

# Repairs & Maintenance Policy

<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Connexus Operations Committee</b>
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<b>Policy developed by</b>	<b>Head of Connexus Repairs</b>
<b>Associated Procedure</b>	<b>Asset Management Strategy Connexus Compensation Policy 2019 Construction Design &amp; Management 2015 (CDM) and contractor Assurance policy – pending. Property Investment Works policy - pending</b>

## Say hello

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# Introduction

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the measures Connexus has in place to ensure it maintains the properties it owns and manages.

Repairs and Maintenance is a key service area and one on which we will be judged, particularly in terms of customer satisfaction with the quality of services provided. It is also a key component of our overall Asset Management Strategy, ensuring that the useful life of individual building components is maximised and hence value for money is optimised.

## 2. Problem to solve

The Regulator of Social Housing requires registered providers:

- To ensure that all homes are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities.
- Provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service that responds to the needs of, and offers choice to, tenants
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of tenants in their homes.

Connexus will also ensure that it carries out its obligations under:

- The Landlord and Tenant Act
- Tenancy Agreement
- Terms of Lease
- Health and Safety at work act 1974
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015
- Gas and electrical regulations
- Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme
- Homes (fitness for human habitation) Act 2018

Our aim is to provide a quality home for our customers, a home that is warm, safe, secure, affordable, well maintained and located in neighbourhoods which people are proud of and where they feel safe and secure. In order to achieve this we will:

- Providing quality homes that are sustainable homes that offer warm, safe, secure and healthy living environment for our customers; and which remain in demand.
- Preserve our housing stock asset value by investing at the right time and in the right place, in existing and new homes.
- Meet our statutory, regulatory and contractual repairs and maintenance obligations through measures that monitor performance and standards, ensuring probity and value for money.

- Plan for and provide adequate resources so we can create and deliver services that matter to our customers; services that deliver responsive as well as longer-term maintenance and stock investment works; providing an effective repairs service that is efficient, responsive and offers our customers value for money.
- Engage with our customers in a participative and empowering manner so that they have the opportunity to contribute and influence the future direction of the repairs and maintenance service.
- Fulfil our commitment to equality and diversity while delivering the repairs and maintenance service.
- Meet all legal requirements in the upkeep and maintenance of our properties e.g. Gas Safety, Health and Safety, Right to Repair, etc.

## DEFINITIONS

This policy brings together the key areas of our Repairs & Maintenance Service:

- **Responsive maintenance** – day-to-day repairs and maintenance issues that require an immediate or short term response.
- **Planned maintenance** – larger works and batched works that have a lead in period and may be subject to consultation.
- **Cyclical maintenance** – periodic maintenance and safety testing.
- **Void Repairs** – the repair, maintenance and investment on empty properties to enable the re-letting of the property.
- **Out-of-hours service** – the response to emergency works required outside of standard working hours.

## 3. Method

Connexus aims to provide an excellent quality repairs and maintenance service. To achieve this we will:

### Responsive Repairs, Planned Maintenance and Cyclical Maintenance

- Operate clear, concise, convenient and well publicised arrangements for reporting repairs and fulfil our repair obligations to the agreed responsive repairs service offers (standards) and within agreed response times. These will be reviewed annually following consultation with our customers.
- Ensure that our customers are aware of their responsibilities in maintaining the condition of their home.

- Publicise to our customers their right to repair and improve their homes; as well as the rights of Connexus to recharge repairs for wilful or accidental damage or neglect to the property.
- Deliver non-urgent repairs, especially external or communal repairs where a customer appointment isn't required, as part of a planned maintenance programme.
- Offer to our customers an appointment date, when we need to carry out a repair inspection or to complete the repair. We will also send a written or electronic confirmation receipt to our customers who have to wait more than five days for a repair inspection or for a repair to be completed. Our customers will always be contacted if we have to cancel or change an appointment and a new appointment will be offered.
- On completion of a repair inspection by a surveyor we will confirm the decision, and if a repair is needed, we will confirm an appointment date to complete the repair.
- Carry out quality assurance checks on the response repairs, planned maintenance and cyclical maintenance provided to customers, to ensure that services offered and delivered conform to the agreed customer standards.

#### Responsive Repairs categories and timescales

Connexus will operate the following response times for dealing with responsive repairs:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ▪ <b>Emergency</b>                   | Respond within 4 hours and make safe & within 24 hours to complete the repair. |
| ▪ <b>Urgent repairs</b>              | Complete within 1-5 working days.  |
| ▪ <b>Responsive routine repairs</b>  | Complete within 6-20 working days  |
| ▪ <b>Planned maintenance repairs</b> | Complete within 21-60 working days (12 weeks)                                  |

Appointments will be offered to all customers where it is practical to do so.

Seasonal adjustments are made to categories and timescales, Connexus identifies the winter season as from the 1<sup>st</sup> November until the 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Adjustments to categories and timescales will be made to support vulnerable customers who have no available support to assist them. The use of the word "vulnerable" in this context is based on the two primary meanings set out in the Oxford English Dictionary. The first definition is "exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally". The second is defined as (of a person) "in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect".

Further detail on repair timescales are set out in **Appendix One** of this policy.

#### Cyclical Maintenance

Connexus will complete a programme of works of cyclical maintenance which are repeated at regular intervals to cover:

- Gas servicing and maintenance
- External painting (including pre-painting repairs)
- Grounds maintenance and tree maintenance
- Electrical servicing and maintenance
- Fire systems, fire detection and portable fire equipment
- Water hygiene/ treatment (i.e. legionella, risk of scalding)
- Lifts and sliding doors
- Safety equipment (i.e. smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors)
- Portable appliance testing (PAT)
- Wet and dry riser
- Emergency lighting and automatic door
- Air conditioning
- Playground inspections

#### Out of hours repairs service

- Connexus will provide an out of hours repair service which will operate solely for emergency repairs that occur outside the hours of 8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. The emergency service remains available 24hrs a day during weekends and Bank Holidays.
- Where Connexus carry out emergency repairs, we will contact customers the next working day to make appointments for any follow up routine repairs required.

#### Property Investment Works

Connexus will deliver a programme of property investment (capital) works which we undertake to improve the condition of our stock, for example:

- Replacement kitchens, bathrooms and boilers.
- Upgrade of heating systems, boilers and wiring.
- Energy efficiency improvements.
- Replacement windows, doors and roofs.

- Estate improvements, garage/ car parking facilities.

Property investment works are determined by our Asset Management Strategy. How we deliver these works are set out in the Connexus Property Investment Works policy.

Connexus will fully comply with Construction Design & Management 2015 (CDM) requirements and where regulations do apply, will fulfil the role of CDM Co-coordinator when delivering our own in-house improvement works (see Construction Design & Management 2015 (CDM) and contractor Assurance policy)

#### Access and refusal of works

Through our tenancy agreements Connexus has the legal right to enter our properties to inspect or carry out repairs provided customers are given reasonable notice (at least 24 hours although immediate access may be necessary in emergencies).

Where a customer does not want property investment works carried out in their home, then they may refuse these unless the works are required to maintain the structural integrity of the dwelling or to prevent other components within the dwelling from deteriorating or where Health and Safety hazard exists.

If necessary, Connexus will take legal action to ensure an annual gas and electrical service/ safety check and any remedial works required is carried out at all properties.

#### Landlord responsibilities

Connexus is legally responsible (under the Landlord and Tenant Act and Right to Repair Regulations) for the maintenance and repair of the exterior and structural elements of its properties, facilities and installations inside properties which are part of a dwelling.

The repair responsibilities of **Connexus** are set out in **Appendix Two** of this policy.

#### Tenant and leasehold responsibilities and rechargeable repairs

Connexus will not carry out repairs, maintenance or replacement of elements of the property which are the responsibility of tenants and leaseholders.

The repair responsibilities of **tenants** are set out in **Appendix Three** of this policy.

The repair responsibilities of **leaseholders** are set out for guidance only in **Appendix Four** of this policy. Reference should always be made to the landlord's Leaseholders Handbook and individual lease agreements for more detailed information on the repair responsibilities of both the landlord and leaseholders. Shared owners are responsible for all repairs to their properties unless they share communal facilities, in which case they will be viewed as "leaseholders".

Where tenants are found to have failed to undertake their responsibilities or there are repeated failures that cause detriment to the upkeep of the property or nuisance to neighbours, Connexus may issue tenancy warnings or serve leaseholder notices and carry out repair works which are rechargeable to the tenant or initiate possession proceedings.

Where Connexus is requested to carry out repairs or maintenance that are normally the responsibility of the tenant or leaseholder to complete or are the result of deliberate damage or neglect, Connexus will recharge for the work concerned.

Tenants or leaseholders will be informed that the works will be rechargeable when contact is made with Connexus (either through incoming call, outbound call to book appointments or in person by a colleague). We will advise the tenant or leaseholder what the cost of the work will be.

Where a tenant is deemed to be vulnerable by way of disability, immobility through old age or for any other reason, Connexus may carry out works that would normally be the responsibility of the tenant to complete without recharging. Each case will be considered on its merits and the decision will be at Connexus' discretion based on known information and individual circumstances.

Connexus' Rechargeable Works Policy should be referred to and complied with at all times.

### Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Connexus will fully comply with the requirements of the HHSRS, the main principle being that any residential premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor.

To satisfy this, a dwelling should be designed, constructed and maintained with non-hazardous materials and should be free from both unnecessary and unavoidable hazards

In bringing all of its properties up to the Decent Homes Standard Connexus ensured there are no category 1 hazards (that provide a serious risk to health and safety) in any of its properties.

Connexus will continue to ensure properties remain hazard free by:

- A continued programme of investment and improvement in its properties.
- Ensuring all void properties meet the Decent Homes Standard before letting.
- Supporting colleagues in identifying risks on a day-day-basis, ensuring that we are proactive in resolving through robust management arrangements.
- Cyclical safety testing as outlined above.
- Identifying and resolving risks identified when carrying out stock condition surveys, regular risk assessments and estate inspections.

Connexus will fully comply with any 'Improvement Notices' or 'Orders' that may be served upon it following investigation by Local Authority Environmental Health Officers in relation to the conditions of the Housing Health & Safety Rating System.

### Insurance

Connexus will at all times carry appropriate buildings insurance to cover for loss or damage caused to buildings (or any parts of buildings and surrounding areas that Connexus has legal responsibility for).

Connexus is not responsible for insuring the contents of its properties. Customers must take out their own Home Contents Insurance and can also access a special scheme arranged through Connexus' insurers should they wish to do so.

### Repairs to Void Properties

Connexus is committed to delivering investment at the right time and right place. When a property becomes empty (void) Connexus has the opportunity to review the current quality and future sustainability of that property. Where we decide to invest in a property we will act swiftly to assess the repair and investment needs of the property, ensuring the property meets the lettable standard as defined by legislation, that it delivers what matters to the prospective customer, and we do so in a timely and consistent way.

Throughout the void repairs process we demonstrate value for money and delivery of efficiencies through reduced numbers and reduced re-let times. We will regularly review the void repairs and investment work we carry out and will aspire to aligned void repair works with our customer's expectations and what matters to them.

Every void property will only be let if it achieves the legislative definition as set out in the Homes (fitness for human habitation) Act 2018.

We will take a proactive approach in identifying and pursuing rechargeable repairs/ bad debts through carrying out repairs to void properties.

### Handyperson+

Connexus (Herefordshire only) offers customers the opportunity to access our "pay as you go" Handyperson+ service to complete additional DIY jobs which we can help with that would not normally be carried out by our responsive repairs service.

Right to Repair – see Appendix 5.

Alterations and Improvements – see Appendix 5.

Party Wall Act 1996 – see Appendix 5.

## **4. Measurement**

To ensure that the repairs and maintenance service continues to reach the consistently high service standards Connexus will:

### Quality Management

- Set challenging and realistic performance targets.
- Carry out a sample of post inspections across all responsive, planned and cyclical maintenance jobs.

- Carry out 100% post inspections of void repairs works.
- Carry out a random sample of telephone surveys for completed repairs through an independent organisation, contracted to gather and analyse customer satisfaction.
- Benchmark our performance against relevant industry comparators.

#### Performance

- Report performance regularly to our Board and Operations Committee.
- Monitor performance against a range of measures and indicators through monthly scorecards, customer feedback, complaints and compliments, and analysis of post-inspections and colleague feedback.
- Make full use of external scrutiny/ inspection by external bodies/ agencies.
- Report performance to our customers on an annual basis through our annual report.
- Examine performance through customer inspection and scrutiny groups.

#### External Contractors

We will continuously monitor the performance of all contractors employed on repairs and maintenance works through a variety of methods including:

- Customer feedback from satisfaction surveys
- Analysis of complaints
- Work in progress quality inspections
- Post inspections for quality
- Delivery of key performance indicators

All of this information will be collected and used to inform regular reviews of each contractor's performance, which will identify any actions necessary to be taken including determining or not extending contract, not inviting to tender for future contracts, etc.

#### Feedback, Complaints & Compliments

Any complaint about the repairs and maintenance service will be dealt with in a professional manner in accordance with the Connexus Complaints Policy and Procedures.

#### Code of Conduct

Connexus will ensure that all colleagues, contractors and consultants employed to deliver the repairs and maintenance service adhere to the company's code of conduct for colleagues and contractors.

### Customer Engagement & Communication

Connexus will ensure that we communicate with our customers in the most efficient and effective way and that they are encouraged to be actively involved in the development and future direction of the repairs and maintenance service.

By working with customers we will be:

- Obtaining the views of the repairs, maintenance and improvement services from a customer's perspective.
- Reviewing and agreeing policies and service standards in relation to the strategic approach to asset management.
- Shaping policy review work on repairs, maintenance and investment.
- Agreeing the content and delivery of investment work.
- Contributing to effective procurement processes.
- Recommending and agreeing standards of service for repairs and maintenance.
- Monitoring performance and continuous improvement activity.
- Contractor selection and performance reviews.

### Equality & Diversity

Connexus is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and fair access for housing and employment. We recognise that the community we serve is made up of people from different backgrounds, religions and traditions that have with individual needs and expectations.

We will ensure that we reflect this in the way we present and deliver the repairs and maintenance service in line with the Company's Equality, Diversity and Inclusive Policy and Strategy.

### **MONITORING AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that implementation of this policy is monitored.

Our Executive Director for Assets & Repairs is responsible for delivering the policy and will be accountable for its implementation and colleague training.

Every Asset & Repairs colleague has the responsibility to read, understand and implement this policy.

All contractors, consultants and partner organisations are responsible for operating in accordance with this policy when delivering services on behalf of Connexus.



## Appendix 1 - REPAIR TIMESCALES

### 1. Emergency Repair

These are repairs that have an immediate health, safety or security risk.

To respond and make safe and secure within 4 hours:

- Major disaster or fire
- Immediate danger to life or serious risk of damage to the property
- Severe storm damage
- Flooding
- Uncontrollable water leak in the dwelling

To respond, make safe or complete the repair within 24 hours:

- Total loss of electric power (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Total loss of water supply (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Total or partial loss of gas supply (excluding failure by utilities to maintain suppliers).
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.
- No hot water (winter only -1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> March).
- No central heating and main fire in lounge not working (winter only -1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> March).
- Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (only toilet in property).
- Blocked toilet where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling.
- Leaking toilet cistern, bath and basin, heating pipes, water tank or cylinder (none containable).
- Insecure external ground floor window, door or lock.
- Total loss of electric power to communal lights.
- Repairs to defective fire doors.
- Force entry and change locks.
- Unsafe rotten timber flooring or stairs.
- Stairs lifts or hoist not working.
- Unsafe fencing, walls, footpaths, communal drying areas, car parking areas or steps.
- Remove and board up broken and dangerous glazing.
- Missing manhole cover.
- Smoke detector (mains operated) not working or continuously sounding off (customer to check batteries first).
- Unsafe sockets, light switch or pendants.
- Running overflow in icy conditions.
- Loose stair treads handrails and/or banisters.
- Dangerous loose roof tiles, chimney pots and guttering.

**Please note:** our trade colleagues and contractors are not allowed to carry out any emergency work that will put them in personal danger, e.g. roof repairs after dark or in severe weather conditions.

**Any misuse of the emergency repairs service will result in you being charged for the call out.**

## 2. Urgent Repairs

These are very urgent repairs that do not fall into an emergency repair category.

To complete the repair within one to five working days.

- Partial loss of electric power, including defective power points, sockets etc.
- Partial loss of water supply.
- No hot water (summer only – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October).
- No central heating and main fire in lounge not working (summer only – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October).
- Central heating not working and main fire in lounge is functioning.
- Only one central heating radiator/storage heater and main fire in lounge is working.
- Blocked sink, basin, bath or waste pipes.
- Leaking roof.
- Leaking from water or heating pipes, tank, cistern, baths, toilets, basins, sinks or cylinders etc. (dripping and containable).
- Toilet not flushing.
- Leaking toilet cistern when flushed
- Sink or basin waste dripping (containable).
- Taps not working to kitchen sink, bath and hand basins.
- Reseal around bath or shower.
- Door entry system not working.
- Faulty shower (if installed by Connexus and only means of bathing).
- Faulty immersion heaters.
- Faulty door lock (property secure).
- Renew letter box lock (communal flats or maisonettes).
- External underground water service leaking
- Removal of obscene and racist graffiti from Connexus properties.
- Replace faulty lightbulbs or fittings in communal areas (winter only – 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> March).
- Urgent Health & Safety works.

## 3. Responsive Routine Repairs

These are small routine repair jobs that can be completed within six (6) to 20 working days.

- Unblock second toilet in the property.
- Unblock gulley or repair surround.
- Repair running overflow (summer season – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October).
- Repair dripping tap.
- Repair loose toilet pan.
- Renew internal door to WC or bathroom.
- Repair internal doors, latches and door frames.
- Replace electric sockets, lamp holder rose, and lamp or batten holders.
- Replacing light bulbs, florescent tubes and their starters for non-standard light fittings.
- Repair electric and gas fires where they are an integral part of the properties heating system\*.
- Repair stop tap.
- Remedy water hammering.
- Repair water tank/cylinder.
- Repair solid fuel fire basket where it is an integral part of the properties heating system\*.

- Repair external door, locks and furniture.
- Repair windows, catches and furniture.
- Re-string communal rotary dryers.
- Repair communal TV aerials.
- Replace faulty light bulbs or fittings in communal areas (summer – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October).
- Repair stairs and steps (no trip hazard).
- Replace storage tanks, hot water cylinders.
- Replace waste water pipes.
- Repair defective central heating appliances not covered by other priorities.
- Re-glazing of external windows and doors.
- Minor repairs to leaking gutters and rainwater pipes.
- Replace electrical night storage heater.
- Repair kitchen unit and worktop.
- Repair concrete floors and floorboards.
- Replace manhole cover and frame.
- Replace isolated area of wall and floor tiles.
- Remove graffiti (non-offensive).
- Replace/repair extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom.
- Repairs to garages, store sheds (roofs and doors).
- CCTV Survey of drains (repeated drain problems).
- Replace/repair waste disposal unit faulty.
- Replace/repair faulty shower (if installed by Connexus and a bath installed)
- Replace/repair smoke detector (when there is more than one detector working in the property).
- Minor plaster repairs.
- Replace/repair street lights

#### **4. Planned Maintenance Repairs**

Larger type of repairs that cannot wait for the company's property investment works programme will be packaged together and dealt with on a programmed repairs basis; repairs that fall into this category will be completed within 12 weeks (60 working days).

These may include the following type of repairs:

- Renewal of bath, hand basin or complete bathroom suite.
- Replace glazed wall tile surrounds to baths, shower trays, hand basins and kitchen work tops.
- Resolving condensation problems to bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms etc.
- Renew internal, external or garage doors and frames.
- Removing open fireplaces and blocking up opening etc.
- Install focal point fires where they are an integral part of the properties heating system\*.
- Replace complete floors, concrete or timber flooring.
- Timber and dampness treatment to walls, floor or ceilings.
- Replace kitchen units, worktops (not including kitchen refurbishment or improvement works).
- Major plastering works to walls and ceilings.
- External repairs to brickwork, rendering, chimney's or garden walls.
- Replace or repairs to fascias, soffits and verges.
- Replace external steps, ramps, footpaths and hard standings.
- Replace fencing and entrance gates (owned by Connexus).
- Overhaul of rainwater goods, downpipes and guttering.

- Replacing roof sheeting, cladding or felt coverings.
- Roof repairs to sheds and outbuildings.
- Internal doors
- Renew window frames and casements.
- Non-urgent Health & Safety works.

\*Note: Repair and maintenance of ***secondary heating***, including electric or gas fires, open fires and wood burners, including replacing ash pans and fire baskets for solid fuel fires are tenants responsibility.

Note: Adjustments to categories and timescales will be made to support vulnerable customers who have no available support to assist them.

## Appendix 2 - CONNEXUS REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. REPAIR OF STRUCTURE & EXTERIOR

To keep the structure and exterior of the premises in good repair including:

- The roof.
- Drains (excluding drains maintained by mains provider), gutters and external pipes.
- Outside walls, outside doors, window sills, window catches, sash cords (glass) and window frames, including any necessary external painting or decoration.
- Internal walls, skirting boards, doors and door frames, door jambs, thresholds, floors, ceilings and kitchen units and work surfaces (but not painting and decoration).
- Internal plaster work (not filling of minor cracks prior to decorations).
- Chimneys and chimney stacks and flues \*(excluding leasehold shared chimney stacks).
- Boundary walls, fences, and access pathways, steps and ramps.
- Car parking areas (where provided by Connexus).
- Garages and outbuildings (where provided by Connexus).
- Stair and passenger lifts.

### 2. REPAIR OF INSTALLATIONS

To keep in good repair and proper working order any installations provided or adopted by Connexus landlords (Herefordshire Housing, South Shropshire and Meres & Mosses) for space heating, water heating and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

- Water pipes and tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring
- Electrical sockets and light fittings (but not plugs or non Connexus appliances)
- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes
- Water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators (where provided by Connexus)
- Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors (where provided by Connexus)

### 3. REPAIR OF COMMUNAL AREAS

To take reasonable care to keep the following in reasonable repair and fit for use by the tenant and other occupiers and visitors to the premises

- Communal entrances, halls and passageways
- Stairways and passenger lifts
- Rubbish chutes
- Lighting
- Any other communal parts

### 4. DECORATION OF EXTERIOR AND COMMUNAL AREAS

To maintain the exterior of the property and any internal communal areas in a reasonable state of decoration.

## Appendix 3 - TENANT REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. GENERAL

Tenants are responsible for keeping the interior of their home in a good condition and to decorate all internal parts as often as is necessary to keep them in good decorative order. Tenants are also expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent damage once a repair fault has been identified.

To repair, renew or replace as necessary any parts of the structure, installations, fixtures or fittings inside or outside the building that are damaged by the tenants, a member of the tenants household or someone the tenant has allowed into the property, including children. Criminal damage or vandalism should be reported to the Police and a police crime number obtained.

Not to make any changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property without written permission from Connexus.

To maintain any approved changes to the structure of the property, its fixtures and fittings, boundary fence or wall or anything connected to the provision of services to the property.

To take reasonable steps to avoid moisture build up (condensation) within the property and causing damage.

To pay in full any rechargeable repair cost due to misuse or damage to the structure or fittings of the property.

### 2. INTERNAL DECORATION & OTHER MATTERS

To keep the interior of the premises in good and tenantable repair and in clean and good decorative condition, and to decorate all internal parts of the premises as frequently as is necessary to keep them in reasonable decorative order.

### 3. MINOR REPAIRS

Tenants are responsible for carrying out minor repairs such as the following:

- Replacing plugs and chains to baths, basins and sinks
- Replacing keys that are lost or when tenants have been locked out
- Testing and maintaining smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, including battery replacement
- Repair and maintenance of **secondary heating**, including electric or gas fires, open fires and wood burners, and includes replacing ash pans and fire baskets for solid fuel fires.
- Sweeping chimneys as often as necessary to prevent fires and to ensure efficient operation
- Replacing fuses, light bulbs, florescent tubes and their starters for standard fittings.
- Cleaning baths, wc pans and washbasins
- Replacing toilet seats
- First attempt to clear blockages in sinks, hand basins, water pipes, toilets or gullies
- Repairing minor plaster cracks or holes to walls and / or ceilings
- Taking steps to prevent water in pipes and tanks from freezing
- Repairing gas and electric cookers

- Garden Maintenance including trees
- Replacing washing lines and posts or restringing including rotary dryers (except in communal areas).
- Maintaining garden paths
- Repairing any fences installed by tenants
- TV aerials (except communal aerials) and any damage to property or neighbouring property caused by their installation.
- Ensure the property is appropriately heated and ventilated
- Cleaning off mould and condensation
- Supplying and renewing dustbins
- Reglazing broken windows unless as a result of a crime and a crime number provided
- Altering doors for carpets.
- Alterations to install additional appliances, fittings or fixers.
- Re-glazing of external windows and doors where the tenant has caused the damage.
- Cleaning leaves and garden waste etc. from rainwater gullies.
- Removal of pests in communal areas (rats, fleas, wasps, etc.)

#### 4. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

Tenants can be charged for repairs under the following circumstances:

- If the tenant asks Connexus to carry out extra work that is their responsibility
- If the tenant replaces any fixtures or fittings, or does any repairs or improvements without first obtaining Connexus' written permission
- If Connexus has to repair anything that the tenant, members of their family, visitors or pets have damaged (including blocked toilets or waste pipes caused by neglect or misuse)
- If the tenant misuses the emergency call-out system
- Re-lighting boilers where this is caused by an act or omission of the tenant
- Any repairs that are tenants responsibility
- Garden Maintenance including trees.
- You may be charged if you have not kept an agreed appointment.

In certain circumstances tenants may qualify for a waiver were vulnerability can be demonstrated.

Connexus will consider the replacement of locks where this is required to protect the tenant from domestic violence or burglary. Connexus will also carry out the work at no cost to the tenant where this is required through no fault of the tenant.

When a tenant does not carry out repairs that are their responsibility and failure to do so causes a risk to the tenant, neighbours or the property, Connexus may carry out the repair and recharge the cost to the tenant.

Where a tenant is deemed to be vulnerable by way of disability, immobility through old age or for any other reason, Connexus may carry out works that would normally be the responsibility of the tenant to complete without recharging. Each case will be considered on its merits and the decision will be at Connexus' discretion based on known information and individual circumstances.

## Appendix 4 - LEASEHOLDER REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Connexus is responsible for keeping the 'common' parts of blocks in good repair and will maintain the structure of the building and the internal and external communal areas. Leaseholders are responsible for keeping the inside of their home in good repair.
2. Connexus will complete the Section 20 process for all works where the cost to an individual leaseholder is expected to exceed £250.
3. The following table provides a guide on who is likely to be responsible for repairs. Individual lease agreements will provide specific information regarding repair responsibilities and must be referred to at all times.
4. Shared owners are responsible for all repairs to their properties unless they share communal facilities, in which case they will be viewed as "leaseholders".

TYPE OF REPAIR	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Doors:</b>	
Door to individual flat	Connexus
Door fastenings	Leaseholder
Door frame to individual flat	Connexus
Communal entrance doors to block	Connexus
Lost keys / locks and handles	Leaseholder
Internal doors in flat	Leaseholder
Existing door entry systems	Connexus
<b>Windows:</b>	
Window frames (in external wall)	Connexus
Double glazing in UPVC windows	Connexus
Glass in windows of flats	Leaseholder
Window – fastenings	Leaseholder
<b>Heating:</b>	
Individual central heating system	Leaseholder
Gas Appliances; Servicing and Safety Checks	Leaseholder
Sweeping chimneys	Leaseholder
<b>Electrical:</b>	
Faults within the flat	Leaseholder
No mains supply to the flat (other than power cut)	Connexus
Communal lighting	Connexus
Check after water leak from another tenants' flat or communal area	Connexus
<b>Plumbing:</b>	
Burst pipe in flat	Leaseholder
Taps and tap washers	Leaseholder
Stopcocks, ball valves	Leaseholder

Bath, basin, sink and w.c.	Leaseholder
Blocked waste pipes	Leaseholder
Hot or cold water storage tanks within flat	Leaseholder
Communal water storage tank	Connexus
Communal pipes under floor	Connexus
Water main supply to flat	Connexus

#### TYPE OF REPAIR

#### RESPONSIBILITY

#### Floors within Flats:

Floorboards	Leaseholder
Structural floor slabs	Connexus
Floor Joists	Connexus
Skirting boards and mouldings	Leaseholder
Floor tiles, concrete screeding	Leaseholder

#### Walls:

Interior non-structural walls	Leaseholder
Structural walls of flat and block	Connexus
Foundations	Connexus
Plaster and plasterboard - interior of flat	Leaseholder
Architraves and mouldings	Leaseholder

#### Decorations:

Internal decorations to flat	Leaseholder
Communal area decorations	Connexus

#### Communal Facilities:

Communal entrances, passages, landing and stairs	Connexus
Communal TV aerials	Connexus
Communal gardens and car parks	Connexus

#### Exterior:

Roof	Connexus
Chimney (not sweeping)	Connexus
Gutters & rainwater pipes	Connexus
Painting	Connexus
Fencing of communal areas	Connexus
Grounds maintenance of communal areas	Connexus
Balconies (structural parts and railings)	Connexus
Main drains	Connexus
Storage and refuse bin areas	Connexus

#### Interior:

As a general rule repairs in the interior of the flat are the responsibility of the leaseholder and communal areas are the responsibility of the landlord.

## **Appendix 5 – RIGHT TO REPAIR / ALTERATIONS & IMPROVEMENTS / PARTY WALL ACT 1996**

### **Right to Repair**

Connexus must complete certain urgent repairs that might affect health and safety or security of tenants within specified timescales (these are known as qualifying repairs). Failure to complete the repairs within specified timescales will lead to compensation payable to tenants.

Qualifying repairs are set by law and the total cost of the repair must be below £250. Prescribed response times are also set by law and will either be 1, 3 or 7 working days depending on the repair. The response time must take into account the needs of the tenant including their health, safety or security.

Connexus will advise the tenant of the expected timescale to complete the repair (prescribed period) and where possible make an appointment for the repair to be completed.

If Connexus (or contractors acting on our behalf) fail to complete qualifying repairs within the initial prescribed period, the tenant may inform Connexus that the repair has not been completed and a second repair appointment made, with the same prescribed period to complete the work. Where Connexus will need to carry out an inspection before works can be ordered the prescribed period would start on the next working day following inspection.

If Connexus (or contractors acting on our behalf) fail to complete the repair within the second prescribed period then compensation will be £10, plus £2 a day for every day the repair remains outstanding, up to a maximum of £50.

Where Right to Repair compensation claim is made and is payable Connexus will arrange for a payment to be sent to the tenant directly. Connexus does, however, reserve the right to offset any payments against debts owed to it, for example where there are rent arrears.

Connexus will not accept liability for Right to Repair compensation when:

- The tenant informs Connexus that the repair is no longer required.
- Where the tenant fails to grant access for the repair or inspection to be carried out.
- Where the tenant misses an appointment that has been arranged for an inspection or repair to be carried out.
- Repairs that when carried out are found to have a total value exceeding £250.

### **Alterations and Improvements**

Customers have the right to make some alterations and improvements to their property, provided they receive written permission from Connexus. In considering an application to make an alteration or improvement, we will take into account a number of factors including for example (but not restricted to):

- The work will not reduce the value of the property or result in additional cost to us.

- The work will not make the property less safe.
- The customer obtains all statutory approvals for work and proofs are provided to Connexus including necessary Building Regulations, Planning Consent, Electrical Safety Certificate and Gas Safety Certificate.
- An Asbestos survey has been completed at the property.
- The customer understands that if the work does not meet the satisfaction of Connexus or has been carried out without permission, we reserve the right to correct any defective work, and to recharge the customer for the costs incurred.
- The work will not restrict access for Connexus to carry out essential repairs/ improvements.
- The customer will permit Connexus to inspect the alteration/ installation once completed.

On leaving a tenancy, improvements made by a tenant may qualify for compensation under the Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994. Where the tenant is exercising their Preserved Right to Buy, Right to Acquire or acquiring their property on Rent to Mortgage terms they are ineligible for compensation.

The tenant is required to submit a compensation claim.

See Connexus Compensation policy.

### **Party Wall Act 1996**

When considering work to properties with adjoining private owners and leaseholders, Connexus will fully comply with the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996 when any proposed works to party walls or party wall structures have consequences for the structural strength and support functions of the wall.

Connexus will assess the need to notify adjoining neighbours of proposed works on a case by case basis and for minor, routine works permission under the Act will not be required. Connexus will provide written notification to all adjoining owners of proposed building works (that have consequences for the structural strength of support functions of the wall). Any necessary planning consent will be obtained for any party wall works that Connexus commissions or intends to carry out.

Where Connexus receives notification of intention to carry out works to party walls from adjoining neighbours to its properties a written response will be sent within 14 days of the notice being received, agreeing or disagreeing with the proposed works.

Where Connexus disagrees with the proposed works, Connexus will appoint an independent surveyor. In all cases Connexus will seek to reach agreement with the adjoining neighbour in the first instance by way of amicable discussion.