



NORTH STAR
Creating homes, building futures

North Star **Repairs Handbook**

Keeping your **home safe,**
secure and in good repair.

northstarhg.co.uk



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WELCOME

This handbook explains how North Star's responsive repairs service works, what you can expect from us, and what responsibilities are yours.

It covers day-to-day repairs to your home and repairs to communal areas and shared parts of buildings where North Star is responsible.

It does not cover planned improvements such as new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, and roofs.

Repairs are one of the most important services we provide. They help keep homes:

- safe
- secure
- warm
- weather-tight
- in good repair



OUR REPAIRS PROMISE

North Star is committed to:

- keeping homes safe, secure and in good repair
- responding within published timescales
- treating you with respect and professionalism
- keeping you informed
- considering vulnerability and individual needs
- learning from feedback, complaints and performance information

When delivering repairs, our staff and contractors will:

- be polite and professional
- treat you and your home with respect
- explain what work is being carried out
- show identification when attending your home
- agree appointments where possible
- aim to complete repairs right first time wherever possible



REPORTING A REPAIR

You can report a repair in several ways:

Via our website:

www.northstarhg.co.uk

Telephone

By calling **03000 11 00 11**

Email

By emailing

customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk

In person:

At North Star offices (by appointment only)

North Star Online

Search **North Star Online** in the App Store or Google Play to download the free app, or visit our website

Via Facebook (during office hours)

facebook.com/northstarhg

Via your Support Worker

When reporting a repair, please provide:

- your name and address
- a contact telephone number
- details of the repair
- when the contractor will be able to visit you
- any information about health needs or vulnerability that may affect the repair

Please report repairs as soon as possible so that we can respond quickly and prevent problems getting worse.



EMERGENCY AND OUT OF HOURS REPAIRS

North Star provides an out-of-hours service for emergencies, including evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

This service is for repairs that pose an immediate risk to:

- **health**
- **safety**
- **security**
- **the structure of the home**

Out-of-hours emergency repairs are normally attended within **4 hours** to make the situation safe.

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- serious water leaks or burst pipes
- gas leaks
- dangerous electrical faults
- total loss of power
- insecure external doors or windows
- serious structural danger
- blocked toilet where there is only one toilet

The emergency service must only be used for genuine emergencies.

Misuse of the service may result in a cost to you.



REPAIR CATEGORIES AND TIMESCALES

Repairs are prioritised according to the risk to health, safety, security and the condition of the home.

Repair Type	Examples	Target Timescale
Emergency Call Outs (Out of Hours)	Listed on page 6	Attend and make safe within 4 hours
Emergency Repairs	Listed on page 6	Attend and make safe within 24 hours
Urgent Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaking roof • Loss of hot water or heating when no back up • Toilet blocked or not flushing where there is more than one toilet available • Smaller water leaks that cannot be contained 	Attend within 3 working days

REPAIR CATEGORIES AND TIMESCALES

Repair Type	Examples	Target Timescale
Routine Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small plumbing jobs such as dripping taps • Issues with fittings such as kitchen worktops and cupboards • Gates and fencing • Indoor joinery repairs such as doors and window frames 	Attend within 20 working days
Planned Works	Issues with recent major replacements in your home such as kitchens and bathrooms	Attend within 90 working days

Damp, mould and condensation cases that may present a risk to health will be assessed and prioritised in line with legal requirements, including Awaab's Law.

Timescales may be affected by:

- access issues
- the availability of specialist parts
- surveys or investigations
- health and safety considerations

Where this happens, we will keep you informed.





DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION

Damp and mould can seriously affect health and wellbeing.

If you notice damp, mould or condensation in your home please report it to us as soon as possible.

We will:

- assess the issue promptly
- arrange an inspection if required
- consider health impacts and vulnerability
- investigate the cause
- take appropriate action to resolve the problem



Further information and advice can be found on our website:
northstarhg.co.uk/manage-my-home/repairs/damp-mould-condensation/



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU REPORT A REPAIR

When you report a repair we will:

01 Log the repair

02 Assess its priority

03 Decide if a pre-inspection is needed before a contractor attends to carry out the job

04 Arrange an appointment or instruct a contractor

A inspection is where a North Star member of staff comes to look at the issue before the repair appointment.

These may be required where:

- the issue cannot be diagnosed without being seen in person
- responsibility for the repair is unclear
- further investigation is required
- the repair is complex
- the repair relates to damp, mould or condensation, or may pose a risk to health

Where required, inspections will normally take place within **5 working days**.

Repairs involving potential health risks, including damp and mould, will be prioritised.



APPOINTMENTS AND ACCESS

We will normally offer an appointment window depending on the urgency of the repair.

Please allow reasonable access for North Star staff or contractors.

To help us complete repairs safely and efficiently, please:

- clear the work area
- move belongings where possible
- remove floor coverings where necessary

For routine repairs, we will normally make up to three attempts to gain access. If access is not provided, we may ask you to rearrange the repair and the repair may be cancelled if we do not hear from you.

For repairs involving potential health hazards, including damp, mould and condensation, we will make additional efforts to gain access and manage any risks in line with legal requirements.

Missed appointments may result in a cost to you in some circumstances.

We have a duty to protect the health and safety of our staff and contractors.

Please keep your home smoke free during repairs or home visits. If this is not possible, our staff may leave without completing the work, which could delay your repair or visit.



EQUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY

To make sure our services are fair, inclusive and accessible, we can provide support such as:

- interpreting services
- British Sign Language support
- large print or alternative formats
- assistance understanding written information
- allowing you to request a visit from someone of a certain gender

If you have a disability, health condition or vulnerability that may affect the repair, please tell us when reporting the repair.



REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

North Star provides a comprehensive repairs service. However, some repairs are your responsibility.

The below tables show who is responsible for which repairs. **If a repair isn't listed or you are unsure, please contact us.**

Repairs to the outside of the home

Repair	North Star	You
Communal areas such as lifts and stairs	✓	
Garages owned by North Star	✓	
Sheds built by you		✓
Garden maintenance and rubbish clearance		✓
Fences, walls and gates installed by North Star	✓	
Fences, walls or gates installed by you		✓
Footpaths and hard standings installed by North Star	✓	
Footpaths or hard standings installed by you		✓
Clothes lines installed by North Star	✓	
Satellite dishes and aerials		✓
Chimneys and roof structures	✓	
Guttering and rainwater goods	✓	
Canopies over doors or windows	✓	

REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Doors and Windows

Repair	North Star	You
External doors and fittings	✓	
Internal doors	✓	
Window frames and fittings	✓	
Internal window boards	✓	
Lost keys or lockouts		✓
Damage due to misuse		✓
Door adjustment following new flooring		✓
Removing or refitting blinds after repairs		✓

Drainage

Repair	North Star	You
Soil pipes and vents	✓	
Drain grids and gullies	✓	
Inspection chambers	✓	
Blocked drainage (not through misuse)	✓	
Keeping gully grids clean		✓

REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Walls and Ceilings

Repair	North Star	You
Foundations and damp proof course	✓	
External masonry and rendering	✓	
Major plaster repairs	✓	
Minor plaster repairs		✓
Internal decoration		✓
Wall tiling installed by North Star	✓	
Tiling installed by you		✓
Decorative finishes such as coving or shelving		✓

Floors

Repair	North Star	You
Structural floors and joists	✓	
Concrete floors and screeds	✓	
Communal flooring	✓	
Floor coverings such as carpet or laminate		✓

REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Kitchens and Bathrooms

Repair	North Star	You
Kitchen cupboards, doors and drawers	✓	
Kitchen handles and hinges	✓	
Worktops	✓	
Taps and sink units	✓	
Toilet flushing system	✓	
Bath or shower tray	✓	
Seals around sinks or baths		✓
Toilet seats		✓

Plumbing

Repair	North Star	You
Water pipes and tanks	✓	
Blocked drains or toilets (not through misuse)	✓	
Taps and pipework	✓	
Bleeding radiators		✓
Removing radiators for decoration		✓

REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Gas and Electrical

Repair	North Star	You
Gas boilers and pipework	✓	
Radiators and thermostats	✓	
Electrical wiring and sockets	✓	
Consumer unit	✓	
Smoke and CO alarms	✓	
Electric storage heaters	✓	
Gas or electric meters		✓
Light bulbs		✓
Cooker connection or disconnection		✓
Electrical appliances		✓

RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

Charges may apply where repairs are required because of:

- deliberate damage or negligence
- lost keys or lockouts
- misuse of the emergency service
- missed appointments
- unauthorised alterations
- damage caused by tenants or visitors

Wherever possible we will advise you in advance if a repair may be rechargeable.





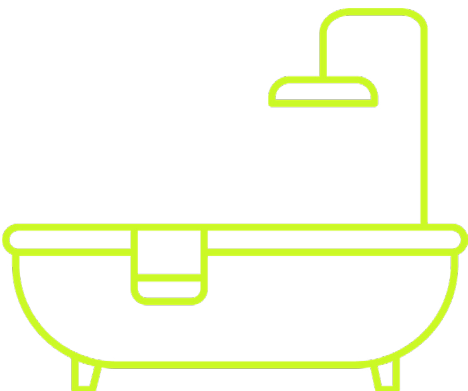
ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

You must get written permission from us before carrying out alterations or improvements.

Examples include:

- installing showers
- replacing kitchens or bathrooms
- installing laminate flooring
- fitting sheds or fencing

North Star is not responsible for repairing items installed by you.



Previous tenants' improvements that we may leave in an empty property and take responsibility for in future include:

- showers
- kitchens
- bathrooms
- doors

If these items need replacing, they will only be replaced with standard available items.

We may also leave some non-standard items in the property for the new tenant to keep. These items will become the tenant's responsibility, and North Star will not repair or replace them. These may include:

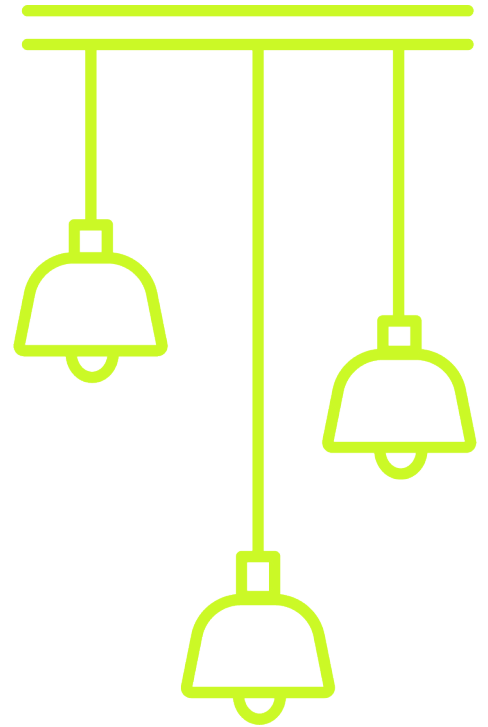
- sheds
- laminate flooring
- carpets, lino and floor tiles
- paving
- water butts

RIGHT TO REPAIR

Some small urgent repairs fall under the **Right to Repair Scheme**.

If a qualifying repair costing **£250 or less** is not completed within the legal timescale, compensation may be payable:

- £10 initial payment
- £2 per additional working day
- maximum £50 per repair

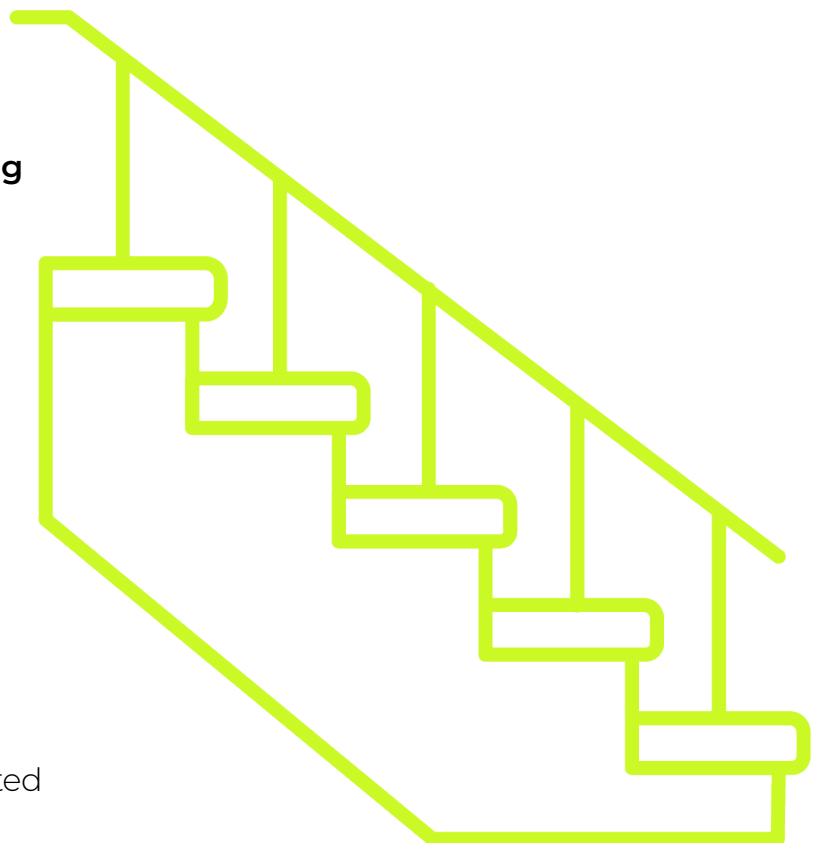


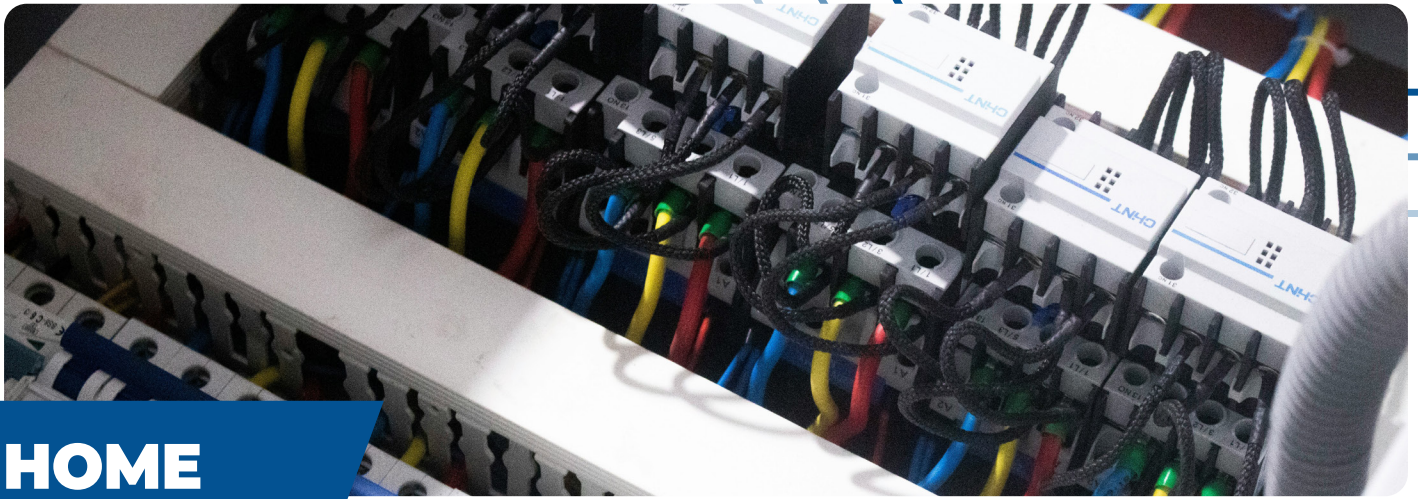
COMMUNAL AREAS

North Star is responsible for maintaining communal areas including:

- entrances and hallways
- stairwells and corridors
- lifts
- communal lighting
- shared drainage
- car parks and footpaths
- bin stores and grounds

Repairs to communal areas can be reported in the same way as any other repair.





HOME SAFETY

North Star carries out annual gas safety checks where required. You must allow access for these inspections as they are essential for safety.

If you smell gas:

- call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately on 0800 111 999
- open windows and doors
- do not use electrical switches
- contact North Star once it is safe

Gas repairs should be reported to North Star in the usual way.

Electricity consumer units (fuse boards)

Your consumer unit (also known as a fuse board) controls the electricity in your home. It includes a main on/off switch and circuit breakers labelled for different areas, such as lights or sockets. You should find where this is when you move in.

If a fault occurs, one of the switches may trip to the OFF position.

If you lose all power

- Check whether there is a local power cut or if your prepayment meter has credit
- Reset the main switch and circuit breakers
- If a switch trips again, there may be a fault. Call us on **03000 11 00 11**.

If your sockets stop working

- Unplug all appliances
- Reset the socket circuit breaker
- Plug appliances back in one at a time

If the switch trips again, one of your appliances may be faulty. If the circuit still will not reset with everything unplugged, contact us.

If your lights stop working

- A light bulb may have blown or a circuit breaker may have tripped. Replace any blown bulbs and reset the switch. If the circuit will not reset, contact us.



HOME SAFETY

Damp, mould and condensation

Condensation is one of the most common causes of damp and mould. It happens when warm, moist air settles on cold surfaces like windows and walls.

You can reduce condensation by:

- using extractor fans or opening windows when cooking or bathing
- keeping kitchen and bathroom doors closed
- drying clothes outside where possible
- keeping your home heated at a steady temperature
- using window vents or opening windows safely to improve airflow
- visit our website for more advice on damp, mould and condensation. If you spot it in your home, report it as soon as possible.

Fire safety

If there is a fire

- If you live in a flat, follow your building's fire safety plan.

- If you live in a house or bungalow:
- close internal doors if safe to do so
- leave the building immediately
- do not go back inside
- call 999

Smoke alarms

Test and clean smoke alarms regularly using a soft brush or vacuum attachment. Keep them free from dust and grease and never allow mainspowered alarms to get wet.

Asbestos

Some homes built between 1900 and 1999 may contain asbestos. Asbestos is usually safe if left undisturbed, but it can be dangerous if drilled, cut or damaged. We have processes in place to safely manage asbestos so please contact us before carrying out any DIY work so we can make sure you



COMPLAINTS, FEEDBACK AND LEARNING

We welcome feedback about our repairs service and may contact you via text after a repair to ask about your experience.

If you are unhappy with the service, you can make a complaint. We use complaints, feedback and Housing Ombudsman decisions to improve our service. You can contact us to make a complaint in any way that suits you.



North Star is a housing association providing homes and investing in communities across the North East.

We are a strong organisation with a clear vision of what we want to achieve for the people who live in our region – creating homes, building futures.

Get in touch

North Star Online

Free app - search **North Star Online**
on the App Store or Google Play
or visit: www.northstarhg.co.uk/north-star-online

Phone

03000 11 00 11 – Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm
(excluding bank holidays)
Emergency repairs outside office hours:
03000 11 00 11

Email

customer.services@northstarhg.co.uk
emergencyrepairs@orbisprotect.com
(for out-of-hours emergencies if you can't call)

Facebook Messenger

facebook.com/NorthStarHG

Write or Visit

(by appointment only)

Head office: Endeavour House, St Mark's Court, Thornaby,
Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6QN

Teesdale office: Enterprise House, Harmire Enterprise Park,
Barnard Castle, DL12 8XT

Please note that all calls to our Customer Services Team are monitored and recorded.