



## RECHARGE POLICY

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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the circumstances when North Devon Homes (NDH) will make a charge to a customer or organisation for undertaking works or other services; how we will communicate this to them and the expectations about repayment.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles will apply to this policy:

- It will be open, fair and transparent
- It will reflect the current standards of operation and will be reviewed whenever industry standards, legislation or guidelines change
- It will promote consistency in the approach to rechargeable repairs
- It will incorporate views taken from customers, staff, and Board members
- It will be realistic, achievable and provide value for money.

## 3. REVIEW

We will review this policy at least once every two years to ensure that it continues to meet best practice and remains fair and reasonable.

Alternatively, the policy and all associated procedures will be reviewed immediately following any relevant change to regulation or legislation.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of Customer and Housing Services is responsible for monitoring and review of this policy.

Detailed procedures will be developed and maintained by the Customer Service Manager in line with this policy.

The term recharge refers to the recovery of costs incurred by the company outside our expected obligations. This can include repair items beyond our usual repairing obligations or requiring legal enforcement of tenancy terms.

## 5. SCOPE

This policy applies to all customers living in North Devon Homes' properties.

- The recovery of costs incurred undertaking repairs that were caused by neglect; accidental damage or misuse of a property by the customer; their family or anyone visiting their home
- The recovery of costs undertaken to return a property to a standard following unauthorised alterations or removal of waste or personal belongings when a property becomes void, or whilst occupied
- The recovery of costs undertaken as part of longer term planned maintenance works. This would apply to leaseholders as a condition of their lease
- The recovery of costs ordered by the Court as a result of legal fees we have had to incur enforcing a term of the tenancy agreement
- The recovery of costs incurred by our contractors, which is passed onto us, as a result of no access being provided for us to carry out servicing or repairs to a property
- The recovery of costs incurred by us in putting right damage caused by a contractor, a third-party person or organisation employed by the customer.
- The recovery of costs incurred by missed confirmed appointments.

## 6. POLICY STATEMENT

### 6.1 Providing timely information and advice to customers who incur a recharge

Where we need to raise a recharge we will provide timely and clear information to the person or organisation to be charged. This could include some, or all, of the following:

- If it is identified as a rechargeable item from the outset, we will inform the person or organisation of the need to raise a charge at that point and explain why they are liable for the cost.
- When a repair is reported outside of normal working hours, customers will be advised that a recharge might be applicable if the repair is not considered an out of hours emergency e.g. no

electric credit on a meter, or a minor leak being reported as a major leak.

- If a rechargeable item is identified during a home visit or a pre void inspection (where something needs to be made safe or put right) then we will explain this during the visit and confirm in writing the estimated cost to carry out the works.
- If the cost of the recharge is known, we will also inform the person or organisation at that time. With repair items which are commonly recharged, such as a lock change due to the loss of a key, we will use an agreed menu of charges (these charges are shown in Appendix 1 of this policy and may be updated from time to time).
- We will confirm the recharge in writing, along with the cost, if known. We aim to raise an invoice as soon as possible for the charge. This will usually happen within a month but in more complex cases could take longer to organise and will have a covering letter setting out the repayment methods available to clear the debt.
- Where a recharge is for the replacement of a major item of work such as a kitchen the recharge will be calculated as a proportion of the remaining life of that item. For example, if a customer has had a new kitchen installed and then moves out of that property. If there has been significant damage to the kitchen, to the extent that new one is required, the customer would be charged as follows:
  - Lifecycle of kitchen = 20 years
  - Remaining lifecycle =  $20 - 5 = 15$  years
  - % remaining lifecycle =  $15 \div 20 \times 100 = 75\%$
  - Recharge to customer = cost of replacement kitchen x 75%

## **6.2 Are customers able to organise the works to put right the damage or neglect themselves?**

Where a repair is identified as the responsibility of a customer or organisation, and where it would be safe and appropriate, they will have the option to arrange for the remedial work to be undertaken by themselves or another contractor.

The customer or organisation will be responsible for these costs, including materials and/or labour. If this option is taken up we will need to arrange an inspection of the completed work to ensure it is finished to a satisfactory standard. If the remedial works undertaken

are sub-standard we will need to complete the repair and we will include the cost of the inspections / repairs as part of the overall charge.

### **6.3 How will NDH recover the costs of the recharge?**

The amount we raise as a recharge will be fair, reasonable and reflect the costs we have incurred. We believe that it is reasonable to expect those that have caused any damage to our property to repay this cost and not be covered by other residents through their rent payments.

With any repair or non-access related recharge we will include a 10% charge, on top of the repair cost to cover our administration costs. The cost of this administrative charge will be capped at £50. These charges will be subject to VAT.

We will offer a range of payment methods to make repayment as straightforward as possible. In addition, we will offer repayment schedules that are reasonable and affordable.

Where the customer has other debts, such as rent arrears, then this debt should be cleared as a priority before the recharge.

If the debt is not cleared within the first 28 days we will seek to recover the outstanding debt in line with our normal debt recovery procedures.

With recharges, if no regular payment schedule is met, this may result in an application to the Small Claims Court for a court order. If this order is not complied with, we may employ debt recovery agents who may use distraint (seizure of goods) to recover the debt. This final option will be a last resort and only approved by a manager within the company.

### **6.4 Temporary withdrawal of certain services**

Whilst a customer has an outstanding recharge debt we will normally withdraw a limited number of services until the debt is clear. This approach is also applied for any customer in rent arrears. The list of services that may be withdrawn is shown in Appendix 2 and may be updated from time to time.

## 7. CONSULTATION

### Who has been consulted in developing the Policy?

Date	Consultation methodology	Challenge / impact / result
9.12.22	Customer Board Partnership	For the policy to be reviewed every 2 years.  NOTE: Current review elicited no changes to the policy.
4.3.25	Asset Team	Some small changes implemented following feedback
4.3.25	Neighbourhood Team	
4.3.25	Income Team	

## 8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Section 1: Contact details

Please complete your details and contact information in the spaces provided

Job title	Customer Service Manager
Department	Customer Care Team
Submission date:	13 March 2025

### Section 2: About the policy

Please describe what you are impact assessing and who it applies to

Title	Recharges			
Aims / description / purpose	Add in purpose section from the policy			
People it applies to: (tick as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customers	<input type="checkbox"/> Contractors	<input type="checkbox"/> Board

### Section 3: Gathering data and evidence

Have you identified relevant evidence (qualitative and quantitative) to establish whether this policy could potentially affect some equality groups more than others? This section provides an opportunity to include additional resources relating to EDI data / information / feedback etc

Have you analysed equality data for each of the groups identified in Section 2?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Have you identified / researched anecdotal or alternative evidence?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Have you attached the evidence to this impact assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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#### Section 4: Assessing the impact

Based on your evidence, which equality groups might this policy affect more or less than others (if any)? (Tick as appropriate)

Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fuel and food poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young People who may be vulnerable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Single parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug and alcohol dependency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion and belief (including no belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender / sex equality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Isolation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Using examples from the evidence you have collected, please describe the impact (positive, negative or neutral) on the equality groups you have identified above and highlight any different needs required for this protected characteristic.

**Note:** if you are reviewing a policy / guidance please reflect on the scope, language used and its application - does it fully promote equality and inclusion?

Give a brief explanation below on why you ticked each box and why you think the policy will impact that groups more or less than others:

All equally affected by the policy.

#### Section 5: Addressing any impact: action planning

Please describe any actions or mitigation required as a result of this assessment – include the timescale for each and who is responsible. State what changes have been made to the policy as a result of this assessment

	Action / Mitigation	Timescale	Responsibility
1	Consideration will be given to a customer's circumstances in line with the reasonable adjustment policy.	ongoing	

## Section 6: Involvement and Consultation

What involvement / consultation activity has been undertaken or is planned in relation to this policy? State who you involved / consulted and how you went about it.

	<b>Involvement / consultation activity</b>	<b>Results / Feedback</b>
1	Asset Team	some changes requested and implemented
2	Neighbourhood Team	
3	Income Team	

<b>Next review date:</b>	
Every two years. Next review date: March 2027	
<b>Author</b>	<b>Related Documents</b>
Customer Care Team Manager	Rent Collection and Arrears Policy

## Appendix 1

### Recharges Menu Pricing

#### Doors and Windows

- To change a door Lock (Barrel) in uPVC Door  
£38 + Admin and VAT = £50.00
- To Gain Entry to a property (keys are inside)  
£55 + Admin and VAT = £73.00
- Board up a Door/window and measure for new glass  
£40 + Admin and VAT = £53.00
- Re Glaze 1 pane of glass from a uPVC door  
£100 to £150 + Admin and VAT = £198.00 Maximum
- Re-Glaze a double glazed window (small to medium size)  
£50 to £100 + Admin and VAT = £132.00 max
- Renew an internal Door  
£125.55 + Admin and VAT = £166.00

#### Drains and Plumbing

- Replace broken TRVs to radiator  
£41.39 + Admin and VAT = £55.00
- Water leak found to be washing machine or dishwasher connection  
£25.00 + Admin and VAT = £33.00
- Unblock a WC  
  
£25 + Admin and VAT = £33.00
- Unblock Drains  
OOH Callout (Saturday or Sunday first hour) £150 + VAT = £180.00  
OOH Hourly rate after the first hour = up to £50 + VAT = £60.00 p/h
- Unblock Drains (Drainage contractor) working day (call out for 1st hour) £80 + VAT = £96.00  
Hourly rate after the first hour = £40 + VAT = £48.00 p/h
- Repair a chip in the bath or basin

£160 +Admin and VAT = £211.00

- OOH call out  
£52.70 per hour.

## H2H

- Renew 1m length of kitchen worktop  
£36.38 plus Admin and VAT = £49.00
- Renew acrylic bath panel  
£50.12 plus VAT and Admin = £66.00
- OOH call out  
£80 plus materials.

## Electrics

- Change a light bul  
£33 + Admin and VAT = £43.56
- Change a kitchen or Bathroom light fitment to an LED (no bulbs needed)  
£58.62 plus VAT and Admin = £77.00
- Replace an electric socket front cover or light switch cover plate  
£33.00 + Admin and VAT £43.56
- Faulty Appliance caused Fuse board to Trip the switch  
£33.00 + Admin and VAT £43.56
- No Gas on the Meter  
£35 + Admin and VAT = £46.00
- OOH call out  
£52.70 per hour.

### Missed Confirmed Appointments

- Staff missed appointments  
£25 + Admin and VAT = £33.00
- Chimney Sweep Visit  
£60 + Admin and VAT = £79.00
- All Contractors - Day Site Inspection (to make safe)  
£35 + Admin and VAT £42.00
- OOH Site Inspection (to make safe)  
£50 + Admin + VAT = £66.00.

### Garages (H2H)

- Gain Entry  
£27.15 + Admin and VAT = £36.00
- Gain Entry and Lock Change  
£62.00
- Lock Change  
£33 + Admin and VAT = £43.56
- Clearance and Disposal (1 1/2hr labour)  
£53.28 + Admin and VAT = £70.00.

## Appendix 2

List of services that may be withdrawn until the debt is cleared.

We will expect the debt to be cleared before we approve:

- A move to another property (be it a transfer or exchange)
- Consent to carry out any alterations to the property, including satellite television
- Consent to keep a pet at the property.