



Rechargeable Repairs and Services Policy

Regulation and Legislation	This policy links to the Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard
Supporting documents	Repairs Policy; Disposal of Abandoned Vehicles Procedure; Disposal of Goods in Communal Areas Procedure; Possession, Eviction and Tort Procedure; Customers Own Improvements Procedure; Estate Inspection Procedure
Scope	This Orbit policy sets out the approach to recharging the cost of carrying out work that is not the contractual responsibility of Orbit, or which arises from damage or neglect and for additional services provided to the customer which are not part of our landlord duties.
Reference to “Orbit” means Orbit Group which consists of Orbit Group Limited, Orbit Housing Association Limited, Orbit Homes (2020) Limited, Orbit Treasury Limited and Orbit Capital Plc.	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Orbit aims to provide customers with a value for money repairs and maintenance service. Integral to this approach is the need to ensure that customers are recharged for works for which they are contractually responsible, or for works arising from negligent behaviour or deliberate misuse.
- 1.2 In addition to repairs and maintenance, Orbit may also undertake other works, such as removal of items, including vehicles, from common parts, where the costs of removal and storage costs may be recharged to the owner of the goods, where they are identified.
- 1.3 Customers who require replacement locks, keys, fobs or vehicle permits due to loss, destruction or theft of the original items, will also be recharged the costs of providing replacements, where available.
- 1.4 Rechargeable works and services will normally fall into one or more of the following categories:
 - Works which are the customers own responsibility in accordance with their tenancy agreement, lease, deed or license
 - Works which arise as a result of misuse of the property
 - Works which arise as a result of neglect or where a repair has not been reported
 - Works arising as a result of unauthorized, inappropriate or poorly executed alterations or improvements to the property

- Works arising from damage to the property caused by a resident, a member of their household or visitor
- The cost of abortive call outs where an appointment has previously been made
- Removal and/or storage of waste, rubbish, refuse, goods, items or vehicles where they have been inappropriately left, stored or disposed in communal areas or in properties on possession.
- Replacement of articles provided to the customer to facilitate occupation of the property, which the customer has then lost, destroyed or had stolen.

- 1.5 This policy applies to all customers regardless of tenure and should be read together with the respective tenancy, lease, and deed or license agreement.
- 1.6 The definition of rechargeable repairs and services includes damage to, and services provided both to individual homes owned or managed by Orbit as well as shared areas of a building or estate.
- 1.7 This policy does not relate to repairs that are the result of reasonable wear and tear.
- 1.8 This policy applies equally to rechargeable repairs or services that arise during the defects or warranty period to a new or improved home.

2. Policy statement

- 2.1 We will not generally complete repairs or provide a service for which we are not contractually responsible as determined in the appropriate tenancy agreement, lease, deed or license unless it is judged to be a risk to the health and safety of customers, or the public should we fail to do so or for the reason of good estate management. Whilst agreements should be checked for any variation, a summary of repair responsibilities will be published on our website and be made available in hard copy, when requested.
- 2.2 Where such repairs are ordered, or services provided, we endeavour to collect the cost of the repair or service in advance of the work being completed unless it is judged to be a risk to the health and safety of customers, or the public should we fail to do so or for the reason of good estate management.
- 2.3 Where the work has been completed without payment in advance, we will consider recharging customers for the costs incurred as a result of damage to Orbit property or arising from the following circumstances:
- Neglect or misuse
 - Inappropriate, unauthorized or poorly executed alterations or additions
 - Damage caused through failure to report repairs
 - Work that the customer is contractually responsible as determined by the appropriate tenancy agreement, lease, deed or license
 - Sufficient evidence to identify the customer responsible for inappropriate disposal of items, waste and refuse, where removal is made for good estate management or to enable void works to commence

- Ownership identified for goods left, stored or disposed in communal areas where removal and/or storage costs have been incurred for health and safety reasons
- Orbit has provided replacement locks, keys or fobs in advance of payment.

- 2.4 We will have a clear procedure for implementation of this policy that will identify those circumstances in which Orbit will not pursue the recharging of customers and the circumstances in which we will undertake a repair or provide a service that would otherwise be the customers' responsibility.
- 2.5 There will be a minimal level below which the cost of rechargeable repairs will not be pursued to ensure that resources are used effectively.
- 2.6 The procedure will allow discretion to waive repayment in certain circumstances, such as the vulnerability of the customer concerned, or where it would not be cost effective to pursue the charge.
- 2.7 We will pursue the cost of rechargeable repairs undertaken in the most cost-effective manner in line with our Debt, Service Charge and Other Arrears Policy. This will include appropriate legal remedies and may include the use of outside collection agencies (for former tenant debts only) to collect monies owed. When recovering costs, associated costs such as administration, legal or professional fees and prevailing VAT may be incurred.
- 2.8 We will undertake all repairs that constitute a risk to health and safety or the security of the property and will recover costs that are relevant, where it is deemed appropriate.
- 2.9 If the customer disputes a recharge, then they are encouraged to use the Complaints process.

3. Data retention

Information recorded against customer accounts will remain in place for the lifetime of the tenancy or lease and then disposed of in line with Orbit's data retention schedule and legal obligations.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1

Role	Responsibility
Director of Property Operations	Delivery and monitoring of the policy
Property Repairs team	Identifying rechargeable repairs in communal areas and at property inspections

Voids and Lettings team	Identifying recharges for disposal of goods (end of tenancy)
Property Management and Estate Services	Identifying recharges for abandoned vehicles

5. Performance controls and business risk

- 5.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Director of Property Operations.
- 5.2 Orbit will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years subject to legal, regulatory changes or in accordance with the agreed Policy Review programme.

6. Essential information

- 6.1 All Orbit policies and procedures are developed in line with our approach to the following, data protection statement, equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) approach, complaints policy and our regulatory and legal obligations to ensure we deliver services in a lawful manner and treat people equally and fairly. Orbit's privacy policy can be accessed on our website www.orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/publications/policies/

EA	Equality Analysis was completed in March 2019 is available to view.
DPIA	A DPIA was approved in March 2020 and is available to view.
Consultation	Internal: Property Management, Property Services (Estates and Responsive Repairs), Income – Collection & Recovery External: Customers were consulted in 2019 and will be consulted again during the full review in 2024-25
Applies to	Property Services, Property Management, Customer Services

Document control

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Date

Approved by	Director of Property Operations	March 2024
Next review		March 2025 Ext Sept 2025 Ext Mar 2026

Extension date	Extension reason	Approved by
Sept 2025 Mar 2026	To allow for creation and implementation of new recharge process	Jayne Lombardi; Director of Property and Place

Revision History

Version Number	Date	Comments / Reason for revision
v1.0	March 2020	Published
v2.0	March 2024	Interim review ahead of full review on implementation of new repairs service delivery model. No changes to policy.