



Places to live. Space to grow.

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## Recharge Policy

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**Policy Author:** Scott Phillips (Head of Planned and Servicing)  
**Policy Owner:** Head of Repairs  
**Effective date:** 01<sup>st</sup> December 2025  
**Next review date:** December 2028

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## 1 Introduction

1.1 At West Kent, we want all residents to have a positive experience regardless of who they are, where they live, or how and when they interact with us. Occasionally, we need to recover costs for repairs, services, or damage. When this happens, it's important these charges are identified early, clearly explained, and fairly applied.

1.2 A recharge is the process of recovering costs from a resident for a repair or a service that would normally be their responsibility.

1.3 Policy Ownership:

The Policy is owned by the Repairs Team  
Potential recharges are validated by the Neighbourhood Housing Officer  
The Finance Team will collect recharges

## 2 Purpose

2.1 This policy sets out our approach to identifying and recovering rechargeable costs, ensuring consistency, fairness, and transparency.

2.2 A recharge is the recovery of money that West Kent has spent or will need to spend to complete a repair or service. It is not a fine or penalty.

2.3 Recharging for certain costs helps us protect rental income from being used to fund damage, neglect or tenancy breaches. This allows us to invest more in maintaining and improving homes and neighbourhoods for everyone. This ensures that all residents rent is protected and recharges are applied fairly and transparently.

## 3 Policy Statement

3.1 When we identify a rechargeable item that the resident is able to complete themselves, such as reinstating alterations, carrying out minor repairs or clearing belongings, we will inform the resident in writing that a recharge may apply and offer them the opportunity to carry out the work. The written notification will set out a reasonable timescale, normally 14 days, with longer allowed for more complex tasks if needed. If the work is not completed within this timeframe, and no agreed extension has been requested and approved in writing, we will proceed with the recharge process.

3.2 Where a recharge is appropriate, we will consider the individual circumstances of the resident before deciding whether to proceed and on what terms.

3.3 We will consider any known vulnerabilities or support needs when deciding whether to apply a recharge, and if so, how it is communicated and recovered.

3.4 We will consider abuse when deciding whether to apply a recharge and if so, how it is communicated and recovered. Please find the Safeguarding Adults and a Domestic Abuse policies on the West Kent website: [www.westkent.org](http://www.westkent.org)

- 3.5 When a disability, or disability equipment may have contributed to property damage, we will interpret “fair wear and tear” more generously.
- 3.6 If you live in a Kent Excellent Homes For All (KEHFA) home your repairs are carried out by Galliford Try Facilities Management (GTFM), who may interpret wear and tear differently from West Kent.
- 3.7 We also recognise that residents with vulnerability or young families may face additional hardship if works are delayed. In these cases, we will consider proceeding with works before full payment and offering a repayment plan where appropriate.
- 3.8 In line with West Kent’s Vulnerability Policy, vulnerability is defined as circumstances where individuals are especially susceptible to physical or emotional harm or distress. Vulnerability can be influenced by a range of factors, including (but not limited to): age, disability, bereavement, mental health, domestic violence, or poverty. Where a customer or household is identified as vulnerable under this policy, we will make every effort to provide Reasonable Adjustments to our services to accommodate additional needs.

## 4 Recharge Reasons

- 4.1 Recharges may apply in the following categories:

### Repairs

When we carry out repairs to an individual property or communal area as a result of:

- Wilful damage, neglect, or misuse
- Damage not caused by fair wear and tear
- Resident responsibility where the repair hasn’t been completed by the resident
- Damage resulting from the resident failing to report a repair or allow access (e.g. a water leak)
- Emergency works to rectify issues caused by unauthorised improvements

### Home Improvements

- Reinstating a home to its original condition following unsafe or unauthorised alterations
- Making safe or correcting poor quality DIY works (e.g. electrical or plumbing modifications)
- Where home improvements don’t meet our standards as set out in the home improvement policy, the resident may be asked to:
  - Carry out remedial work within a set timeframe
  - Or, if not done, West Kent may complete the work and recharge the cost

### Services

- Where the resident has requested a chargeable service (e.g. key replacement, pest control)
- Where the resident has asked us to complete a task they are responsible for

## Clearance

- Clearing out a property during or after a tenancy (includes garages, sheds, gardens, lofts)
- Removal of items left in communal areas or on West Kent land

Recharges may also apply where damage or misuse is caused by a member of the household, a visitor, or (where relevant) emergency services.

## 5 Recharge Recovery

- 5.1 Residents are normally expected to pay in full before we carry out any rechargeable works. However, where a repair is urgent or poses a health and safety risk (e.g. a lock change, leak, or dangerous electrical fault), we will proceed in advance of payment.
- 5.2 Sometimes the rechargeable works will be carried out before the resident has paid. An example of this is a void property where the resident is no longer in occupation. In these cases, the recharge will be processed after the works.
- 5.3 All recharges will be supported by clear communication and, where relevant, photographic or contractor evidence.
- 5.4 We will issue the invoice to the resident within one month of the completion of the works or service.
- 5.5 Payment for repairs and services will be expected in full within 28 days of the invoice being issued. Where appropriate, we will offer repayment arrangements based on individual financial circumstances.

We will not offer repayment agreements to residents with a poor repayment history.

Any outstanding recharge should be cleared within 12 months.

- 5.6 The cost of any recharge may include:
- Labour and materials
  - Third-party contractor fees
  - An administration fee
  - VAT, where applicable
- 5.7 A decision to waive or reduce a recharge, or to write off a debt, will be made by the appropriate delegated authority. This will take into account known vulnerabilities, available evidence, and previous payment history.
- 5.8 The West Kent Finance Team will be responsible for collecting recharges.
- 5.9 As per the Income Collection Policy: We will ensure that all reasonable steps have been exhausted before considering legal steps. If the resident still fails to co-operate in reducing arrears we may be left with no option but to commence legal action to recover the debt.

## 6 Recording and Reporting

We will record and manage recharges consistently using our internal systems. The following will apply

- **Correspondence & evidence:** Letters and supporting evidence will be saved, this will include any decision to waive or reduce a recharge
- **Financial data:** Recharges will be logged
- **Monitoring:** Recharge trends will be reviewed regularly to inform operational performance and policy review.

## 7 Right to Appeal

7.1 If you do not agree with a recharge, please contact us within 14 Days of receiving the invoice. We will consider your evidence and review the decision.

## 8 Consultation

8.1 This policy was developed in consultation with West Kent's Resident Scrutiny Panel. Feedback was gathered through a structured questionnaire and open comment submissions.

## 9 Communication

9.1 This policy will be published on the West Kent website and available to all residents. Internally, it will be available on the Bettie for staff reference.

## 10 Related Policies

10.1 This policy should be used in conjunction with other relevant West Kent policies which include:

- Compensation Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Home Improvements Policy
- Income Policy
- Maintaining Your Home Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Vulnerability and Safeguarding

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**Summary of key material/changes  
(will need to be removed prior to publishing)**

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- This is a new policy

## POLICY SIGN-OFF

*[This section should be removed for public facing policies which will be published on the West Kent website.]*

*All policies require Executive level sign off as a minimum. Further guidance on sign off is set out in the Guidance for Procedures and Policies, which can be located on Bettie and available from the Risk and Governance function.*

A current version of this procedure is available to all employees on (West Kent Intranet).

<b>Document Name:</b>	Recharge Policy
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	The Equality Impact Assessment demonstrates that the policy is non-discriminatory . It highlights that WKHA will make reasonable adjustments as deemed necessary for Age, Disability and Socio Economic Status.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment on Bettie:</b>	No
<b>Equality Impact Assessment on S Drive:</b>	Yes
<b>Resident Impact Assessment:</b>	The Resident Impact Assessment highlights the aim of the policy is to create awareness for recharges.
<b>Policy Author:</b>	Scott Phillips
<b>Approved by:</b>	The Executive Team and Communities and Housing
<b>Effective from:</b>	01 <sup>st</sup> December 2025
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	December 2028
<b>Risk:</b>	Compliance, Regulatory, Finance & Legal
<b>Document Location:</b>	Bettie and the West Kent Website

**APPROVAL SIGNATURE:** *SPhillips*

**JOB TITLE:** Head of Planned and Servicing

**DATE:** 28.11.2025

### Change History Record

Version	Date	Details of Change(s)	Approved By
V1.0	November 2025	Initial issue	Communities and Housing
V2.0	[Enter date]	[Enter details of change]	[Enter Job Title]