

TENANCY STANDARD



Version 7 - September 2019

The New Tenancy Standard provides information for maintenance officers and contractors when inspecting an empty property to make sure all work identified as necessary is detailed in the inspection report.

The identified work will be undertaken in accordance with the councils repair and maintenance priorities - with all essential work taking place prior to the new tenant moving in.

Work to be undertaken following the allocation of the property will be clearly explained to the new tenant with priority times given.

Kitchen

- will include a food preparation area, fully plumbed in sink, hygienic and easily cleaned worktops, space and connections for a cooker and a fridge or fridge freezer
- there will be a minimum number of four double sockets to Electrical Safety Regulations based on the size of the kitchen
- kitchen fittings will be sound and in good working order
- floor coverings to kitchens will be hygienic, easy to clean and in sound condition
- wall tiling will be checked and any cracked or defective tiling replaced
- any discoloured or defective grouting will be renewed - and wherever possible, wall tiling will be of a uniform colour
- the kitchen sink outlet will be checked to ensure adequate drainage
- plumbing for a washing machine will be provided - where there is no existing space for a washing machine, space will be made in the kitchen wherever possible, unless there is space in another part of the property such as a utility room
- in properties where no kitchen extractor fan* (see local offers at the back of this booklet for details) is currently installed an appropriate fan will be fitted where the layout permits.

Bathroom/Sanitary Ware

- the property will include a fully plumbed in WC, wash hand basin and a bath or shower
- if taps are replaced in older person's accommodation, lever taps will be installed
- the WC seat and cover will be replaced - in white unless an exact colour match can be achieved
- sanitary fittings will be replaced if they are in a poor condition - if they are cracked or beyond economical repair. The replacement colour will be white, unless an exact colour match can be achieved
- if a new bathroom is installed and the property has a combi-type boiler an electric shower will be fitted over the bath
- shower hoses and heads will be cleaned
- in properties where no extractor fan* (see local offers at the back of this booklet for details) is currently fitted in the bathroom an appropriate fan will be fitted where the layout permits.

Meters

All meters -gas, electric and water - will be read and recorded on the Void Condition Report Form. Photos of the meter reading will be stored on the Shared Housing File.



Gas Installations and Gas Central Heating

- all properties with gas installations will be subject to a gas safety check and a landlord's gas safety certificate will be issued to the new tenant
- on completion of the gas check and prior to occupation, the gas supply will be disabled. The supply will be reinstated when the new tenant has moved into the property and has arranged their gas and electric supplier
- the engineer will explain the correct and efficient operation of the heating system
- any repairs to the gas central heating system will be completed prior to the tenant moving in - and checked on completion
- any central heating system found to be beyond economical repair will be identified and renewed, wherever possible. Renewal will be in accordance with the specifications for the Gas Maintenance Contract and be undertaken by a Gas Maintenance Contractor whilst the property is vacant
- for properties that lack any form of controllable central heating system, consideration will be given to fitting a new central heating system whilst the property is vacant
- where combination boilers have been installed a thermostatically controlled electric shower will be fitted over the bath
- immersion heaters will be checked to ensure they have a suitable thermostat and tested to ensure they are set at an appropriate temperature.



Electric Heating

- storage radiators will be checked for adequate and secure fixings to the wall and/or floor
- storage radiators should be visually checked and arrangements made for the internal mechanisms vacuum cleaned to remove built up deposits of dust
- storage radiators will be checked to ensure they are positioned in an appropriate and safe position
- wherever possible, electric hot water systems should be provided with normal tariff and off peak immersion heaters - or dual immersion heater
- any existing immersion heaters will be checked to ensure they have an adequate thermostat
- electric heating systems will be checked and certified as part of the checking and testing of the rest of the electrical installation
- where an electric heating system is identified as being beyond economic repair, a replacement central heating system will be designed and installed, with a preference to a mains gas system where the area has a gas supply
- the energy supplier is the responsibility of the tenant to arrange.

Solid Fuel Heating Appliances

- if a solid fuel system is to be retained, the chimney will be swept
- cold water header tanks will be checked to ensure they have adequate support, are of sound construction and have overflows, ball valves and floats
- any redundant back boilers will be removed in accordance with HSE guidance and fully decommissioned to ensure a fire cannot be re-lit with a sealed back boiler in situ
- solid fuel appliances will be subject to safety checks to ensure adequate ventilation and draw on the flue
- where a solid fuel system is identified as being beyond economic repair, a replacement central heating system will be designed and installed, with a preference to a mains gas system where the property has a gas supply or other greener alternatives such as air source heat pumps
- adequate provision for fuel storage will be provided either in the form of a coal bunker or other dry fuel store
- external fuel stores accessed via a door will have a suitable lock.

Oil Storage and Oil Fired Heating Systems

- where a property has oil-fired central heating, a visual check of the oil tank should be undertaken to ensure it is sound and adequately protected
- the oil fired central heating system should be checked by a suitably qualified engineer and disabled prior to occupation
- when the new tenant takes up occupation and sufficient oil and an electrical supply has been established, the engineer will return and activate the system and instruct the tenant on the safe and economic use
- where an oil fired heating system is identified as being beyond economic repair, a replacement central heating system should be designed and installed, with a preference to a mains gas system where the property has a gas supply or other greener alternatives such as air source heat pumps.

Heating

- heating provision will be combined with appropriate levels of ventilation and insulation. (See section on Ventilation)
- hot water cylinders will be provided with adequate insulation
- heating appliances will be arranged to maximise energy efficiency within each room
- LPG systems should be treated as mains gas systems for the purpose of this document
- ground source heat pumps should be serviced in accordance with the specification. Particular attention should be paid to glycol levels and recorded flow and return temperatures.



Electrical Installations

- a competent and suitably qualified engineer will undertake a full and comprehensive check of the electrical installation
- on completion of the check the engineer will issue a certificate to the Council, a copy of which will be passed to the tenant, if requested, prior to occupation, by Housing Management
- where the electrical supply has been suspended, the engineer will undertake as much of the safety check as possible and return once the electrical supply has been restored by the tenant, to complete the check
- the installation will be checked to ensure an adequate number and layout of electrical outlets and lighting points
- any light fittings or dimmer switches fitted by the previous tenant will be removed and replaced with a standard fitting
- any damaged or discoloured light fittings and switches will be replaced
- the installation will be checked for layout and to ensure there is an adequate number of electrical outlets and lighting points
- any discoloured or painted sockets will be replaced
- any socket face plates fitted by the previous tenant will be removed and replaced with standard fittings
- artificial lighting will be adequate to ensure a safe living environment
- in the case of older person's accommodation, consideration should be given to passive infrared controls
- a decision on whether or not to rewire an empty property will be taken following the electrical test. If the property requires rewiring, this work will be undertaken whilst the property is vacant.

CO and Smoke detectors will be tested and/or fitted whilst the property is vacant as part of the electrical installation check. New batteries will be fitted. Single storey dwellings will have one smoke detector whilst dwellings of two or more stories will have a further smoke detector fitted on each landing. Detectors will be fitted in appropriate place as per manufacturer's instructions.

Appliances

- no built-in electrical cookers, fridges freezers or dishwashers will be left in an empty property.
- in cases where built-in appliances have been purchased from the outgoing tenant by the incoming tenant, or where the incoming tenant wishes to keep the appliances, they will be left in the property.
- the new tenant will be responsible for ensuring the safety of the appliance and for maintaining it. No liability will be accepted by the Council.
- no freestanding electrical appliances will be left in an empty property. In cases where freestanding electrical appliances have been purchased from the outgoing tenant by the incoming tenant by private arrangement, these should be clearly marked by the outgoing tenant. Precautions will be taken to ensure that these are protected during void works. The new tenant will be responsible for ensuring the safety of these items, and for maintaining them. No liability will be accepted by the Council.

Ventilation

- appropriate ventilation will be provided by a combination of openable windows and background ventilation - air bricks or vents in window frames
- existing ventilation will be checked to ensure correct operation
- where possible extractor fans will be provided for kitchens and bathrooms
- where a damp or condensation problem is identified, remedial measures will be taken to remedy the cause and any mould growth and defective plaster removed.

Aids and Adaptations

- existing adaptations will be left in the property unless removal has been previously agreed. Any adaptations left will be checked for safety
- any substantial adaptations should be identified and notified to the Allocation Officers so that an informed decision can be made regarding nominations
- if major adaptations have been agreed with Social Services and the incoming tenant, these works will be done prior to occupation wherever possible, particularly if required for safe occupation.

Warden Call Systems

- where warden call systems are provided in older person's accommodation, a visual inspection will be undertaken to ensure all the call points are in place and not damaged.

Floors

- floors will be level and suitable for normal domestic coverings
- floors will be checked to ensure that there are no loose or damaged floorboards and no nail heads sticking up
- all floor coverings will be inspected during the empty property inspection and if found to be in a satisfactory condition will be left for the new tenant
- where possible properties will be advertised with information showing if carpets are included at the time of letting. Tenants who choose not to keep carpets left will be responsible for the lifting and disposal of carpets. No replacement carpets will be provided by the council
- properties will be visually checked for insect infestations and the appropriate action taken. If woodworm treatment is required, water based treatments will be specified. In all cases, treatment will be compliant with health and safety practices
- in properties where rooms have floor tiles in need of repair, these will be replaced and the floors screeded if necessary.

Internal Decoration

- any sound existing decorations will be left regardless of previous tenants taste or colour choices
- all woodwork and/or metal work will be washed if required
- Polystyrene tiles will be removed.

Cleaning

We will clean empty properties if necessary, including:

- sweeping walls and ceilings if required
- washing walls and ceilings if needed
- windows will be cleaned if required
- woodwork will be cleaned if required
- electrical fittings will be cleaned if required
- cleaning all sanitary ware
- cleaning kitchen units inside and out plus work tops and sink if required
- leaving three air fresheners in the property.

A welcome pack will be left for the new tenant including:

- Bucket
- Roll of ten bin bags
- General purpose cleaner
- Cloth, sponge and a pair of rubber gloves.

Security

- external doors to all dwellings will have new locks fitted which meet insurance requirements
- where doors are provided with multi point locking systems, these will be checked, lubricated and adjusted
- door entry systems will be checked to ensure proper operation
- Keys will be provided to the new tenant at the start of the tenancy - a minimum of two sets of keys will be issued at the beginning of the tenancy.



Windows and Glazing

- all windows will be inspected and repaired as necessary
- any damaged glazing will be boarded up if insecure and replacement glazing ordered
- all window glazing less 800mm from floor level and all internal and external glazed doors/side screens will be checked to ensure that they comply with current safety standards. Where the existing glazing does not meet the required standard, it will be replaced
- non fixed windows will be lubricated, eased and adjusted
- where restrictors are fitted these will be checked to ensure that they are in a serviceable condition.

Stairs - Internal, External and Communal

- stairs and staircases will be well lit with safe and secure balustrades / handrails along the whole length where possible
- the fixings of the balustrades and handrails will be checked and the gaps between the railings will be checked and consideration given to upgrading any balustrade which does not meet current safety standards
- the floor surface in communal entrances and stairs will be slip resistant
- tripping hazards will be removed and stairs checked for loose or damaged treads, nosing and risers
- lighting levels will be appropriate to the location and use.

Balconies - Individual or Common Access

- balconies will provide protection against falling by young children or other vulnerable occupants
- any railings or panels will be checked
- safety glazing will be provided for window glass below 800mm and glazed doors
- all glazing below 800mm will be checked to ensure that it complies with the current safety standards. Where the existing glazing does not meet current standards, it will be replaced
- the floor surface will be slip resistant and there will be adequate drainage
- fungal wash will be used on floors where required
- tripping hazards will be removed.

Internal doors and Cupboard Doors

- all internal doors to rooms will be checked for correct operation and provided with a suitable mortice latch and lever handles
- any doors fitted by the previous tenant will be assessed and, if in good order, will be left
- all internal doors to cupboards - including kitchen - will be checked for correct operation and provided with a suitable cupboard latch.

Lofts

- lofts will be checked for insect and animal infestation
- checks will be made to ensure that the location, size and construction of the loft access is safe
- where loft insulation is found to be less than 200mm or is in poor condition, new insulation will be provided or topped up to a minimum depth of 300mm
- heating systems, pipework and water tanks in lofts will be checked and where insulation is lacking or substandard, new insulation will be provided
- cold water tanks and header tanks will be checked to ensure they comply with current water byelaws
- any loft boarding or artificial lighting will be removed as tenants are not encouraged to enter the loft other than for light storage that can be reached without entering the loft
- all rubbish left by the previous tenant in the loft area will be removed whilst the property is vacant.

Materials Containing Asbestos

- any asbestos-containing materials which are identified as being unsafe and likely to cause harm to tenants in everyday living will be removed and disposed of according to current Health and Safety procedures and in line with the Control of Asbestos at Work Act 2002
- any floor tiling, which is likely to contain asbestos, will be removed and the floor levelled with a latex screed, and retiled
- any materials which contain asbestos and which do not pose a risk will be notified to the tenant at start of the tenancy.

Outhouses and External WCs

- if the property has an outhouse and/or an external WC they will have a suitable door with a suitable lock
- any water supply will be adequately insulated and isolation valves fitted to enable draining down during winter months.

Gardens

- rubbish and debris will be cleared from gardens
- ponds will be removed/filled in for health and safety reasons
- sheds and lean-tos will be removed except when they are in a good, serviceable and safe condition. In these circumstances, the incoming tenant will be given the option to keep them - however, they will be asked to sign a form stating they will be taking on responsibility for the maintenance of the structure. If the incoming tenant decides not to keep the structure, we will arrange for disposal before the tenancy starts
- greenhouses will be removed for health and safety reasons
- paths and steps will be checked for safety
- any defective paving will be identified and remedial work logged for completion after the tenancy commences unless an immediate danger is identified. Any paving laid by the previous tenant will be assessed on the same basis and, if it is in poor condition or inappropriate, identified for removal with the garden made good
- where a garden has been left in an overgrown and unsatisfactory condition, consideration will be given to carry out a one-off maintenance or reinstatement. This may take place after occupation.

Drying Facilities

- Poles or rotary dryers will be provided
- Communal drying areas will be checked for uneven or defective surfaces
- Washing lines will not be provided.

Fencing and Gates

- boundary fencing will be checked and any urgent repairs carried out - all other repairs will be programmed for completion after commencement of the tenancy
- where fencing is renewed, the height of the fence will not exceed 1m high where the fence is in front of the house or adjacent to a highway
- fences behind the front of the house will not exceed 1.8m high
- in all cases, only the fencing that is on a boundary identified as being the responsibility of Housing will be replaced
- any existing external gates will be checked to ensure they can be closed securely with a latch.

External Repairs

- any external repairs to the fabric of the building will be identified and ordered. On completion, the property should be in a sound, weather tight condition and not in need of further immediate routine maintenance.

Previous Tenant's Alterations and Damage

- any alterations or improvements undertaken by previous tenants will be inspected and if appropriate retained or repaired.

Improvement Work

- all new tenants will be informed of any improvement works due in the next 12 months. Further information will be made available via richmondshire.gov.uk

Energy Efficiency Performance Certificate

All new tenants will receive an Energy Performance Certificate based on a survey carried out on the property in the last ten years advising them of the likely running costs associated with their new home.

Local offers 2019/20

Following tenant feedback as part of the development of the Lettable Standard the items identified by ***are being offered as Local Offers to new tenants.**

The New Tenancy Standard was reviewed in July 2019.

**This information is available in
alternative formats and languages**



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