RESIDENT think tank APPROVED

newlon HOUSING TRUST

Repairs



Please note that this leaflet is aimed at residents who rent from us. If you are a homeowner (Shared Owner or Leaseholder) please refer to our Leaseholders' Handbook, which you can find at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

How to report a repair - quick guide

You can report a repair in any of the following ways:

- Call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or freephone **0800 072 4611**, 8am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours a recorded message will provide details of the contractors providing cover.
- For non-emergencies, email **repairs@newlon.org.uk**, **live chat** with us on our website or log into the **My Newlon portal**.

How to report an emergency/urgent repair



Call us right away

- If you have an emergency/urgent repair, please call **020 7613 8080** or **freephone 0800 072 4611**. Lines are open 8am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.
- Someone in our Service Centre will be available to speak to you and deal with your repairs.
- We will discuss the problem, assess the level of urgency and let you know when a repair can be done.
- If you require an emergency repair **outside office hours** please call **020 7613 8080** as usual and a recorded message will direct you to our out of hours service providers.
- It's important that you **phone us** if you have an emergency/urgent repair. **Please do not email us as we are unlikely to respond within the required timescale.**

How to report non-urgent maintenance/repairs

- **Email us**
  For non-urgent maintenance/repairs queries please email: **repairs@newlon.org.uk**. Email responses are 2 to 10 working days.

- mynewlon
  You can also report repairs using our My Newlon residents' portal at **my.newlon.org.uk/signin**. This will enable you to report repairs 24/7 and track the progress of any issues you have reported.

- **Live chat on our website**
  
  Click on the pink chat icon which is displayed on every page of our website (**www.newlon.org.uk**) and type in your details to connect immediately to one of our Service Centre advisers. If there are no advisers available you will have the option to leave a message and we will get back to you.

- **Callback**
  If you have called **020 7613 8080** but don't want to wait on the line to speak to a Service Centre Advisor, just select the 'callback' option when prompted and follow the instructions. We will always call you back on the same day and usually within two hours.

What information will we need when you contact us?

To deal with a repair as effectively as possible we will need to ask some detailed questions so we can we get the correct contractor to attend with the right parts. This is to try and ensure the repair is completed first time. The information we will need includes:

- Your personal details.
- A full explanation of the problem.
- The specific times you can provide access and whether there is anyone in your home with a disability or support needs.

Please make sure you have any crime reference number where damage has been reported to the police.

What are Newlon's repair standards?

- To get every repair right first time or keep you informed about what is happening if it takes longer.
- To arrange suitable repair appointments.
- When there are more than two visits, to arrange flexible appointments suitable for you.
- To complete 100% of emergency repairs within 24 hours and 100% of routine repairs within 20 days.

What happens when we are closed?

If you need an emergency repair out of hours call us on **020 7613 8080**. An answerphone message will direct you to our emergency repairs service. Our contractors will attend all serious emergencies or give you advice if the repair can safely wait until our office reopens.

Which repairs are Newlon responsible for?

In a rented property (either Intermediate or Social Rent) we are responsible for most of the repairs to your home, except minor day-to-day repairs such as changing fuses. Your tenancy agreement will outline the repairs we are responsible for. These include:

- Gutters and outside pipes.
- The roof.
- Outside walls, doors, window frames, sills and sash cords.
- Inside walls, floors, major cracks to ceilings and back/front doors.
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues.
- Pathways and steps at the front of your home which give access to your property.
- Major plasterwork.
- Integral garages and stores.
- Boundary walls and fences where it is clear that they are owned by Newlon.
- Treating infestations of pests classified by Environmental Health as a

statutory nuisance, including mice, rats, cockroaches and pharaoh ants. We will also treat bed bugs but will not carry out proofing works against this kind of pest as they are introduced on clothing and possessions. If the contractor recommends it, we may carry out proofing works where there is damage to the property which is allowing pests to gain access. Photographs must be provided which clearly show the holes/access points for any proofing works.

Please note that we will not treat pest infestations if you live in a house.

We are responsible for any installations we provide, for example heating and hot water and the supply of water, gas and electricity including:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes. Please note that we will repair mechanical sink/bath plugs but not plastic plugs.
- Electric wiring including sockets and switches.
- Gas pipes and water pipes.
- Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating installations.

You are responsible for reporting these repairs to us. If your home is managed by an agency on behalf of Newlon, some repairs may be carried out by the agency. Your tenancy agreement should provide details of this.

Which repairs am I responsible for?

You are expected to carry out minor day to day repairs including those listed below. Please note this is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure whether a repair is your responsibility please contact us on **020 7613 8080**.

- Decorating the inside of your home.
- Taking down/hanging curtains or putting up curtain rails.
- Moving furniture or carpets/laminated flooring so repairs can be done.
- Replacing lost or stolen keys and repairing damage done as a result of locking yourself out.
- Unblocking sinks, toilets and baths.
- Repairing loose kitchen or bathroom tiles, cracked or chipped baths, sinks and toilets.
- Replacing toilet seats, shower heads, hoses and riser bars.

- Fixing television aerials (unless you pay a service charge for a shared aerial).
- Putting up shelves and repairing anything you have fitted yourself (e.g. your own light fittings) or connections for your own washing machine or cooker.
- Replacing fuses, light bulbs (except in shared hallways), kitchen strip lights and broken light fittings. We will only attend to these where you have confirmed that you have already changed the bulb and the starter motor (if applicable). If we attend and find that it was just the bulb that needed replacing we may subsequently recharge you for the work done.
- Fixing broken windows (unless as a result of a crime reported to the police).
- Repairing kitchen units, including drawers.
- Installing or maintaining extra locks or other security on windows and doors (we will maintain night latches).
- Repairing holes in internal walls and cracks to ceilings.
- Adjusting internal doors or repairing internal door latches, catches, locks or handles.
- Blocking of minor holes around pipework or gaps between floorboards.
- Fixing or replacing external door furniture on individual doors, including doorbells, knockers and letter boxes.
- Maintaining internal smoke alarms, unless you can confirm that the batteries have been changed in the unit. If we do attend and find out that the batteries have not been changed we will recharge you for the call out.
- Dealing with infestations of wasps, bees, garden ants, moths or foxes if you live in a house or a flat. However if you live in a house you are also responsible for treating infestations of mice, rats, cockroaches and pharaoh ants. (For more information, please read the section on treating infestations of pests and proofing works on page 4.)
- Fixing dripping or running taps (this would generally require the replacement of the tap washer).

- Repairing damaged items that are not due to normal wear and tear. If you cannot provide an acceptable reason for the item becoming damaged we will not carry out the repair and you will be expected to repair it yourself.
- Maintaining your garden, including pruning trees, replacing garden sheds and gates, other out-buildings, detached garages, paths, concreted areas and patios.
- Cleaning and changing filters in ventilation systems.

Who is responsible for damage caused by leaks ?

If there is any damage to floors or walls due to a leak we will repair this. However, please note that we will not pay for damage to your possessions or carpets caused by leaks. You should arrange for your own contents insurance to cover this. Our Service Centre can advise you about this. Where there is damage to decorations we will paint the affected areas.

Blocked main drains

If you live in a street property and have a blocked drain you should contact Thames Water in the first instance, as they maintain shared main drains. If you live in a flat within a block you should contact our Service Centre.

Can I get any help from Newlon with repairs that are my responsibility?

We may be able to assist you in certain circumstances. For example, if your home is damaged due to vandalism, burglary or harassment (e.g. broken windows or graffiti), we will do the repairs providing you have reported it to the police and have a crime reference number.

We have a small amount of money in our Tenant Welfare Fund to help in cases of extreme financial hardship.

Our target times for repairs

We set targets for completing repairs and these are listed below.

Emergency repairs

We will visit within 24 hours for any situation that is either dangerous or likely to become so, or a serious health risk. In some instances we will carry out initial works to make the situation safe and complete the works on subsequent visits.

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- Total loss of water supply, where the problem is not with the supplier.
- Total loss of electricity, where the problem is not with the supplier.
- Total loss of heating and hot water where household members are disabled, elderly or vulnerable (October to May only).
- Where electrics are damaged by water leaks.
- Major plumbing leaks and taps which cannot be turned off and where damage is being caused.
- Gas leaks – Cadent (formerly National Grid) should be advised in the first instance on **0800 111 999**).
- Dangerous structural issues, such as a risk of ceiling collapse.
- If you can't use your toilet and it is the only toilet in the home.
- Blocked main drains causing back-surge of sewage.
- Resident is locked out due to defective locks or broken keys (not lost keys).

Routine repairs

We aim to complete all routine repairs within 20 working days and an average of 10. We will prioritise repairs such as partial loss of water or gas supply, electrical and plumbing works and structural repairs. For these types of repairs we would aim to visit initially to stop further damage and carry out a full repair on subsequent visits.

Long-term repairs

Some repairs are more complex and may require specialist contractors or take more time to complete. We will aim to complete these repairs within three months or as part of programmed maintenance. These include roof

replacements, treatment for rising damp, repairs to internal joinery, window frames, kitchen worktop and cupboards, bathroom replacement and fences.

How are communal repairs handled?

We are responsible for all repairs and decorating, as well as lighting, in entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways or other common parts shared with other residents.

We aim to complete emergency repairs, such as broken lighting in a communal stairwell, within 24 hours.

For routine repairs, our aim is to complete them within 20 working days, with an average of 10, prioritising urgent repairs such as where there is a health and safety or security concern.

In some shared homes we supply electrical goods such as washing machines and cookers. Specific repair arrangements exist for these. Please contact the Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** for more details.

Do you recharge for repairs?

You may be recharged for the cost of carrying out repairs. The most common reason is if you call the out of hours emergency service and they attend for something that is not an emergency. You will also be recharged for the cost of repairs if it is an issue which is not our responsibility.

If it is necessary to recharge you we will send an invoice. In order to prevent being recharged please familiarise yourself with your responsibilities and what is classed as an emergency repair, as listed on pages 7 and 8 of this leaflet.

What happens if our service fails?

If you believe our service has been inadequate or a repair has not been completed properly you can do the following:

- Contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** so we can resolve the repair as soon as possible.
- Make a complaint by calling **020 7613 8080**, emailing **serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk** or filling in the online complaints form at **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**.

If you have reported repair problems to us, completed our complaints process and the issue has still not been resolved, you may be able to take legal action. We recommend that you seek independent legal advice before doing so. Information about the Housing Conditions Claims Pre-Action Protocol, which explains the steps tenants and landlords should follow before court proceedings are started, can be found at **www.justice.gov.uk/documents/pap-updates-housing-rent-disrepair.pdf**.

Can I claim compensation for delays?

We aim to complete all repairs within our target times. If you believe you have suffered an unreasonable delay then you may be entitled to compensation. Read our complaints leaflet to learn more, which you can find at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

How do we monitor our service?

- By working closely with our contractors to ensure they provide a good quality of service and value for money.
- By surveying our residents to gather their opinions about our service.
- Through discussions about repairs at residents' meetings.
- Via our Scrutiny Panel, made up of residents, who assess our contractors' performance and meet them to look for ways to improve.
- By displaying information about our repairs performance in our reception areas, online and in publications such as the annual report.

Can I make improvements to my home?

You can make improvements, alterations or additions to your home as long as we have agreed in writing before you start work. This includes external decorations and work to installations, fixtures and fittings. If we agree to certain improvements you may be given a payment to cover your costs when you end your tenancy.

If you undertake an improvement without our permission we may take action for breaking your tenancy agreement. For example you may have to remove the improvement and return the property to its original condition.

If you want to make improvements to your home please call us on **020 7613 8080**, email **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**, or write to us at **Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, London, N17 9FE**.

What are defects and how are they handled?

If you have moved into a new-build home a range of repairs are covered by the contractor who built the property for a period of one year from the time they hand over the home to Newlon (not the time that you move into your home). This is known as the defects period. We tell you when you move in how much time is left until the defects period ends. This includes some repairs which will become your responsibility after the defects period has elapsed.

You can report defects to us on **020 7613 8080** or by emailing **repairs@newlon.org.uk**.

What if I am classed as vulnerable?

For vulnerable residents such as the elderly, those with disabilities, or residents with a young baby, we will take individual circumstances into consideration when dealing with repairs. For example we may respond to heating repairs within 24 hours rather than seven days (from October to May).

If you would like this information in large print, audio, Braille, or an alternative format, please ask a member of staff.

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Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk,
Hale Village, London, N17 9FE.
Tel: 020 7613 8080
Phone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

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This leaflet was correct at the time of printing. Information does change over time. Please check our publications at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications/leaflets-brochures/** for the latest version.

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