



Uttlesford District Council

Housing

Repairs and Maintenance Policy

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Repairs and Maintenance Policy

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 The Repairs and Maintenance Policy provides clear guidance for staff, our tenants and residents and wider stakeholders of Uttlesford District Housing regarding the management of repairs and maintenance services.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** - a risk assessment tool used to assess 29 hazards to determine whether a property is safe to live in and rates the hazards in your home depending on the likely impact it will have on your health.

2.2 **First Time Fix** - The commitment to complete the repair in your home at the first visit. This includes allowing for collecting tools/materials if repair can be completed upon return with minimal delay.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Uttlesford Council (The 'Council') is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard which adds value to the homes and their surroundings.

3.2 This policy aims to ensure that all properties are well-maintained, safe, and in good repair.

3.3 By implementing this Repairs Policy, the Council aims to uphold compliance with all applicable legislation and regulatory requirements.

3.4 We ensure we meet our health and safety obligations under HHSRS by actioning and visiting any report of HHSRS hazard within 24 Hours.

4.0 AIMS OF POLICY

4.1 The aim of this policy is to set out how the Council will deliver our responsive repairs service to ensure our stock is maintained and repairs are completed to a high standard, within target times, while achieving value for money.

4.2 This policy applies to all properties managed by the Council and includes statutory repairs, routine maintenance, urgent repairs, and planned improvements.

5.0 Uttlesford Housing Responsibilities

5.1 Uttlesford's responsibilities include the following,

- Maintaining the structure and exterior and common parts of the property of the property, including the roof, walls, windows, doors, and drains.
- Maintaining essential services, such as water, oil, gas, and electricity supply

systems. Ensuring that these services are in proper working order and safe for tenants to use.

- Ensuring homes are safe and free from damp, mould & disrepair.
- Ensuring homes meet the Decent Homes Standard. This standard sets out requirements for safety, thermal efficiency, and basic amenities in social housing, including the provision of adequate heating, hot water, and sanitation facilities.
- **Ensuring that a quality assurance regime exists.**
- Ensuring homes are kept in good repair.
- Ensuring homes are Housing Health & Safety Rating System HHSRS compliant.

6.0 Tenant Responsibilities

6.1 Tenants responsibilities include the following.

- Keeping the interior of their homes and external areas within the boundary of their home in good order.
- Reporting repairs promptly, where Uttlesford is responsible in line with tenancy agreements.
- Providing access for repairs ensuring belongings are moved to enable the work to be undertaken and to provide a clean, safe, smoke free environment for employees and contractors to work in.
- Maintaining any items that they have installed themselves.
- Where able, carrying out all basic DIY tasks such as (but not limited to) changing bulbs, unblocking sinks and toilets.
- Ensuring vents are not restricted to maintain adequate ventilation in the property.
- Maintaining any items that have been gifted to them by Uttlesford.
- Keeping gardens, external spaces, and boundaries in a good, tidy and safe condition free from rubbish and weeds. (Except where a contract service is covered by service charge).
- Ensuring vents are not restricted to maintain adequate ventilation in the property.

7.0 Leaseholder Responsibilities

7.1 Leaseholder Responsibilities include the following.

- Keeping in a good condition and repairing the areas defined as your sole responsibility within the terms of your lease, known as 'demised premises'.
- Maintaining the boundary walls and fences along the boundaries of the garden marked with 'T' on the title plan.
- Seeking our written consent to make alterations or change to the layout of the property by removing or cutting down walls and to pay the relevant fees in respect of any application for consent or approval.
- Allowing us to post inspect the alterations or improvements carried out without our consent to ensure the works undertaken do not represent a health risk to you or any other residents.

8.0 Reporting a repair

- 8.1 We will provide a range of options for residents to report repairs, including online, telephone (including an out of hours line for emergency repairs), email or in writing.
- 8.2 Across all channels for reporting repairs, Uttlesford's aim is to arrange a convenient appointment at first contact with the tenant and complete the repair, where reasonably practicable, within one visit.

9.0 Responsive Repairs

- 9.1 Responsive repairs are usually requested by the tenant. Responsive repairs should be ordered through one of the 5 categories below.
- 9.2 These include the following.
 - Emergency Repair 1: Within 4 hours (and 2 hours in exceptional circumstances)
 - Emergency Repair 2: Within 24 hours
 - Urgent Responsive Repair: Within 5 working days
 - Routine Responsive Repair: Within 20 working days
 - Major Works Repair: Within 45 working days

10.0 Repairs Appointments and Access

- 10.1 Appointment time slots for repairs are:
 - AM – Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 12:30pm
 - PM – Monday to Thursday between 1:00pm and 5:00pm and Friday between 1:00pm and 5:00pm
 - All day – Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 5:00pm.
 - Avoid school run - Monday to Friday attending between 9:20am and 14:30pm.
- 10.2 Appointments will be confirmed using one of the agreed methods.
 - Letter
 - Email
 - Mobile phone
 - Text
 - Social media
 - Telephone
- 10.3 Compensation is paid by the contractor for missed appointments. This is a sum of £20 if a contractor cancels without prior agreement from UDC or a resident request.
- 10.4 A sum of £40 is paid for a second broken appointment for the same job.
- 10.5 There is then £20 paid for each subsequent appointment made for the same job.

11.0 Inspections

- 11.1 Where the scope of the repair is unclear an inspection appointment may be needed to determine what works are required, take measurements or identify required parts or materials.
- 11.2 For more complex repairs the Council will commission a technical inspection. This will be issued within 5 working days to diagnose the required works.
- 11.3 Following an inspection, we will inform you of what will happen next. If:
 - Everyday repair works are required, we will raise a repair within 2 days of the inspection and text you an appointment time for the repair.
 - More extensive repairs are required, we will raise the repair within 5 days of the inspection and text you an appointment time for the repair.
 - The required works are scheduled, or the extent of works would be more economical under a planned works programme.

12.0 Out of Hours Repair

- 12.1 We offer an out of hours service for tenants to report emergency repairs. 'Out of hours' emergency repairs must be reported by telephone.
- 12.2 The Out of hours service operates between the hours of 17:00hrs to 08:00hrs.
- 12.3 All out of hour's requests will be deemed Emergency Repair 1 or Emergency Repair 2 – Emergency repairs to be carried out within 24 hours if they meet the required definition below:
 - There is a serious health and safety risk.
 - A vulnerable tenant cannot manage without the service.
 - The problem will become more expensive if it is not immediately repaired e.g. a serious leak.
 - The job requires immediate attention to make the property secure.
 - The repair is required to protect the asset.

13.0 Programmed Replacements

- 13.1 If the problem cannot be fixed by a responsive repair and requires a full component replacement, Uttlesford will label these works as 'Programmed Replacement'.
 - Programmed Replacement works are component replacements and include the following common items, although this list is not exhaustive:
 - Kitchen (part or all)
 - Bathroom fittings (part or all), including anti slip flooring.
- 13.2 If a Programmed Replacement relates to Health and Safety, (e.g. a Fire Door) the following process applies. (Please indicate process?)
- 13.3 These planned elemental replacements could take up to 12 - 24 Months to be completed.

14.0 Planned Repairs

- 14.1 If the issue cannot be fixed by a responsive repair, requires more planning and is not urgent or dangerous, Uttlesford will treat these works as 'Planned Repairs'.
- 14.2 Examples of planned works include
 - Some boundary works
 - Pointing
 - Rendering
 - Extensive plastering (more than 1 full surface area)
- 14.3 The Council will endeavour to provide a timetable for the delivery and completion of these planned works.

15.0 Servicing

- 15.1 Uttlesford will make regular servicing checks of appliances and facilities it installs and owns.
- 15.2 Items that will be serviced or checked by Uttlesford include:
 - Gas, oil, solid fuel, electric space heating and water heating appliances.
 - Fires and flues (where this is the main form of heating).
 - Door entry systems.
 - Lifts.
 - Play areas.
 - Septic tanks and sewage treatment plants.
 - Fire protection equipment.

16.0 Rechargeable Repairs

- 16.1 Uttlesford will actively seek to recover the cost of any repair which is not its responsibility or where damage has been caused by a tenant, other residents, or visitors to a property.
- 16.2 Please see the Rechargeable Repairs policy for full details.
- 16.3 Examples of rechargeable works include.
 - Damage to the property resulting from an act of intentional or negligent behaviour by the tenant, anybody living with the tenant, or anybody visiting the home.
 - Boarding up and re-glazing windows, resulting from an act of intentional or negligent behaviour by the tenant, anybody living with the tenant or anybody visiting the tenant's home.
 - Lock changes and replacement keys if the tenant has lost their keys or locked him or herself out of the property.
 - Removal of items left in communal areas.
 - Clearing gardens at any time during the tenancy or at the point when the

tenancy ends.

- Abuse of the emergency call out service e.g. when the repair required is not really an emergency but has been reported as such.

17.0 Right to Buy

- 17.1 If you have applied to purchase your home under the Right to Buy repairs will be restricted to emergencies and statutory repairs to ensure the property is weatherproof, safe and all services (gas, electric, water, drainage) are in proper working order.
- 17.2 No replacement works will be carried out unless absolutely necessary.

18.0 Repair Standards and Scope

- 18.1 We will always attempt to repair, instead of replacing.
- 18.2 Where a replacement sanitary component is necessary (i.e. a wash hand basin), we will replace the single item with a standard white replacement, as is the case for wall tiles.
- 18.3 The scope of repairs that we carried out will be made available to residents. In a format that shows both landlord and tenant repair responsibility.

19.0 Right to Repair

- 19.1 We have to fix urgent problems in our council owned homes which could affect any tenant's health, safety or security within a certain period. This is known as the Right to Repair scheme.
- 19.2 We are responsible for making sure:
 - the structure of your property is kept in good condition - this includes the walls, ceiling, roof and windows.
 - gas and electricity appliances work safely.
 - shared parts of a building or housing estate are kept in good condition.
- 19.3 We tell you how long we will take to carry out different types of repairs.

Qualifying repairs

- 19.4 Only certain types of repairs are covered under the right to repair scheme. These are called qualifying repairs. They include:
 - insecure windows and doors
 - unsafe power sockets or electrical fittings
 - leaking roofs
 - broken entry phone systems
- 19.5 A full list of qualifying repairs is published by Citizens Advice.

19.6 A repair won't qualify for the scheme if:

- it exceeds an estimated cost of £250, or
- we are not responsible for the repair.

19.7 When you report a repair to us, we will tell you whether it is a qualifying repair.

If the work isn't done in time

19.8 If our contractor does not do the work in the specified time, you should contact our Repairs Team.

19.9 We'll issue a second repairs order for the work to be carried out.

Compensation

19.10 If the repair is still not carried out, you may get £10 in compensation. For every extra day you wait, you'll get another £2. The most compensation you can get for any one job is £50.

Complain about a repair

19.11 If you are not satisfied with the standard of the repair, or the time taken to carry out the work, you should contact our Repairs Team.

19.12 If you are still not satisfied, you can complain to us.

20.0 Reasonable Adjustments

21.1 We will support the needs of our diverse residents by making reasonable adjustments to our repairs processes, which could be a physical change or change in work practices to avoid any disadvantage to a resident in accessing this policy.

21.2 There will be some scenarios where residents require a faster response, for example, due to their disability or vulnerability.

21.3 Examples of reasonable adjustments includes the following,

- We will risk assess and re-prioritise works considering the vulnerabilities or individual needs of the household where identified.
- We will communicate through a representative.
- We will provide additional support such as a sign language interpreter or translator.
- We will use plain language as far as possible.

21.4 There is more information on our approach to vulnerability and reasonable adjustments set out in our policies on these topics.

22.0 Health & Safety

22.1 All Uttlesford staff and representatives must adhere to the Health and Safety policy and, in accordance with the policy, all staff are required to ensure that all working practices are in line with appropriate health and safety legislation and good practice making sure that employees, tenants, buildings and stakeholders are safe.

22.2 Staff carry out dynamic risk assessments and if health and safety is compromised, or risks are identified, they are authorised to abort the repair and leave.

22.3 Examples include but are not limited to:

- Violence and aggression
- Dangerous dogs
- If needles are identified

23.0 Monitoring and Quality Assurance

23.1 Post-inspection of 10% of repairs jobs issued will be carried out to assess the quality of repair work.

23.2 We will post-inspect all larger extensive repairs above an agreed threshold to ensure that the service provides value for money and maintains high standards.

23.3 We will monitor levels of repair satisfaction and take action to improve service delivery. This will include both ongoing transactional satisfaction survey and annually a broader perception survey.

23.4 The repairs contractor will be encouraged to complete their own satisfaction surveys.

24.0 Performance

24.1 Uttlesford will measure its repair performance by using, and issuing, a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as defined. Please see the appendix for more detail.

24.2 The Council will publish repairs performance information to tenants. This will be in several different ways, the website, the annual newsletter and the annual housing report.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role:	Responsibilities:
Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of the policy
Repairs Client Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible for making sure that all relevant employees are aware of the contents and responsibilities of this policy

Housing Manager/Repairs Client Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible for the overall implementation, and regular review, of this policy and ensuring its objectives are achieved.
Surveyors, Housing Manager/Housing Officers/Customer Services Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Day-to-day operational delivery of the policy and associated procedures.

KEY CONTACT

- Lead Officer: Simone Russell
- Service Area/Directorate: Housing, Environment & Communities. Landlord Services
- Lead Member: Councillor Arthur Coote

LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

Corporate Priorities	Yes/No
Putting residents first	Yes
Protecting and enhancing our environment	No
Building strong communities	Yes
Encouraging economic growth	No

Document History			
Date	Amendments Made	By Whom	Approval
24/12/2024		A Alexander	
20/03/2025		B Burton/A Alexander	
11/06/2025		Repairs Client Team & A Alexander	
<i>Version Number</i>			
<i>Reviewed By</i>			
<i>Approval Body</i>			
<i>Date Adopted</i>			
<i>Next Review Date</i>			

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Update Overview

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or if there are any major changes in legislation that may impact on this policy.

Legislative Context

Building Regulations Act 1984
Building Safety Act 2022
Fire Safety Act 2021
Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
Data Protection Act 2018
Decent Home Standard
Electricity at Work Act 1989
Equality Act 2010
Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
Housing Act 2004
Land Compensation Act 1973
Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 – incorporating Awaab's Law when enacted
The Secure Customers of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994

Local Government Context

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced new Consumer Standards that all social housing landlords are required to meet. The Safety and Quality Standard consumer standards April 2024 state that registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

As part of this providing a value for money repairs and maintenance service and complying with all relevant health and safety legislation.

This policy is to ensure that the councils meet all legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements under UK legislative and regulatory obligations and the terms and conditions of the Tenancy Agreement.

UDC Policy History

A Customer Services Standards for Repairs was last reviewed in January 2015. This is a first Repairs and Maintenance policy for the council in at least 10 years.

Policy Scope: Resident and/or Internal

This policy provides guidance to residents on how the Council will provide a day to day

repairs and maintenance service.

Related Policies & Corporate Governance Matters

Vulnerable Persons Policy
Reasonable Adjustments Promise
Dampness & Mould Policy
Disrepair Policy
Recharges Policy

POLICY MONITORING

The policy will be monitored by the Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Communities

The policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that compliance is achieved.

COMPLAINT, CHANGE & MODIFICATION

Complaint

Complaints made in relation to this policy, or its application shall follow the Council's corporate complaint policy

Modification

Minor changes will be signed off by the appropriate service Director following CMT approval.

Substantial changes will be referred to the CMT for approval.

The decision on what changes will constitute minor or substantial change will be determined by CMT.

Change

The Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Communities shall be responsible for reviewing /updating the policy in accordance with changes to best practice, statutory guidance and legislation.

Substantial changes made shall be presented to CMT for formal approval.

Reference Section.

APPENDIX A – Equality Impact Assessment

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