

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:**

**Title:** Repairs and Succession Policies

Tuesday 16  
November 2025

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Arthur Coote, Portfolio Holder for Housing

**Report Authors:** Nicole Shephard-Lewis, Tenant Engagement & Social Value Manager  
[nshephardlewis@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:nshephardlewis@uttlesford.gov.uk)  
and Anthony Alexander – Interim Housing Policy & Research Officer

**Key decision:** No

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## Summary

1. This report recommends that the Cabinet review and approve a group of five repairs policies and a succession policy. The need for these has arisen following completion of the self-assessment against the Housing Regulators Consumer Standards.
2. The policies for approval in summary are listed below.

Policy	Status
Repairs and Maintenance Policy	New
Disrepair Policy	New
Recharges Policy	New
Dampness, Mould and Condensation Policy	New
Void Management Policy	Revised
Succession Policy	New

3. There is established practice in several of the areas covered by these policies. The policies will provide a formal statement for the council of the aims in each policy area and guidance for residents.
4. Approval of the policies will both provide compliance with key areas of the Housing Consumer standards and support the council's approach to address the requirements of Awaab's law that came into force in October 2025.

## Recommendations

5. Cabinet is asked to approve the policies listed in paragraph 2.

## **Financial Implications**

6. The Dampness and Mould and Disrepair policies will support the reduction in a number of costs associated with disrepair claims and any compensation awarded.
7. The recharges policy aims to recover costs from residents or repairs costs incurred through irresponsible behaviour.

## **Background Papers**

8. A list of the key relevant background reports for each policy is listed below. There are more details attached to each individual policy.

### Void Management

- Regulator for Social Housing: Consumer Standards
- Regulator for Social Housing: Decent Homes Standards (under review)

### Succession

- Localism Act 2011
- Housing Act 1985 for Secure tenants - sections 88 and 89
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004 to extend statutory succession rights to same sex couples.

### Repairs and Maintenance

- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 – incorporating Awaab's Law when enacted

### Disrepair Policy

- Landlord and Tenant Act (LTA) 1985 Section 11 and 9a
- Home (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair (England) (the Protocol)

### Dampness, Mould and Condensation Policy

- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Housing Act 2004)
- Equality Act 2010
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

## **Background**

9. UDC completed a self-assessment against the Housing Consumer standards in October 2024. A key issue emerging was the need to bring up to date the housing policy schedule.
10. In the old directory of Housing Policies and Procedures most policies were reviewed prior to 2020. An effort has been made to bring the directory up to date.

11. This has included completing a risk assessment against the policy directory to identify a priority order in which to re-write policies.
12. There has been a need to draft a number of new policies in line with current regulatory and best practice.
13. The present group of policies were identified to be those with the greatest priority in terms of ensuring compliance with the Housing Consumer standards.

### **Policy Development**

14. Initial drafts of the policies were produced and consulted on internally with housing staff. After this first round of consultation and feedback revisions were made to use as the basis for residents' consultation.

### **Policy Summaries**

15. A short summary is provided of each policy and their key aims.

#### Repairs and Maintenance Policy

16. This policy explains how Uttlesford District Council (UDC) looks after council homes, how repairs are managed, and what tenants and leaseholders are responsible for.
17. Setting out the responsibilities for both the Council, Tenants and leaseholders; the process of reporting repairs; the type of repairs; how appointments and inspections work and the standards and rights of tenants.

#### Disrepair Policy

18. The policy sets out how the Council manages housing disrepair claims, defines responsibilities of the Council and tenants, and ensures compliance with relevant legislation and the Housing Disrepair Pre-Action Protocol.
19. Its main aim is to resolve issues quickly, avoid unnecessary legal action, and protect tenants' rights while controlling costs.

#### Recharges Policy

20. This policy explains when tenants, leaseholders or residents may be asked to pay the Council for repairs or services, and when costs may be waived.
21. Tenant's may have to pay for repairs if they cause damage, fail to meet responsibilities, or stop the Council from carrying out its duties.
22. The Council may waive charges in exceptional cases, especially for vulnerable tenants or where damage was not your fault.

#### Dampness, Mould and Condensation

23. The new damp and Mould Policy is based on the proposed Awaab's Law, the Housing Act 2004 and the Decent Homes Standard. The policy may need to be revised as guidance and legislation evolves.
24. This policy helps ensure effective and timely response to damp, mould, and condensation in council homes. It applies to all homes owned/managed by Uttlesford Housing. It sets responsibilities for council, tenants, and leaseholders.

### Void Management Policy

- 25.** This policy explains how Uttlesford District Council manages empty homes (called voids) from the time a tenant leaves until a new tenant moves in. The aim is to make homes safe, good quality, and ready to rent quickly, while reducing rent loss.

### Succession Policy

- 26.** This policy explains how Uttlesford District Council, will deal with successions in respect of secure tenancies created before 1 April 2012 when the original tenant of a property dies and how the change in the law affects successions to secure tenancies created on or after 1 April 2012.
- 27.** Succession is when a tenancy is passed on to someone else after a tenant dies. Only one succession is allowed for each tenancy

### **Policy Consultation**

- 28.** As there was a substantial number of policies it was agreed that the policies would be summarised to facilitate consultation with residents. These policy summaries were sent to a group of residents to review and provide feedback. (N.B. Need to confirm numbers.)
- 29.** In addition, a day was set aside with residents on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 to go through each of the six policies. This was attended by 5 residents.
- 30.** The feedback and comments provided by residents were used to revise the policies further into the version presented now to CMT.
- 31.** A copy of the policies revised by tenant feedback were sent to the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel for information and final comment.

### **32. Impact**

Communication/Consultation	<p>The repairs policies cover key elements of the repairs and maintenance service. A leaflet for the Dampness, Mould and Condensation policy will need to be refreshed which promote the policy.</p> <p>During the consultation residents asked that this leaflet be provided to all new tenants in their sign up pack.</p> <p>Once approved all the policies will be promoted in the quarterly tenant newsletter.</p> <p>The policies and their principles will be reflected in the Tenant Handbook.</p>
Community Safety	<p>There are no direct impacts arising from this report in relation to community safety.</p>

Equalities	There are no direct impacts arising from this report in relation to equalities.
Health and Safety	<p>The Disrepair and Dampness, Mould and Condensation policies are aimed at minimising and mitigating these issues in the homes of tenants.</p> <p>The introduction of Awaab's Law from 27.10.2025 raises the benchmark on Health and Safety compliance further.</p>
Human Rights/Legal Implications	<p>A robust Dampness, Mould and Condensation policy is key to achieving compliance with Awaab's law.</p> <p>The current legal position is that Clause 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (known otherwise as Awaab's law) inserts into social housing tenancy agreements an implied term that will require social housing landlords to comply with new requirements to be detailed in secondary legislation.</p>
Sustainability	There are no direct impacts in relation to sustainability.
Ward-specific impacts	All Wards.
Workforce/Workplace	Awaab's Law results in additional landlord responsibilities hence the recruitment of a Damp & Mould Officer

### 33. Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Failure to have the key repairs policies in place limit the ability comply with the Housing Consumer standards.	1 –the Council has complied with its obligations	3 –Regulatory enforcement, reputational damage	Not required
Failure to enforce the repairs	1- The approval of	3 –Regulatory enforcement,	Robust performance monitoring

policies robustly will lead to disrepair cases increasing and potential breaches of Awaab's law.	the policies will minimize likelihood of service failure.	potential breach of Awaab's law and reputational damage	
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### Next Steps

- 34.** Once approved and adopted the repair and maintenance policies will be shared with our repair partner, AXIS. They will provide clarity on the expected service delivery principles and outcomes or our tenants.
- 35.** The repairs policies will provide a framework for consistent and compliant repair and maintenance operational work, to ensure safety, adhere to regulatory requirements, streamline decision making and protect against risk.
- 36.** The succession policy will be publicised in a future quarterly newsletter and published on the council website.