

REPAIRS HELP GUIDE

A GUIDE ON WHAT TO DO
WHEN SOMETHING
NEEDS FIXING



Cottington Close

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HOW TO REPORT A REPAIR



**TO REPORT OR RAISE A REPAIR
PLEASE FILL IN THE SHORT FORM
USING THE QR CODE OR VIA OUR
WEBSITE**



WWW.COTTINGTONCLOSERMO.COM

If you have difficulty using the internet please call and we'll fill it in for you

HOW WE PRIORITISE YOUR REPAIR

The following repair priorities are used to decide how urgent a repair is and how long it can take to fix. These priorities comply with the Right to Repair regulations.

Type of repair	Response Time	Our priority Code
Urgent Emergency	Attend two Hours - Fix 24 Hours	E01
Emergency	Fix Within One working day	E02
Routine	Fix within seven days (or three days for certain qualifying repairs under the Right to Repair regulations)	R1
Routine	Fix Within 28 Working Days	R2
Planned	Complete Within 90 Days	R3

Repair priority codes



EO1: Urgent Emergency

Attend two Hours -
Fix 24 Hours



EO2: Emergency

Fix Within One working day



R1: Routine repairs

Fix within seven days (or three days for certain qualifying repairs under the Right to Repair regulations)



R2: Routine repair

Fix Within 28 Working Days



R3: Planned repair

Complete Within 90 Days

Examples of typical routine repairs and the usual times we will offer appointments to carry out the repair

A repair is an emergency when the problem could cause serious health and safety problems or severe damage if not fixed or made safe quickly. The same applies to repairs reported out of hours.

Emergencies include;

- ▶ lift breakdown
- ▶ toilet not working (if there is no other working toilet in the home)
- ▶ total loss of electrical power
- ▶ total loss of mains water supply.

Between one and three days;

- ▶ repairing a front door lock
- ▶ securing a loose or broken handrail
- ▶ tap which can't be turned
- ▶ blocked sink, bath or basin.

Between one and seven days;

- ▶ repairing estate lighting
- ▶ repairing a leaking bath
- ▶ repairing a manhole cover
- ▶ extractor fan not working.

Between seven days and 28 days;

- ▶ repairing your ceiling
- ▶ pram sheds.

Between 28 days up to 90 days:

- ▶ clearing gutters
- ▶ plaster work after repairs have been carried out
- ▶ non-urgent work to prevent problems arising in the future.

Please note – we may not meet our timescales if we need access to another property to fix a repair but cannot get in (for example, if water is dripping through your ceiling we will need to trace and get access to the flat causing the leak to fix the leak). However, depending on the circumstances we can force our way in if necessary.

REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES



Our repair responsibilities

We are not responsible for all the repairs in your home. Below is a list of some of the most common repairs the council is responsible for:

- ▶ Aids and adaptations
- ▶ Baths
- ▶ Blockages (unless caused by you)
- ▶ Ceiling repairs
- ▶ Central Heating
- ▶ Communal repairs
- ▶ Decoration (outside)
- ▶ Door entry system
- ▶ Doors (outside / front door)
- ▶ Electrical wiring
- ▶ Extractor fans
- ▶ Fences
- ▶ Floors (not floor coverings like carpet)
- ▶ Gas boilers
- ▶ Glazing (unless broken by you)
- ▶ Guttering
- ▶ Hot water
- ▶ Kitchen units (as part of planned replacement programme)
- ▶ Lifts
- ▶ Light switches
- ▶ Plaster finishing (except minor cracks)
- ▶ Radiators
- ▶ Roof
- ▶ Skirting boards
- ▶ Stair
- ▶ Stop cocks
- ▶ Taps (except washer replacement)
- ▶ Toilet pan and cistern
- ▶ Windows (frames, sills and vents)



Your repair responsibilities

You are responsible for keeping your home clean, internal decoration, repairing any damages caused by you or anyone living or visiting your homes, the upkeep of anything not provided by the council and for minor repairs including:

- ▶ Blockages. You must keep wastes and drains clear to prevent them becoming blocked, and also try to clear any blockages.
- ▶ Cookers, including installation or disconnection
- ▶ Curtain battens, poles or rails
- ▶ Doors (internal doors)
- ▶ Electricity and gas meters
- ▶ Floor coverings such as carpets or vinyl you have laid yourself (to note laminate flooring is only allowed if there is no one living beneath you because it is noisy when walked on and can cause a nuisance to neighbours)
- ▶ Forced entry damage caused by police after criminal activity
- ▶ Garden maintenance including looking after any trees
- ▶ Glazing
- ▶ Key and fob replacements
- ▶ Kitchen units (door catches, handles and hinges)
- ▶ Locks
- ▶ Light bulbs
- ▶ Limescale removal
- ▶ Mould – you should wipe away any mould using a proprietary cleaner.
- ▶ Plug chains to baths, sinks and basins
- ▶ Radiator bleeding
- ▶ Sealants to bath
- ▶ Sheds in the garden
- ▶ Toilet seats
- ▶ Tiling or grouting
- ▶ Windows (handles, locks, draught excluders)

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

You must make sure that either you or another responsible adult is present at the appointed time so what we can have access to your home to carry out the repair. If we cannot get in, we may charge you for our time or the contractor's time or both. If you are out when we visit, we will leave a card and send you a text message to let you know that we have called. It is your responsibility to contact us and re-book the repair. In an emergency, we may need to force entry if you fail to let us in after we have given you notice. We may recharge you for any repair or damage caused. We may also need access to your property to inspect after the repair has been completed, to make sure the contractor has sorted out the problem. If you are out during this inspection visit, we will assume the repair is satisfactory, unless you tell us otherwise. Please allow us to make this inspection as it helps us to ensure we are providing a good service

PREPARING FOR THE REPAIR

Once you have a date and time for your repair, you should make the area ready for the contractor to come and do the repair. This may involve moving furniture, lifting your floor coverings, and clearing possessions away from the area. For example, please clear out items stored under the sink if there is a leak. Contractors will not be able to clear an area or room before fixing the repair. We will not be responsible for any damage caused to items that have not been moved away from the area. The same applies for pre-repair inspections, particularly when we are trying to detect leaks. If you are elderly, vulnerable or need extra help when someone comes to fix the repair (including preparing the area for the contractor) please let us know when you report your repair. We will pass the information to our contractors and they will be able to assist.

IF THINGS GOES WRONG

We always aim to provide you with a good service and carry out regular surveys to monitor how well we are performing. If you feel that we have not met your expectations, then please contact us. We may inspect the repair and if we decide that it has not been done properly, we can ask the contractor to do the repair again.

RIGHT TO REPAIR

Repair type	Response time (working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Heating or hot water not working between 31 October and 1 May	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 May and 31 October	3

Repair type	Response time (working days)
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	1
Blocked sink, bath, or basin	3
Tap cannot be turned	3
Leak from a water pipe, tank, or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door, or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or hand rail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan not working	7

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HOME CONTENT INSURANCE

We do not insure the contents of your home. We strongly recommend that you take out home contents insurance. Insuring your belongings can save you a lot of money if they are stolen or damaged. For example, if your home is accidentally flooded from the flat above yours, you may be able to claim compensation from an insurance company. We would only have to pay if you could prove we had been careless in some way. Look around for the best insurance policy and make sure it is with a reputable company. It is important to include third party cover in case anyone makes a claim against you, for example if you leave a tap running and flood your neighbour's home. We can arrange home contents insurance for tenants through a low-cost scheme. Lambeth Council have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks and Allianz Insurance plc to offer our tenants and leaseholders the chance to insure their home contents and belongings through the Crystal Insurance Scheme at a competitive rate. To find out more ask your housing officer for an application pack or call Crystal Insurance Scheme on 0345 450 7286 or visit www.crystal-insurance.co.uk, where you can request a call back

TIPS ON DEALING WITH GAS

If you are having a gas appliance or equipment fitted, always use a Gas Safe registered engineer. You can find such an engineer by visiting www.gassaferegister.co.uk.

__ You will be responsible for all charges.

__ Do not try to deal with gas problems yourself.

__ For your own safety, find out where the mains gas supply tap is. It is called an emergency control valve and is usually near the meter. Make sure you know how to turn it off. If the tap needs a key to operate it, the key must be fixed to the tap.

__ If while doing an annual gas safety check, a Gas Safe registered engineer finds that any gas appliance or equipment you installed is defective, they will turn it off. If you turn it back on and it causes an incident, you will be liable for the damage caused.

__ Never turn on the gas to a cooker until you are ready to light the burner or water heater until the pilot is on.

__ If you have a charge key or slot meter and the gas runs out, turn off all gas taps before you put money in the meter. When the gas comes on, check that all pilot lights are lit.

__ Make sure there is plenty of ventilation around gas appliances and water heaters

CONDENSATION

Condensation often results from modern lifestyles, improvements to windows, doors and roofs, and the installation of central heating systems. Central heating changes the way air flows around rooms. Warm, moist air, which would otherwise have escaped through chimneys, windows and doors, gets trapped inside your home. Condensation appears when moisture vapour meets a cold surface. You can see it as water droplets on the walls, ceilings and windows. This can lead to a spread of black mould if not cleared away. You can greatly reduce condensation in your home by taking these few simple precautions:

- __ Do not dry clothes on radiators.
- __ Open windows and cover pans when cooking.
- __ Run cold water into the bath before adding hot water.
- __ Do not block up air vents in walls and doors.
- __ Clean away any mould that appears on walls, ceilings or windows with a suitable cleaning solution.
- __ Do not vent a tumble dryer into a room.
- __ Shut kitchen or bathroom doors when using extractor fans.
- __ Open windows regularly to replace damp air with dry air, especially in the morning. Ten minutes is a sufficient time



For more about avoiding and managing condensation, please see link to a video <https://youtu.be/8FQMUHvrJIQ>. You can also get advice through the 'Damp Medic' on your portal.

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HOW TO GUIDES

Here's some advice on how to carry out simple DIY tasks such as how to bleed a radiator, unblock a sink and repair a kitchen unit. There are also energy saving tips.



bit.ly/3Cu3F10

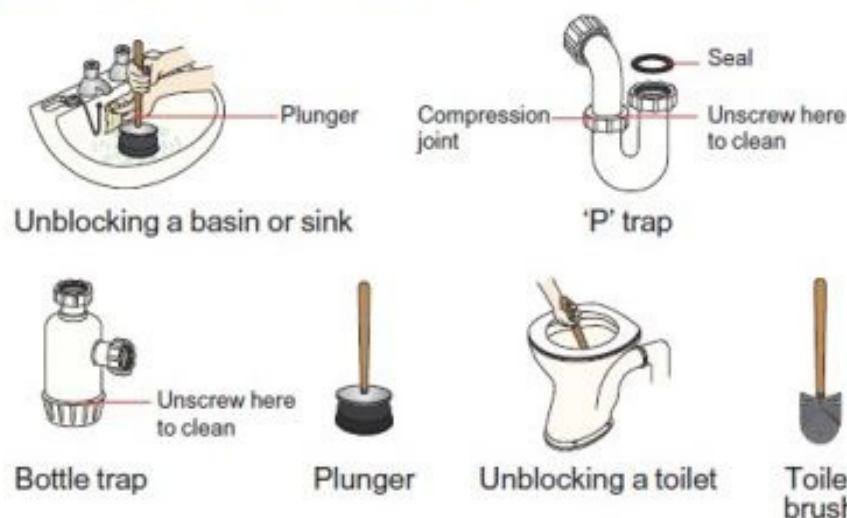


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Clearing a blocked waste pipe



Avoiding toilet blockages

Air fresheners that attach to the rim of the toilet pan should be fastened securely so they do not fall in and cause a blockage. Blockages are usually caused by objects such as:

- ▶ nappies
- ▶ toys
- ▶ sanitary towels
- ▶ wipes

If a blockage happens as a result of these objects getting stuck, we may charge you for clearing it. You should try to unblock this yourself to avoid being recharged.

To unblock a toilet

- ▶ If the pan is already full, remove some of the water into a bucket using a scoop, for example a jug or a bowl.
- ▶ Push the plunger to the bottom of the pan.
- ▶ Pump it up and down vigorously about 10 times. This creates a pressure vacuum, which may shift the blockage.
- ▶ When the blockage has disappeared, pour water from a bucket into the pan and see if it clears. You may need to repeat this process several times before the toilet flushes normally. If there is no improvement after a couple of tries, you should contact us.

Thoroughly wash your hands and all equipment after you have finished.

Avoiding sink, basin or bath blockages

Blockages to a kitchen sink, basin or bath waste pipes are usually caused by build-up of:

- ▶ Fat, tea leaves or food debris
- ▶ hair in the waste trap.

Note – use a suitable product available from most DIY stores to clear waste pipes and traps. Do not use caustic soda as it destroys modern plastic fittings.

The trap is under the bath, basin or sink. It always holds some water, which stops air and foul smells coming up the pipe. However, waste material can build up and cause a blockage.

To unblock a sink, basin or bath You will need:

- ▶ a bowl
- ▶ a jug or cup
- ▶ a rag or dishcloth
- ▶ a plunger
- ▶ rubber gloves.

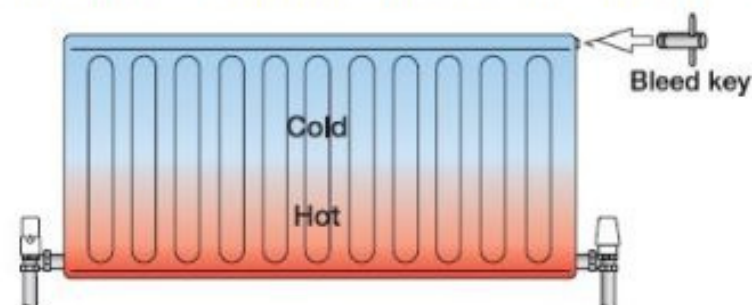
Then:

- ▶ remove most of the water, so the sink is half full
- ▶ wet the rag and hold it tightly over the overflow opening and place the plunger over the plug hole and pump up and down rapidly.
- ▶ If the sink, basin or bath is blocked, the blockage may be in the soil stack or main drain. We will need to clear this.

Heating – bleeding your radiators

Air in radiators can be a common fault in some heating systems, but it is easy to put right.

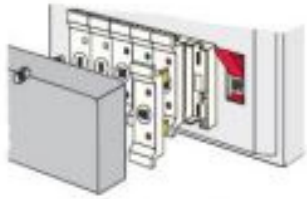
If the radiator is cold at the top and hot at the bottom, you will need to bleed it.



How to bleed your radiators

- ▶ Turn off the central heating.
- ▶ Insert a radiator bleed key into the radiator bleed vent
- ▶ Turn the key anti-clockwise to a maximum of one turn. You should hear a hiss as air escapes.
- ▶ As soon as water starts to appear at the bleed vent, turn off the vent by turning the key clockwise – do not over-tighten.
- ▶ Hold a cloth underneath the radiator bleed vent to catch any escaping water.
- ▶ Turn on the central heating and re-check the radiator.

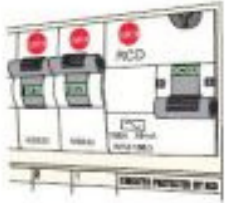
Fuse box



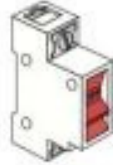
Fuse board



Consumer unit



Trip switches



Circuit breaker

Many homes are now installed with modern fuse boxes called 'consumer units', which contain circuit breakers or trip switches. If a fault occurs, these circuit breakers switch off to prevent injury and damage. If you do not have trip switches in your home and have fuses that can be rewired, please don't try to repair or replace them. Contact us to arrange an appointment.

Trip switches can operate for various reasons, including:

- ▶ an overloaded circuit – for instance, too many appliances being used at the same time
- ▶ faulty or misused appliances – for example, cookers and extension leads
- ▶ dirty cookers or toasters
- ▶ overfilled kettles
- ▶ faulty immersion heaters
- ▶ light bulbs blowing.

If your lighting circuit goes off, check that the trip switches marked 'lights' are switched on. If any are off, turn off the main switch (usually the red one at the end), reset the circuit breaker and turn the main switch back on. Check to see which lamp has 'blown'. If your sockets go off, unplug everything and turn off the main switch (this is usually the red one at the end), reset the circuit breaker and turn the main switch back on. Go around your property plugging appliances back in until you find the one with the fault. You may need to have the appliance replaced or repaired by a qualified electrician. If an appliance is faulty, do not put the plug back in.

Warning – never tamper with the electricity company's fuse, meter or seals. You should contact your electricity supplier.

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