



**TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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| Type of Document: | Policy Statement   |
| Document Group:   | Housing Management |
| Reviewed Date:    | April 2026         |

**1. Purpose & scope**

1.1 This policy sets out Unity's approach to working with tenants to manage their tenancies. Its purpose is to ensure that tenants understand what they can expect from Unity and how we will work to sustain safe, secure and successful tenancies.

1.2 This policy applies to all Unity tenants and covers:

- Types of tenancy Unity offers
- Circumstances in which different tenancies are granted
- Tenant rights and tenancy changes
- Support to help tenants sustain their homes
- Tackling tenancy fraud
- Ending tenancies

1.3 Detailed procedures and operational guidance will accompany this policy to ensure consistent implementation by staff.

## **2. Policy aims and objectives**

2.1 Our aim is to promote strong sustainable communities by offering the most suitable form of tenancy compatible with the type of accommodation and the needs of the household to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. We want tenants to understand their rights and receive the information, support and guidance required to maintain their tenancy successfully.

2.2 We will ensure that our homes are managed effectively by:

- Making the best use of our housing stock
- Preventing and detecting tenancy fraud
- Supporting tenants to build financial independence
- Tenancy sustainability
- Ensuring rent is collected to fund services
- Ensuring homes are turned around quickly

### **3. Service standards**

#### **3.1 When we manage our tenancies, we will:**

- Provide all new tenants with a copy of their tenancy agreement.
- Explain key rights and responsibilities at the tenancy sign-up
- Provide information in a range of accessible formats including digital formats.
- Support vulnerable tenants or digitally excluded tenants
- Develop links with local agencies that will support new tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- Visit new tenants shortly after they have moved in to assist them to settle in.
- Carry out internal audits
- Provide regular updates to our operations committee
- Inform tenants straightaway when we have concerns that they may have breached their conditions of tenancy.
- Respond to enquiries from tenants within 10 working days.
- Deal with complaints at the first point of contact or through our formal complaint's procedure.

### **4. Legislation and regulation**

#### **4.1 Unity will comply with all relevant legislation, including but not limited to:**

- Renters' Rights Act 2025
- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998 (including Article 8 proportionality)
- Immigration Act 2014 (Right to Rent duties)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (Serious Violence Duty)

Unity will also comply with regulatory requirements, including the Regulator of Social Housing: Consumer Standards 2024

- Tenancy Standard
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Safety and Quality Standard

## **5. Types of Tenancies**

### **5.1 Starter tenancies**

Starter tenancies are granted to most new tenants. A starter tenancy is a 12-month assured shorthold tenancy that may be extended if required. Where the tenancy is managed successfully, it will convert to an assured tenancy. Starter tenancies may be ended where serious concerns arise. Separate guidance sets out how starter tenancies are managed.

### **5.2 Assured tenancies**

Unity will grant assured tenancies to:

- Starter tenants whose tenancy has converted
- Existing Unity assured tenants transferring within Unity stock
- Tenants who move to Unity and have held an assured or secure tenancy continuously since 15 January 2012

### **5.3 Other forms of tenancy**

Unity may use other occupancy agreements when required, including:

- Contractual tenancies for temporary accommodation
- Licences for temporary decant arrangements
- Assured shorthold tenancies for supported housing
- Use and occupation agreements
- Equitable tenancies for people under 18, held in trust by a responsible adult until the tenant reaches 18

These are granted only where statutory or voluntary agencies are actively supporting the young person, such as Social Services or another recognised support provider

## **6. Tenancy Changes**

Where applicable, all incoming tenants aged 18 or over must demonstrate a legal right to rent in the UK. Checks will be completed prior to the mutual exchange taking place, using acceptable documentation or the Home Office checking service, and will be carried out fairly, consistently, and in line with statutory requirements.

### **6.1 Joint Tenancies – New Lettings**

Unity will normally grant a joint tenancy where a joint application is made, and the applicants live together as partners. We will not usually grant joint tenancies where:

- An applicant does not meet Right to Rent requirements
- An applicant does not intend to occupy the home as their only or principal residence
- The request is for an intergenerational joint tenancy
- More than two people request a joint tenancy

- A debt is owed to Unity by one or both applicants
- The request is for an applicant and a carer
- There is a history of serious antisocial behaviour
- There are unresolved arrears

Applications will be considered in line with safety, suitability and community impact.

**Sole tenants may request a joint tenancy where:**

- At least 12 months have passed since the start of the tenancy
- The tenancy is assured
- The tenant and proposed joint tenant have lived together as partners for at least 12 months

Unity may refuse requests based on tenancy conduct or concerns relating to the proposed joint tenant.

Requests from joint tenants to transfer the tenancy to one name will be considered where:

- Both joint tenants request this in writing
- Both confirm they understand the implications
- One joint tenant has moved out
- Both sign a Deed of Assignment
- The remaining tenant occupies the property as their main home

## **6.2 Name changes**

Unity will update tenancy records when tenants change their name, provided:

- There are no possession orders or tenancy breach proceedings
- Valid evidence is supplied
- The request is reasonable and not frivolous
- Repeated name changes are not being requested

## **7. Tenant's Rights**

### **7.1 Lodgers and Subletting**

Tenants must request written permission to take in a lodger or sub-let part of their home. We may refuse consent where it is not in the interests of the tenant, neighbours or community, or where tenancy agreement conditions do not permit subletting. Tenancies granted after November 2020 do not allow subletting or short-term lets.

## **7.2 Succession**

Unity will respond promptly and sensitively to succession claims. We will ensure:

- Eligible successors can succeed as quickly as possible
- non-eligible applicants receive advice and signposting
- Occupation by non-qualifying persons is managed lawfully
- Robust checks are made to prevent tenancy fraud

## **7.3 Assignment**

Unity may allow assignment:

- As part of a mutual exchange
- Where ordered by the court, including following relationship breakdown
- To someone who would have qualified to succeed

## **7.4 Mutual Exchanges**

Unity supports tenants to access mutual exchange services. Only direct two-way exchanges will be considered. Exchanges require written consent. Unity may refuse an exchange where there are concerns about conduct, suitability or tenancy breaches. The Mutual Exchange Policy provides further detail.

## **7.5 General rights and responsibilities**

A tenant's rights differ according to the type of tenancy that they have or when it started. We have set out in all our tenancy agreements the rights that tenants will enjoy and their responsibilities. We will provide clear information to tenants about those rights and responsibilities at the start of a tenancy and in other materials such as a handbook and leaflets and where necessary we may publish a separate policy statement.

## **8. Our approach to tenancy support**

Unity is committed to supporting tenants to sustain their homes. We will consider household circumstances including disability, health needs, domestic abuse, age or vulnerability and will work with partner agencies where necessary. Support needs will not prevent enforcement action where tenancy breaches occur, but Unity will make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010 and will comply with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

## **9. Our approach to tenancy fraud**

Unity is committed to preventing, detecting and acting on tenancy fraud. Fraud includes:

- Unauthorised subletting
- Not occupying the property as the only or principal home
- Key selling
- Obtaining a tenancy through false statements
- Benefit fraud
- Wrongful succession claims
- Unauthorised assignments or exchanges

Unity will work with partner agencies, including local authorities and police, to investigate and prosecute fraud. We will take possession action where evidence supports this and will publicise outcomes to deter misuse of our homes.

## **10. Ending Tenancies**

### **10.1 Notice requirements**

We will require tenants to give notice to terminate their tenancy as specified in their tenancy agreement. Tenants will be responsible for the payment of rent during the full notice period.

### **10.2 Legal proceedings**

Unity will always attempt to sustain tenancies through advice, support and referrals. Enforcement will be considered only when necessary and proportionate under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Possession action may be taken where:

- There is tenancy fraud
- Serious or persistent breaches occur
- A legal ground for possession applies under the Housing Act 1988 (as amended by the Renters' Rights Act 2025)
- The property is required for redevelopment, Health & Safety reasons, or major works
- The home is no longer suitable for the household
- Required to make best use of stock or protect community safety

Unity Homes & Enterprise works to ensure all properties meet its lettings standards; where damage or additional repairs are identified as being the responsibility of the outgoing tenant, the organisation may seek to recharge the costs incurred.

## **11. Responsibilities, monitoring and performance**

- 11.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Housing Services Manager. The Housing Services Manager will ensure that staff receive the appropriate training, support and guidance needed to achieve our aims and objectives.
- 11.2 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the Operations Committee.
- 11.3 We will monitor and evaluate this policy through customer satisfaction surveys, TSM data and our complaints data and by reporting outcomes at the Operations committee.

## **12. Associated policies and Documents**

- Lettings Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Complaints Policy
- Arrears Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy

## **13. Document management**

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Policy title    | Tenancy Management Policy |
| Policy group    | Housing Management        |
| Date created    | May 2014                  |
| Policy owner    | Housing Services Manager  |
| Authorised by   | Operations Committee      |
| Date authorised | February 2021             |
| Review period   | 3 years                   |
| Date reviewed   | Nov 2025                  |

| Consultation and assessment       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Consultation                      | We have consulted with the Scrutiny Panel on this policy and the revised tenancy agreement. This policy now incorporates the rights and responsibilities contained in the new agreements.                                                                                          |
| Equality Impact Assessment        | An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. The provisions of this policy are based on the contractual and statutory rights enjoyed by our tenants and are applied consistently to all tenants to ensure that we do not act unlawfully in the management of our tenancies. |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment | Not required. Information sharing agreements in place with key partners (WY Police, local councils) where we need to share data to help us to manage a tenancy. Data processing is based on the contract or tenancy agreement.                                                     |

| Document review history |              |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Version                 | Date amended | Date approved | Key changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1.0                     | May 2014     | May 2014      | Original document                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2.0                     | August 2017  | November 2017 | Routine policy review. Minor amendments made to text to update and clarify our approach to exchanges.                                                                                                                             |
| 3.0                     | January 2021 | February 2021 | Routine policy review. Policy aligns with the changes to the rights and responsibilities introduced in the new tenancy agreements launched in November 2020. Removal of reference to possible future use of fixed term tenancies. |
| 4.0                     | April 2026   | April 2026    | Expand of support and ensure equalities are considered, expanded on legal reference and made reference to Allocations process and conducted an up to date EIA                                                                     |