

Pest Control Policy

Document Owner	Responsive Repairs Manager
Prepared by	Responsive Repairs Manager
Approved by	Directors Group
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Monitoring, Auditing, Reporting	1. Reported within responsive repairs KPI reporting

1. Scope and Aims

- 1.1. Hexagon Housing Association (Hexagon) is responsible for maintenance and repairs of tenanted properties, including pest proofing. However, whether or not Hexagon is responsible for the treatment of a pest infestation depends on the cause of the infestation and whether or not it affects communal areas and/or multiple flats within a building.
- 1.2. In tenanted properties, if the pest infestation is caused by disrepair or a structural defect for which Hexagon is responsible, Hexagon is responsible for resolving the issue including pest treatments. Disrepair is defined in this policy as Hexagon failing to meet its published service standards in its repairs and maintenance responsibilities.
- 1.3. Residents are responsible for preventing and treatment of pest infestations where the issue has not arisen due to disrepair, or a structural defect, for which Hexagon is responsible.
- 1.4. Where an infestation arises because of a resident's actions, Hexagon will not be liable for treating or eradicating the infestation.
- 1.5. Hexagon will investigate fully before deciding who is responsible, and offer vulnerable residents appropriate support, referrals and/or signposting.
- 1.6. Hexagon must ensure that there is no pest infestation at the time a home is let to a tenant.
- 1.7. Pests are considered to include rats, mice, cockroaches, wasps, bees, pharaoh ants, pigeons, and squirrels.
- 1.8. Hexagon is responsible for the treatment of the specific pests that constitute a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 1.9. This policy allows for discretionary pest control works, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. Resident Consultation

- 2.1. This policy is scheduled for resident consultation in 2025/2026.

3. Pest Control Works

- 3.1. Hexagon is responsible for repairs and pest proofing at tenanted properties and communal areas. In cases where an infestation has been caused by disrepair for which Hexagon is responsible, Hexagon will also arrange or conduct treatments, through specialist contractors, to eradicate pests.

- 3.2. Hexagon will undertake timely inspections following a report of pest issues. Target timeframes for completion of pest control works are the same as for general repairs, see the Repair Priority Policy for details.
- 3.3. The presence of silverfish and woodlice may indicate damp issues. In such cases, an inspection will be carried out to identify and address any underlying damp problems.
- 3.4. In cases where rats or mice access tenanted properties, appropriate proofing works, such as securing external air vents and blocking access points, will be carried out alongside pest control measures.
- 3.5. Resolving pest control issues can take multiple visits to try different approaches where initial attempts have been unsuccessful. Hexagon will keep the tenant updated during this time. Hexagon will keep accurate records of actions taken.
- 3.6. In cases of severe pest infestation that may place the tenant's health and safety at risk, Hexagon will complete an assessment to determine whether the household needs to be moved to alternative accommodation until the issue is resolved. This assessment will take into account any factors that make the household more vulnerable, such as the presence of children under 5 years of age. See the Alternative Accommodation Policy for more details.

4. Tenant Responsibilities

- 4.1. Tenants are responsible for all other pest infestations that do not fall under Hexagon's responsibilities as outlined above.
- 4.2. Tenants must maintain their property and garden in line with their tenancy or lease agreements to prevent harbouring pests that could affect their own or neighbouring properties.
- 4.3. Infestations in private gardens (including of individual flats) are the responsibility of the tenant.
- 4.4. Tenants should assist in preventing and managing pest issues by:
 - Maintaining their property and garden to avoid attracting pests;
 - Taking action to treat minor infestations contained within their property.
- 4.5. Tenants are encouraged to report the issue to the Local Authority and make use of the services provided by the Local Authority, many of which are without charge or low-cost. Hexagon will provide information regarding services provided by Local Authorities.

- 4.6. Tenants must allow Hexagon or its contractors access to their property, in accordance with their tenancy, to carry out pest control treatments for which Hexagon is responsible.
- 4.7. If an infestation originates in a tenant's property due to their actions and spreads to neighbouring properties or communal areas, Hexagon will treat the infestation in all affected areas and may recharge the cost to the tenant where the problem originated.
- 4.8. If a tenant does not treat an infestation for which they are responsible, Hexagon may take legal action to ensure compliance and remedy the issue, with costs recharged to the tenant.
- 4.9. Foxes are typically attracted to food waste. Tenants should take measures to securely store bins and prevent access by foxes.
- 4.10. Pest control issues should be reported through the same channels used to report general repairs to Hexagon.

5. Exclusions

5.1. Hexagon will not treat the following, except in communal areas or multiple flats:

- Foxes
- Fleas
- Bedbugs
- Silverfish
- Mites
- Moths
- Flies
- Spiders
- Woodlice
- Other insects (non-exhaustive list)

5.2. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 gives special protection to certain wild animals and we are therefore prohibited from intentionally killing, injuring or disturbing bats, crickets, sand lizards, slow worms, snakes and common frogs & toads.

5.3. This policy allows for discretionary pest control works, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Leaseholders and Shared Owners

- 6.1. Leaseholders and shared owners are responsible for treating any pests found inside their home.
- 6.2. Hexagon is not responsible for pest control or repairs in leasehold properties. Leaseholders should refer to their lease agreements to determine their pest control obligations.
- 6.3. Where Hexagon is responsible for repairs and maintenance of the communal areas, Hexagon will be responsible for pest treatment and proofing of the communal areas.
- 6.4. The cost of pest treatment or proofing works in communal areas will be recharged to Leaseholders and shared owners through the service charge in line with Lease Agreements. Where cost of the works exceeds the Section 20 threshold, Hexagon's Section 20 Policy will be followed. Where the pest infestation is severe and/or works are required urgently due to health and safety concerns, Hexagon will apply to the First Tier Tribunal for dispensation from the Section 20 process.
- 6.5. The Alternative Accommodation Policy does not apply to Leaseholders and shared owners; if a Leaseholder needs to leave the property due to the infestation or whilst pest works are carried out, the Leaseholder is responsible for organising and funding this.

7. Equality and Diversity

- 7.1. Hexagon aims to understand the diverse needs of residents and deliver fair and equitable outcomes under this policy. We commit to considering reasonable adjustments in the delivery of our services to accommodate the diverse needs of residents and their household members.
- 7.2. Hexagon will assist vulnerable tenants who lack alternative means of support to treat pest infestations, but the cost of such treatment will be recharged to the tenant as per our Rechargeable Repairs Policy.
- 7.3. Hexagon will offer support to vulnerable tenants whose actions may be causing a pest infestation in line with our Hoarding Procedure.
- 7.4. Hexagon will complete a risk assessment to determine whether a tenant requires temporary alternative accommodation whilst the issue is resolved, taking into account any vulnerabilities.

7.5. This Policy will be enacted in line with our Vulnerable Residents and Reasonable Adjustments Policy and in compliance with our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Regulations.

8. Data Protection

8.1. This Policy will be enacted in line with our Data Protection framework, and in line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

8.2. Under this policy, resident's personal data, such as home address and contact details, may be shared with Pest Control contractors and a Data Sharing Agreement is in place with these contractors to ensure the security of your data.

8.3. The Data Process Owner of the personal data processed under this policy is the Responsive Repairs Manager. The Data Process Owner is responsible for ensuring that the personal data is processed in line with Hexagon's Data Protection Framework.

8.4. If you want more information about how your personal data is processed under this policy, please contact our data protection team at dprotection@hexagon.org.uk or call our office.

9. Legal Framework

9.1. Environmental Protection Act 1990

9.2. Housing Act 1988 and 2004

9.3. Housing Health and Safety Rating System

9.4. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

9.5. Homes (Fitness for Habitation Act) 2018

9.6. Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

10. Related Hexagon policies, strategies and procedures

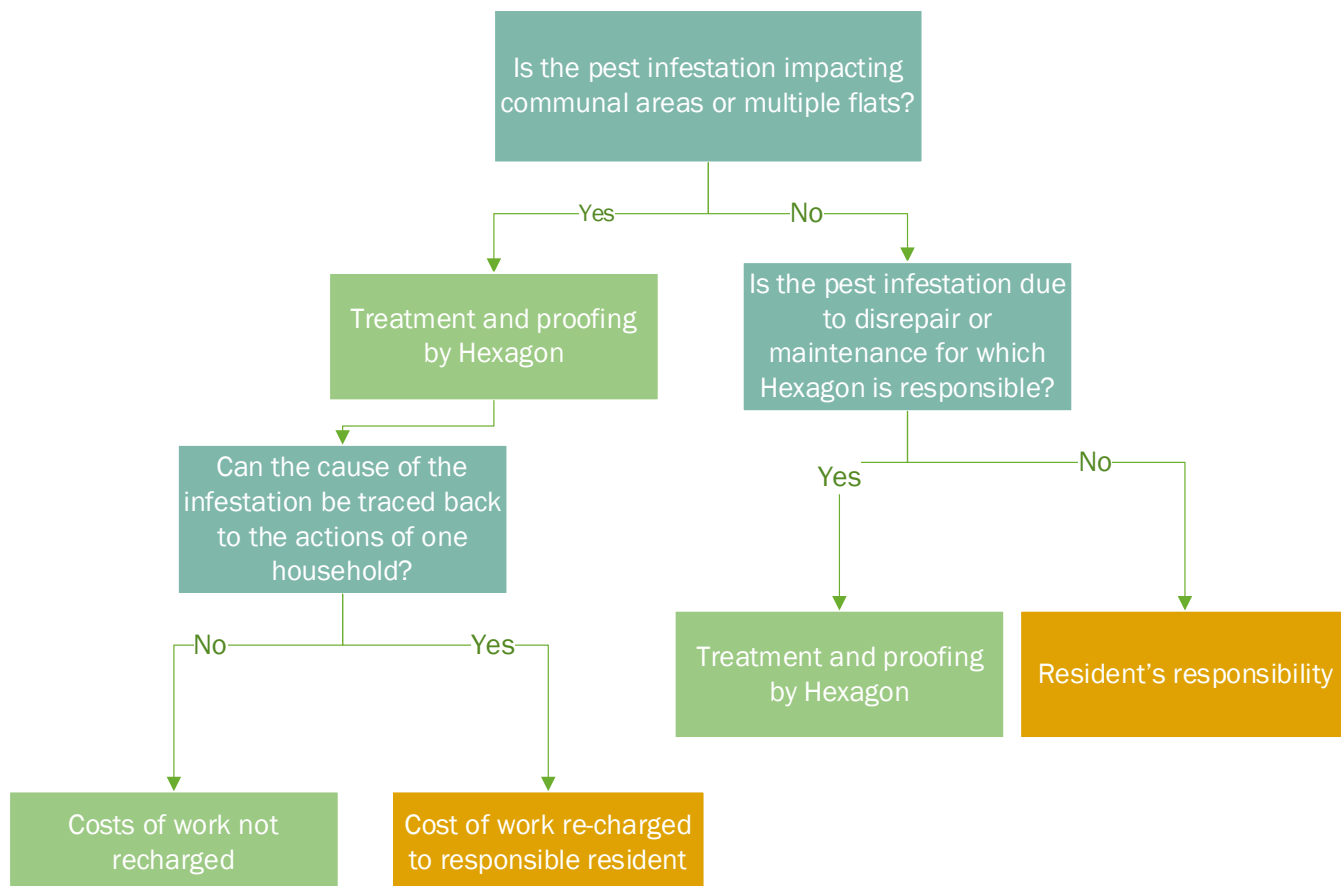
10.1. Repair Priority Policy

10.2. Rechargeable Repairs Policy

10.3. Hoarding Procedure

10.4. Alternative Accommodation Policy

11. Appendix 1: Responsibility Flowchart (Tenants only)



12. Appendix 2: Responsibility Flowchart (Leasehold Properties)

