

## **PROPERTY CONDITION**

The differing responsibilities of landlords and tenants for the condition of a property are set out in the contract between them – either a tenancy agreement or lease.

Generally if you have a lease with the landlord, the landlord is usually only responsible for the communal areas and any other areas specified in the lease, this applies if you are a shared owner . Always check your lease to be clear who is responsible for what.

Under tenancy agreements landlords are responsible for keeping their rented properties in a good repair. As well as the tenancy agreement the residents handbook should also explain what it is responsible for and how it aims to meet those responsibilities.. Your landlord may have additional repair and maintenance responsibilities under the law.

If a repair is needed in your home or communal areas then you should report this to the landlord's repair or maintenance department. Your landlord should also operate an emergency repair line that enables you to report emergency repairs out of hours. It is a good idea to follow up a phone call in writing or by email so you have a record of reporting the repair.

Your landlord will usually only be responsible for carrying out a repair once the matter has been brought to its attention. Tenants have a responsibility to report a repair, but always check your tenancy agreement to see whether you may be responsible for fixing the disrepair you want to report.

You should allow your landlord a reasonable amount of time to carry out the repair before contacting it again. Your landlord should have published target times for repairs and this will give you an idea of how long the repair may take to complete. You will need to allow your landlord reasonable access to the property so it can assess what repairs are needed and to carry out the work.

In addition to any maintenance responsibilities you might have your landlord may be able to recharge you for damage you or your visitors cause to the property.

Policies on treating a pest infestation will vary from landlord to landlord and it is sometimes difficult to know who is responsible for carrying out treatment works. You should report the matter to your landlord in the first instance. You can get further guidance from your local authority's environmental health department, which also has certain obligations to deal with pests.

If you need an adaptation to your home due to a disability, you may have certain rights under the law. In the first instance you should report the matter to your landlord to establish what its policy is on funding and carrying out adaptations. If you are a housing association tenant you can also contact your local authority which will have certain obligations to aid people with disabilities for a range of adaptations to their homes.