

SAXON WEALD

LEAVEABLE STANDARD POLICY

First Approved: December 2001

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Next Review: May 2028

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the conditions of the contract (the tenancy agreement) held between Saxon Weald and its customers is when a tenancy comes to an end, a property should be left in good and clean condition with all furniture, personal possessions and rubbish removed. We call this the Leaveable Standard.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to:
- Set out the requirement for customers (who are vacating their homes) to leave the property in a good and clean condition.
 - Outline the processes we will have in place to ensure the standard is met.
 - Clarify the position on recharging for works where the standard is not met.
 - Explain how we will adapt the implementation of this policy for customers in certain circumstances or with specific needs.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all social and affordable rent properties and includes those properties that are being vacated because of a mutual exchange. It does not include market rent properties, which are governed by different contractual arrangements.
- 1.4 This policy is supported by a Leaveable Standard Checklist.
- 1.5 We would like to thank those customers involved in the review of this policy for their valuable support and insight.

2.0 Legal and regulatory requirements

Legal requirements

- 2.1 The tenancy agreement is a contract between Saxon Weald and a customer (tenant). It sets out the requirement as follows:

To leave the property and return the keys of the property to us promptly on the day following the end of the tenancy, and to remove all of your furniture, personal possessions and rubbish and leave the property and its fixtures and fittings in good and clean condition (fair wear and tear excepted) and to the Leaveable Standard.

Regulatory requirements

- 2.2 There are no specific regulatory requirements relating to the Leaveable Standard; however, the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard registered sets out that '*providers must ensure that communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants*'.

Good practice guidance

- 2.3 The Chartered Institute of Housing issued a guidance document in 2015, 'How to effectively manage void properties'. This includes guidance on a pre-termination inspection process that establishes what repairs need to be done for re-letting and any damage that the outgoing tenant needs to pay for.

3.0 Policy

- 3.1 Saxon Weald will ensure that all tenants are aware of their obligations to meet the Leaveable Standard before they move out of their home. To support this, the Leaveable Standard Checklist is issued to customers both at the beginning of their tenancy and again when they tell us they will be moving out.
- 3.2 We will provide access to information on the Leaveable Standard in a range of formats and languages to meet diverse needs. We will also make reasonable adjustments in the implementation of this policy for disabled people.
- 3.3 As a minimum, when customers move out, we expect the property to be:
- Safe and secure (doors, windows intact);
 - Empty of all belongings;
 - Clean; and
 - In a good state of general repair and decoration.
- 3.4 We will carry out an inspection of the property (using the Leaveable Standard Checklist as a guide) before the customer moves out. Following this inspection, we will inform the customer if the property does not meet the standard and advise them of what they need to do. We will let them know that the cost of any works will be recharged if the standard is not met.
- 3.5 Where the outgoing tenant has been offered a transfer or wants to undertake a mutual exchange, we may delay their new tenancy until any outstanding work is completed.
- 3.6 We will adapt the processes set out in this policy, where required, to take the specific needs and circumstances of customers into account. Examples where we may waive the Leaveable Standard or the decision to recharge include:
- Where the customer is in poor health and does not have the capacity, financial means or support to bring the property up to the standard.
 - Where the customer needs to move out for their wellbeing or safety (for example, if they are experiencing domestic abuse).
- 3.7 Where a tenant dies, we will act compassionately and work with the next of kin (where there is one) to ensure the property is cleared. Where appropriate, we may seek to recharge any costs to the person's estate.

4.0 Value for money

- 4.1 Properties that are vacated in a poor condition, and/or require clearing of possessions, generate significant cost each year. The implementation of this policy helps reduce these costs, as well as reducing the time taken to carry out any works.

5.0 Monitoring and review

- 5.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that it reflects the needs of our customers, good practice, and changes to legislation or regulation.

6.0 Equality and diversity

- 6.1 We will carry out an Equality and Customer Impact Assessment (ECIA)¹ of this policy to ensure and evidence that the Leaveable Standard is fair and equitable for different customer groups.
- 6.2 Equality and diversity affect all aspects of our business and, as such, its principles are integral to everything we do. As a landlord and an employer, Saxon Weald aims to recognise and respond positively to people's differences, while providing equality of opportunity in relation to the services and careers we provide and support.
- 6.3 This means that no person or group of people, either working for Saxon Weald or seeking housing, services, employment or contracts from us, will be treated less favourably because of their or their partner's, family's, friend's or associated person's protected characteristics, which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, nationality, immigration status, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Version	Amendment	By	Date
4.0	Three-year review	Kath Hicks	April 2022
5.0	Three-year review	Kath Hicks ED Customer Operations	May 2025

¹ The ECIA for this policy is planned for 2026/27