

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS & LEISURE COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2025

QUESTION NO. 1

Melvina Dimmott to ask the Chair of the Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee:

Housing Repairs

1. What is the process for a tenant who has been waiting for a repair to their flat, such as an intercom and the repair has been outstanding for an inappropriate length of time?
2. What is the temporary accommodation provision for a tenant, especially a severely disabled tenant, who is allocated an upgrade to their kitchen and bathroom, if the work is going to require the tenant to leave the property for the work to be carried out?

REPLY by Councillor Dennis:

I invite Councillor Yeo, the Lead Councillor for Housing, to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by the Lead Councillor for Housing:

1. What is the process for a tenant who has been waiting for a repair to their flat, such as an intercom and the repair has been outstanding for an inappropriate length of time?

When a tenant reports a repair, it is logged through our repairs reporting system and assigned a priority based on the nature and urgency of the issue. For example, intercom repairs are typically classified as non-emergency but essential, particularly where they impact security or access.

If a repair remains outstanding beyond the expected timeframe, the following steps are taken:

Monitoring and Escalation: The repair is monitored through our housing management system. If it exceeds the target completion date, it is flagged for escalation.

Follow-Up with Contractors: Our back-office team contacts the contractor or in-house repairs team to determine the cause of the delay and to expedite completion.

Tenant Communication: The tenant is kept informed throughout the process, including updates on the reason for the delay and the revised timescale for completion.

Prioritisation Review: If the delay is causing significant inconvenience or poses a risk to the tenant's wellbeing or safety, the repair may be reclassified and prioritised accordingly.

Formal Complaint Route: Tenants also have the option to raise a formal complaint if they are dissatisfied with the handling or delay of the repair. This triggers a separate investigation and response process in line with our complaints policy.

We are committed to improving our repair response times and ensuring tenants are kept informed and supported throughout the process.

2. What is the temporary accommodation provision for a tenant, especially a severely disabled tenant, who is allocated an upgrade to their kitchen and bathroom, if the work is going to require the tenant to leave the property for the work to be carried out?

Where major works require a tenant to temporarily vacate their home, the Council has a duty to ensure that appropriate alternative accommodation is arranged, particularly where the tenant is vulnerable or has specific needs, such as a severe disability.

The process is as follows:

Assessment of Needs: Prior to the works commencing, a full assessment is carried out in consultation with the tenant, Occupational Therapy (if applicable), and the contractor. This includes evaluating the impact of the works on the tenant's ability to remain in the property safely.

Temporary Accommodation Arrangements:

If it is determined that the tenant cannot remain in the property during the works, suitable temporary accommodation is sourced.

For severely disabled tenants, this accommodation must meet accessibility requirements and be as close as possible to their existing support networks.

The accommodation may be in the form of a decant to another council property, or in some cases, hotel or supported housing provision.

Support and Coordination:

A dedicated officer coordinates the move, ensuring that transport and any necessary equipment are transferred or replicated in the temporary setting.

The tenant is kept informed throughout the process and supported before, during, and after the move.

Minimising Disruption:

Works are scheduled to be completed as efficiently as possible to minimise the duration of the decant.

Once the works are completed and the property is safe and suitable for reoccupation, the tenant is supported to return home.

Costs:

The cost of the temporary accommodation and associated moving expenses are covered by the Council, not the tenant.

This approach ensures that tenants, particularly those with significant needs, are treated with dignity and that their health, safety, and wellbeing are prioritised during major improvement works.