111 999**.

What happens next?

When you report a repair, we will look at the information you have provided and give the job a target date.

We aim to complete most routine repairs within 15 working days.

We will 'make safe' all repairs that we consider to be an emergency within one working day. We may need to make a second appointment to complete the repair. This would usually be within 20 working days. Specialist materials or contractors may delay some of the repairs being carried out within these timescales and we will advise you of this.

Appointment slots

When you ask for a repair inside your home, we will offer you a morning or afternoon weekday appointment. All routine repairs are carried out Monday to Friday.

Morning appointments are between 8am and 12.30pm.

Afternoon appointments are between 12.30pm and 5pm.

An appointment will be made for you at the time of reporting the repair. We will send you text and email reminders. Where these options are not available, a letter reminder can be requested.

Please report any access information at the time of reporting the repair and we will try to fulfil any requests.

For repairs inside your home, you (or someone else over the age of 18) must be there to let us in and remain in the property whilst the repairs are taking place.

Please ensure:

- The work area is clean, clear and ready for the tradesperson to commence the repair;
- Children and pets are kept free of the work area whilst the repairs are taking place;
- If you cannot make the suggested time, you call us as soon as possible on 0800 018 6050 to arrange a different appointment.

We may ask you to open windows, socially distance and you may be required to wear a mask (unless you are exempt).

IMPORTANT:

Repairs carried out because of damage or neglect by you, or anyone living with or visiting you, will be charged to you at full cost. This includes any repairs needed to put right work that you have carried out and is not of a satisfactory standard. It is your responsibility to report repairs promptly so that your home remains in a safe condition and meets the Decent Homes Standard. If you end your tenancy, you must leave your home in an acceptable condition, or we will recharge you for the work needed to put it right.

You can find details of the cost of some frequently-recharged repairs in the Recharges Price List on our website.

What is an emergency?

The emergency out-of-hours service is for reporting major repairs needed to avoid the danger of injury or serious damage, such as:

- Total loss of power - please check there is not a power cut in the area that you live and you have sufficient credit on your pay-as-you-go meter;
- Uncontrollable water leak - turn off your stopcock and contact us;
- Uncontrollable water leak from neighbouring property – contact them and ask them to turn off stopcock and report fault;
- Complete loss of water – check with water supplier there is no loss of supply;
- Impact damage to your home (such as vehicle collision); or
- Fire in your home that makes the property uninhabitable.

If you call us out and we find the repair is not a genuine emergency, we will charge you an emergency call-out fee - [rents-and-other-charges-policy-final-\(jul-2017-updated-sept-2019\).pdf \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](#).

Reasonable adjustments may be made in individual circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Please remember that all emergency repairs must be reported by telephone: Use the Free phone number 0800 018 6050. Your call will be recorded.

What should I do if I suspect there is a gas leak?

If you think there could be a gas leak or you notice any fumes coming from a gas appliance:

- ✗ Do not turn any electrical switches on or off;
- ✗ Do not use naked flames;
- ✗ Do not smoke.
- ✓ Do turn off the gas at the meter (if you are unable to locate or turn off the gas meter, vacate the property until safe to enter);
- ✓ Do open all windows and doors;
- ✓ Do phone Cadent on **0800 111 999** to report the gas leak or if your carbon monoxide alarm sounds.

Your right to repair

There are certain repairs that we must carry out within specified time limits.

We should carry out repairs within one working day if:

- You have no water or electricity;
- You have no gas or there is a gas leak inside the property;
- Windows or doors are not secure (for example after a burglary);
- There is a leak from a pipe, tank or cistern;
- The flue to an open fire or boiler is blocked;
- The heating or hot-water system is not working between 31 October and 1 May;
- The sewage drain or soil stack are blocked (or you only have one toilet and it can't be flushed);
- Electrical lighting or fittings are unsafe.

We should carry out repairs within three working days if:

- You have lost some of your water or electricity supply;
- The heating or hot-water system is not working between 1 May and 31 October;
- A tap cannot be turned on or off;
- You have a loose banister or handrail, or rotten wood on the floor or stair treads.

We should carry out repairs within seven working days if:

- The roof is leaking;
- An entry phone on a door is not working;
- An extractor fan is broken.

Specialist materials or contractors may delay some of these repairs being carried out within these timescales.

There is more information about your rights as a council tenant on the Government's website:

www.gov.uk/council-housing

Stair lifts, through-floor lifts and hoists are inspected on an annual basis. Our contractor will get in touch with tenants directly to arrange servicing visits.

Tenants **must not** remove any lifting equipment installed by the Council.

If you have concerns about any faults with stair lifts, through-floor lifts or hoists, please contact Osborne call centre on 0800 018 6050.

Smoke/Heat/CO alarms may be part of your electrical installation and operate as a full safety alarm system and should not be removed or interfered with.

If your smoke alarm is faulty, damaged, missing or fails to operate when tested this should be reported immediately.

If you have any concerns regarding safe operation or faults to the Smoke/Heat/CO alarms, please contact Osborne call centre on 0800 018 6050.

Which repairs are my responsibility?

Some repairs and maintenance of your home is your responsibility. You should deal with them yourself at your own expense and ensure the work is carried out to a satisfactory standard.

Any alterations made to the property by the tenant is the tenant's responsibility to repair.

You must have written authorisation from the Council before any alterations are carried out. You may also be responsible for any charges for damage caused to neighbouring properties due to these alterations and repairs are required. Unauthorised alterations will be rectified at the tenant's expense.

- Blocked sinks, baths and toilets ¹
- Clothes poles and rotary driers except those in communal drying areas
- Curtain rails and batons (unless you live in our Passivhaus block at St Peter's Court, Gadebridge)
- Decoration and painting inside the property, including redecorating damage caused by mould and mildew unless this is caused by a defect
- Doorbells ²
- Driveways except for access to council garages and blocks of flats unless this has been installed by DBC ³
- Fences and garden walls ⁴
- Fuses in plugs and appliances in general
- Garden maintenance – all grass, flowerbeds, shrubs, trees, wooden or metal sheds ⁵
- Garden taps ⁶
- Garden paths and patios
- Broken glass to doors and windows on the outside of your home
- Broken glass inside your home
- Light bulbs including fluorescent strip lights, security lights and with the exception of sealed, steam proof units and communal areas installed by us
- Locks - when replacement is needed because keys have been lost or stolen ⁷
- Mould and mildew unless caused by a structural defect
- Pest control – wasps' nests (unless the nest needs to be removed so that we can carry out other work)
- Plugs and chains for sinks, basins and baths
- Satellite dishes and TV aerials except for communal systems provided by us
- Shower curtains and rails
- Toilet seats except specially adapted seats due to adaptations or living in sheltered housing

¹ If you report blocked waste pipes and we find household objects lodged inside them we will charge you the cost of repair. Pipes are easily blocked by wet wipes, nappies, sanitary products, and excessive amounts of toilet tissue, children's toys or cooking fat. Do not pour hot fat down waste pipes or drains.

² We will repair specially adapted doorbells for people with hearing loss or visual impairment.

³ Subject to permission given on installation.

⁴ Our leaflet 'Garden Fences' gives more information. This is available on the Tenants' Handbook page of our website: www.dacorum.gov.uk/tenantshandbook.

⁵ Please refer to <https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/environmental-health/high-hedges>.

⁶ To ensure regularity maintained and to the complaint to water bylaws recommendations – permission is required by the Council before installation is carried out, however, these must be removed when you vacate the property.

⁷ Replacement locks and keys will be recharged to you. However, you can make a claim for the cost if you have Dacorum Tenants' Home Contents Insurance.

It is a tenant's responsibility to report and provide access for repairs to be carried out as part of their tenancy agreement and tenancy action may be taken if repairs are not reported or access provided. Failure to provide access may result in forced entry and result in recharges.

How to report a compliment

If you are satisfied with the service received and would like to report a compliment, please email us at compliments@dacorum.gov.uk

How to report a complaint

If you are unsatisfied with the service received and would like to report a complaint, you can do so at: [Compliments, comments and complaints \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/compliments-comments-and-complaints)

Making improvements to your home

We are usually happy for you to make some changes or improvements to your home, but you must apply for permission first. Our Tenant Improvement Panel will review your application and decide whether your request is appropriate. If you fail to do this, we may charge you the cost of putting your home back to its original condition. You have the right to carry out improvements and alterations to your home, provided that we give our written permission first. You can apply to make an improvement or alteration at: [Home improvement \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home-improvement)

Useful information

We recognise that some of our tenants may have difficulties carrying out the repairs and maintenance that is your responsibility (as detailed in your Tenancy Agreement). If you are struggling, there are ways to get help:

Age UK Dacorum:

- Information and advice for older people, their families and, friends. You can call the free, confidential advice line on 0800 055 6112, which is available 8am to 7pm, every day of the year. You can also go online at [Welcome to Age UK Dacorum](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum).
- Handyperson Scheme. This provides help to older people, their carers, and people with disabilities. Their friendly and trusted tradespeople can carry out small repairs and DIY jobs around your home at reasonable rates. You can find out more online at [Age UK Dacorum | Handyperson scheme](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/handyperson-scheme) or call 01442 259049.

Downsizing:

- If your home and/or garden are getting too much for you to maintain, we can help you downsize to a more suitable one. Go to www.dacorum.gov.uk/moving for more details.

Standards & Policies


- Our Housing strategies and policies are available to view and download on our website, go to: [Strategies and policies \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk).
- Energy Efficiency – You will be given an energy performance certificate (EPC), which shows the energy rating of your home. You can view your homes EPC on the government’s website at [Find an EPC](https://www.gov.uk).

Tell us what you think

- Once your repairs have been completed, we will send you a satisfaction survey so that you can provide us with feedback about what went well and how we can improve our services.
- If you have recently moved into a New Build property, we are interested in hearing your feedback on your new home. Please complete the online satisfaction survey: <https://tinyurl.com/Lettings-Survey>. Your feedback will help ensure we are working to provide a good service to our residents.

Get Involved

- There are many opportunities for our tenants to get involved to help shape and improve our services. If you are interested in finding out more, go to: [Get involved \(dacorum.gov.uk\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk).
- If you would like to be part of a tenant focus group, working with us to develop the new standard, please email us at: talk-to-us@dacorum.gov.uk or call 01442 228000 and ask for Housing Engagement.



If you would like this booklet in another format such as large print, CD or in another language, please contact us:

Email Talk-To-Us@dacorum.gov.uk

Phone 01442 228000