



Steps to Getting Repairs Done

Landlords and tenants both have responsibilities for repairs. Both in statute and common law, but these are often subject to interpretation. A tenant should discuss this with the agency or landlord before signing a contract or during the tenancy consult the wording of the contract.

Step 1

You should consider what security you have as a tenant before taking action on repairs and consider the risk of eviction. This should not prevent you from reporting the repairs required but if your landlord refuses or is reluctant to carry these out you need to be aware of any consequences.

Step 2

Always check your tenancy agreement (if you have one). Look for what it says is the landlords responsibility and what are your's. If you are unclear or need clarification on this please seek advice.

Step 3

Report the repair to the landlord/agent in writing, and state clearly the nature of the problem. Make sure it is dated and signed by everyone. Keep a copy.

Note: If the repair is urgent (e.g. sanitation, health or safety risk) ask the landlord to deal with the problem within 1-3 days. Depending on the problem, anything up to 21 days for a minor repair would be a reasonable time scale within which to ask your landlord to deal with the repair.

Step 4

Collect as much evidence as you can including written description of the repair/problem, a copy of the letter notifying landlord/agent, photo/video, Environmental Health Officers report and information about any cost you may have incurred as a result - i.e. damage to clothing, having to stay elsewhere, eat out. The more detailed all this information is the better.

Step 5

If the repair is not done, try to find out why. If the delay seems unreasonable, **Step 6**

Step 6

Send a second letter by **recorded** delivery informing the landlord that unless the repair is undertaken

within a short period (up to 10-14 days depending on the seriousness) you will take the matter further.

Step 7

Consider other options (the SAC can assist you):

- Report the matter to the **Environmental Health Department** at the Civic Centre - they have the power to compel your landlord to do essential repairs. See SAC 'Moving In' leaflet.
- Is the property let under the **Accreditation Scheme**? If it is, contact the Accommodation Office, which should act on your behalf.
- Take the **Landlord to Court**. This is a civil action to get a court order requiring the landlord to do repairs. You will need a solicitor. From December 2003, a Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair claims has to be followed.
- Use the **rent to pay for repairs**. In order to do this within the law a very specific procedure must be followed. The SAC can advise and provide a leaflet on the procedure to be followed.

Damage through Vandalism or Burglary

Normally the landlord must do repairs. Who caused the damage is irrelevant unless you the tenant have been careless. To cover yourself against this charge:

- Draw the landlord's attention to any inadequacies in the security measures to the property.
- If the property is going to be left vacant for a significant period of time (especially over vacations) let your landlord know.

If your home security is compromised by an attack and you cannot contact your landlord, there is a good argument to say that it is reasonable for you to pay for work to be done securing the property and to send the bill to the landlord.

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You can access our website : www.unionsociety.co.uk/sac/

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