

Lift Maintenance and Breakdown Policy



Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

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Owner	<i>John Nash</i>		
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Purpose	<i>This policy outlines Sandwell Council's responsibilities for maintaining passenger lifts, including regular servicing, inspections, testing, and repairs to ensure they remain operational. It also details how the Council will address lift breakdowns, prioritising timely communication, support for vulnerable residents, and minimising disruption.</i>		

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1. Purpose

1.1 Sandwell Council is responsible for maintaining their passenger lifts and ensuring their safe operation through regular inspections and examinations.

1.2 This policy outlines our responsibilities for ensuring passenger lifts are regularly serviced, thoroughly inspected, tested, and efficiently repaired, while keeping clear and accurate records.

1.3 This policy outlines Sandwell Council's responsibilities for promptly resolving lift breakdowns within its housing stock. It also emphasises how we will support tenants and leaseholders through timely communication, focused assistance for vulnerable residents, and efficient repairs to minimise disruption during lift breakdowns.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy is relevant to all our staff, tenants, leaseholders and all other persons who may work on, occupy, visit or use any building across our stock.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Lift Maintenance

Sandwell Council is dedicated to ensuring all passenger lifts and lifting equipment in our properties are safe, reliable, and fully operational, reducing the risk of breakdowns. Here's what you can expect:

- **3.1.1 Regular Maintenance and Safety Checks**

We carry out regular inspections and maintenance to identify and fix any faults or issues with the lifts. In addition, a more thorough examination is completed every six months to ensure long-term safety and reliability. Any repairs or upgrades needed will be addressed as quickly as possible. Service schedules will be published and made available for each block.

- **3.1.2 Competent Person**

The council appoints a qualified expert, known as a 'Competent Person,' to oversee all aspects of lift safety. They work with tenants and contractors to ensure that inspections, maintenance, and examinations are completed by trained professionals who follow strict safety standards.

- **3.1.3 Defects or faults**

If any defects or faults are identified, they are reported immediately, and the Competent Person will ensure work commences on these faults.

- **3.1.4 Routine Servicing**

Routine servicing is carried out by qualified contractors at regular intervals. This includes replacing worn or damaged parts, topping up fluids, lubricating moving parts, and making adjustments to keep the lift running smoothly.

- **3.1.5 Planned Upgrades and Major Works**

If your building is part of a planned maintenance or upgrade programme, the work will be carefully reviewed before and after completion to make sure everything meets safety standards.

- **3.1.6 Thorough Examinations**

Twice a year, a detailed inspection of all lift equipment is carried out to detect any hidden faults or risks. This inspection is conducted by an independent expert, separate from the team responsible for routine maintenance, to ensure a fresh and thorough evaluation.

- **3.1.7 Recordkeeping**

- Sandwell Council maintains a master database of all its properties with passenger lifts. This database holds detailed records of inspections and maintenance from the past five years, along with the due dates for upcoming examinations.
- For new properties, all commissioning and installation certifications, along with future maintenance requirements, are completed and added to this database before the lift is put into service.
- Records of any incidents involving lifts are also kept and will help inform updates to our policies to improve safety.

- **3.1.8 Legal requirements and guidelines**

- Sandwell Council will meet the legal requirements and guidelines regarding lift safety, including the PUWER 1998 Regulations.
- For all thorough examinations, Sandwell Council will use companies that are UKAS Accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 standard. The qualifications of any contractors will be checked annually.

3.2 Lift Breakdowns and Repairs

3.2.1 Reporting a Lift Breakdown

Tenants are encouraged to report any defects or faults in the lift installation to the council as soon as they become aware of it.

3.2.2 Inspections and Reporting

When a lift breakdown occurs, immediate action will be taken to address the issue, and affected tenants, leaseholders, and teams will be informed promptly.

A qualified inspection team will assess the lift to identify the root cause of the problem and determine the necessary steps for repair. Findings will be documented, including details about the fault, safety concerns, and required actions. This information will be shared with relevant teams to ensure a coordinated response.

If repairs can be completed within 24 hours, updates will confirm the anticipated resolution time.

For repairs requiring more than 24 hours, residents will be informed about the expected completion timeline, reasons for the delay, and any additional measures being taken to minimise disruption.

3.2.3 Resident Communication and Support

Clear and timely communication will be provided to all tenants and leaseholders affected by a lift breakdown, with additional focus on identifying and supporting residents with specific needs, such as those with mobility challenges, disabilities, or young children.

Residents will be promptly notified of the breakdown and repair plans through communication methods suited to their preferences, such as letters, emails, phone calls, or in-person visits. Notifications will include:

- The nature of the issue.
- The steps being taken to resolve it.
- The expected repair timeline.

Regular updates will be issued during the repair process to keep residents informed of progress. For those with additional needs, appropriate support will be arranged, including temporary solutions or referrals to external services if required, to ensure their well-being during the disruption.

3.2.4 Fire Safety Considerations

Fire safety will be a priority during any lift outage. Safety measures will be reviewed to assess potential risks, and necessary adjustments to evacuation plans will be made to safeguard all residents.

If significant risks are identified, the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) will be notified, and additional safety protocols will be implemented in coordination with relevant authorities. Residents will be informed of any temporary changes to evacuation procedures to ensure compliance and understanding.

3.2.5 Ongoing Monitoring and Notifications

Efforts to support tenants and leaseholders will continue throughout the disruption. Regular contact will be maintained with affected residents to address concerns and adapt support measures as needed.

Upon completion of repairs, the lift service provider will confirm that the lift is operational. Notifications will then be sent to all impacted tenants, leaseholders, local councillors, and Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs) where appropriate, providing details of the repair completion and continuation of normal service.

Residents will be encouraged to provide feedback on the communication, support, and handling of the breakdown to improve processes for future incidents.

4. Policy Development

4.1 Sandwell Council recognises the importance of clear and effective communication in ensuring lift safety, maintenance, and support for tenants and leaseholders during lift breakdowns. To achieve this, the Council have consulted residents on a draft version of this policy, providing opportunities to submit feedback both online and in person.

4.2 Incorporating resident input into the development of this policy will enable the Council to improve its approach to lift maintenance and tailor the support provided to tenants and leaseholders during lift breakdowns.

4.3 We will share information clearly and transparently and ensure that information is available to our residents on our website.

5. Related Documents

The following documents that should read in conjunction with this policy:

- [Housing Asset Management and Compliance Strategy 2025 - 2030](#)
- [Property Compliance Policy](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustment Policy](#)
- Lift Breakdowns Standard Operating Procedures

6. Legal Framework

This policy is subject to, but not restricted to the following specific regulations, Health and Safety Executive's Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPS) and industry guidelines:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Lifts Regulations 2016
- BS 7255:2023 Safe Working on Lifts Code of Practice
- BS 9999:2017 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings
- The Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed) Guidelines
- HSE Guidance Note PM26 (safety at lift landings)
- HSE INDG339 – Thorough Examination and Testing of Lifts
- HSE INDG422 – Thorough Examination of Lifting Equipment
- HSE INDG290 – Lifting Equipment at Work
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

7. Equality and Diversity

All passenger lifts across Sandwell Council's housing stock will be fully accessible for disabled users, as per the Equality Act 2010 and Part M of the Building Regulations 2004. This includes provision of lifts that:

- Are clearly signposted
- Are equipped with emergency lighting
- Have voice announcement systems for floor arrivals and door closing
- Have Braille floor numbering, tactile controls and safety instructions
- Are of a sufficient size and capacity to allow wheelchair access.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment refers to modifications or accommodations made to a property or its services to support tenants with disabilities or additional needs, ensuring they can live comfortably and safely. These adjustments aim to ensure equal access to housing opportunities and promote independence for residents.

8.1 Supporting Vulnerable Tenants During Lift Breakdowns

We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable tenants receive the necessary support during lift breakdowns. To achieve this, we will:

- **Identify vulnerable residents:** maintain an up-to-date record of tenants who may require additional assistance, such as those with mobility issues, medical needs, or caregiving responsibilities.
- **Offer personalised communication:** Contact vulnerable tenants directly to inform them of the situation, provide estimated repair times, and discuss any specific support they may need.
- **Co-ordinate with support services:** Work closely with partner services to offer support during prolonged disruptions.

8.2 Customers can also request that we make any other reasonable adjustments in the following ways:

- in person
- in writing for example by email, by post, text
- by telephone
- by a family member when we have been given permission to do so; and or
- a member of staff may suggest for one to be made, when they are aware it will support the customer needs.

8.3 For more information, please refer to Sandwell's [Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#).

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, management, a major incident or if it is no longer suitable.

10. Policy Document Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Updated By	Approved By
1.0				
2.0				

DRAFT