Rent it right

Property standards for contract and partner schemes

1. General

1.1. Gas and electric meters, fuse boards, gas and water stop taps should be accessible to all occupants at all times without having to pass through other accommodation or through commercial premises. Where this is not possible due to security problems, tenants must be able to shut off gas and electrics from within the accommodation.

1.2. Appliance operating instructions are required for all cookers, boilers, electric heating systems and fridges, freezers and washing machines supplied with a new tenancy and upon request.

1.3. The hot water system of the property must provide a constant controllable supply of hot water to each bath, sink, shower and wash hand basin. Cold water must be available to these facilities and to each water closet. Instructions on how to use the system must be provided to all tenants at the beginning of their tenancy including how to shut them off in an emergency.

1.4. Information on emergencies and contact numbers for gas leaks and repairs must be provided to all tenants in writing at the beginning of their tenancy.

2. Property Condition

2.1. Structurally sound and weatherproof

2.2. Walls in good repair, free from defects cracks holes and graffiti

2.3. External render in good condition and decoration to outlast length of lease

2.4. Roof to be wind and watertight ,slates, coping, ridge tiles , gutters, soil wastes and downpipes to be secure intact and without leaks

2.5. Property to be free from any form of damp or water penetration

2.6. External doors to be serviceable, correctly fitting with locks complying with BS 3621 fitted

2.7. Manhole covers level and securely fixed and drainage gullies to be clear and grid covers fitted

2.8. All joints between structure and doors and window frames should be adequately sealed and draught proofed

2.9. Stairs to be structurally sound with handrail and balustrade fitted

2.10. Space between open risers and balustrades to be less than 100mm

2.11. No locks or doors to be fitted to bedrooms and living rooms

2.12. Curtain track/poles to be provided in all living room and bedrooms

2.13. Any gas or electrical appliances such as fire or ovens left on the premises must have been included in the appropriate safety certificates

2.14. All windows must be sound and well fitted, and opening lights must be able to be readily opened and securely closed. Windows must not be louver windows. Glazing should be intact and missing perished putties, glazing bars internal or external cills to be replaced.

All windows with glass within 800mm if the floor will require safety glass to BS 6206 or the whole pane of glass coated with proprietary safety film.
Windows should have restrictors that limit the window being opened to 100mm to windows above ground floor level. Restrictors should be capable of being over-ridden by an adult in the event of fire.

2.15. Every living room and bedroom should have a window opening directly to the outside

2.16. Access steps, handrails, pathways, sheds, fences and gates must be maintained in good order.

2.17. Stair cases are to be well lit to allow their safe use. Light switches must be in a suitable location. Lighting to staircases and rooms entered by more than one door shall be two-way/three-way as appropriate.

3. Flooring and Decoration

3.1. The decoration of the interior and exterior of the property must be kept clean and sound at the commencement of the tenancy, with appropriate cleanable paintwork to the walls of the bathrooms and kitchens.

3.2. Floors should be level and even and suitable for the type of flooring laid

3.3. Carpets laminates vinyl sheet flooring or ceramic tiles are suitable floor coverings

3.4. All coverings to be in good condition, carefully laid and suitable for the term of the lease

3.5. All existing carpets should be clean and stain free

3.6. Architraves and skirting to be complete

3.7. Light coloured emulsion to walls is preferred with gloss or silk paint to all woodwork and radiators etc.

3.8. Decoration should be suitable for term of lease

4. Cleaning

Prior to let the property must be clean to remove any obvious stain or residue. This should include:

4.1. Sweep, mop or hoover all floors as appropriate

4.2. Wipe down all woodwork, radiators electrical sockets switches etc.

4.3. Clean glazing internally and externally including frames

4.4. Wash down all kitchen surfaces and units

4.5. Clean all sanitary ware baths sinks toilets showers as necessary

4.6. Remove any mail packages or rubbish and check bins are clear

4.7. Remove all waste from store cupboards loft etc. and leave clear

4.8. If builders have been working in property ensure all dust, paint, builder’s material or waste is removed.

5. Electrical Safety

Provide the council with an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), the report must cover the full term of the lease or tenancy. The Council will pay the costs for the certificate but you will be responsible for carrying out and paying for any works identified
The EICR must be carried out by a “competent person”. A competent person is defined by the HSE as “a person trained and experienced so as to be able to properly examine, test and undertake any remedial action and to present the information in a report”. In this context the competent person shall be a suitably qualified electrical engineer, for example:

- A member of the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA).
- A member of the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC).
- A member of the National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers (NAPIT).

6. Building Insurance and Cover

   6.1. It is recommended that a British Gas Homecare 200 Agreement or equivalent to cover the heating and hot water systems and/or storage heater systems should be obtained. You will be responsible for payment of the Homecare Agreement or equivalent.

   6.2. You will have to provide us with a copy of your Buildings Insurance policy. This policy must be renewed annually throughout the terms of the lease.

7. Energy Performance Certificate

   Provide an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), obtained from a registered Domestic Energy Assessor or Home Inspector. Properties should be rated E and higher. The cost for the certificate will be paid for by the Council if landlords are joining the partner scheme.

8. Carbon Monoxide Detector

   Provide and install a Carbon Monoxide to the kitchen that complies with BS EN 50291:2001.

9. Fire Precautions

   9.1. Mains powered interlinked smoke alarms need to be fitted in the hallway of every floor of the property. They must be:

   The alarms should be interlinked to each other so that if one alarm sounds the others also sound. This may be through a wireless connection. The alarm system should comply with BS 5839. Each alarm requires an integral battery standby supply and powered via the local lighting circuit, they should ideally be fitted near the centre of the ceiling.

   In properties of 3 or 4 storeys which have a cellar or basement then an alarm also needs to be fitted in that room.

   The alarms should be installed by a competent person (see section 5).

   9.2. A record must be kept with full details of all faults, repairs, servicing, tests and alterations to both the fire alarm and emergency lighting systems, including details of who carried out the work. The log book must be made available for inspection by the Council, on request.

   9.3. At the start of each tenancy, occupants must be given appropriate fire safety advice regarding the means of escape in case of fire and other fire precautions. In particular, the importance of keeping fire doors closed and keeping the escape route clear, plus how to use the fire alarm system, and fire blankets.

   9.4. The means of escape should not take the occupants through a room containing kitchen facilities. Where this does happen, the licence holder should contact the council for advice.

   9.5. There must be no polystyrene, such as ceiling or wall tiles in any common parts.

10. Waste Management

   10.1. Tenants must be provided with details of the closest civic amenity site so they can properly dispose of refuse that will not be collected by the Council.
10.2. Provide adequate receptacles for the storage and disposal of household waste. The facilities must be suitable for the number of persons or households permitted to occupy the property and will need to be stored in a suitable accessible place within the curtilage of the property.

11. Gardens and boundaries

11.1. Gardens and yards must be clean, tidy and secure, free from rubbish and safe at the commencement of the tenancy.

11.2. Where garages and sheds are accepted these should be in good condition lockable safe and cleared of any waste and usable by occupant. If supplied with electrical supply this should be inspected under the EICR above.

11.3. Boundaries to property to be safely and adequately enclosed

11.4. Ponds to be in filled and ornaments and structures made safe or removed where necessary

11.5. Paths paved area wooden decking to be in good repair, level and safe

11.6. Gardens should be cleared of rubbish or builders rubble etc.

11.7. Any unsafe outbuildings or structures to be demolished and cleared

11.8. Greenhouses or conservatories with low level unprotected areas of glazing to be protected or removed to prevent accidental injury

11.9. A front gate should be provided with a suitable closing device

11.10. All gates to be in good condition and secured when closed, side and rear gates to have a locking device

12. Heating and Ventilation

12.1. The council would expect the following heating systems:

- Gas
- Electric storage heaters on an off peak tariff e.g. Economy 7 with duo storage heater in living room and night storage heaters to bedroom.

12.2. Ensure that the property has a form of fixed space heating. Heating should be controllable by the tenants for example by incorporating a timer, suitably positioned room thermostat or TRVs. Radiators must be provided to bedroom, living rooms, dining rooms and bathrooms. The heating should be capable of providing the following temperatures in each room:

- Living rooms, dining room and bedroom: 21°C
- Bathroom: 22°C
- Elsewhere: 18°C

12.3. The system shall be capable of maintaining the above temperatures when the external temperature is −1°C or less.

12.4. Portable electrical heaters are not acceptable, unless being used as temporary heaters in the case of a boiler breakdown.

12.5. Where storage heaters are provided there must be an off peak electrical meter at the commencement of any tenancy.

12.6. Properties must have their own individually metered utility supplies with meter cards or keys containing no debt and with £5 credit supplied. Keys and cards to be left at the property.
12.7. Water storage tanks and cistern to be insulated and secure.
12.8. Where applicable and should be adequate for the size of the room
12.9. Heating systems and appliances must have the user instructions supplied at time of lease commencement.
12.10. There must be a mechanical extractor fan in each bathroom and kitchen. The unit must be capable of minimum extract capacity of 15 litres per second and extract direct to the external air or through ducting as necessary. It is recommended that fans operate with low noise levels and are controlled by a humidistat with a manual over-ride. In kitchens, a cooker hood that extracts to the outside will be sufficient.

13. **Kitchen**

13.1. The walls, floors, ceilings, work tops and cupboards of the kitchen must be sound, clean and, as appropriate, well decorated at the commencement of any tenancy. The kitchen must be laid out in such an arrangement as to allow its safe use and be easy to keep clean and hygienic by the tenant. Gas and electric outlets provided to the cooker space as necessary and meeting with certification as stated above.

13.2. Kitchen sinks should be modern and functional with working taps. Waste disposal units should be removed and standard wastes fitted

13.3. 600m cooker space should be provided, locate with adjacent worktops and not next to a doorway

13.4. Power sockets and 600mm spaces should be available for fridge and washing machine

13.5. Wall tiles to be fitted behind sink cooker and laminate surfaces at least 3 tiles high. These should be clean and well grouted to ensure a waterproof finish

13.6. Provide a fire blanket to comply with BS EN 1869:1997, to the kitchen. The fire blanket must be wall mounted, sited in an easily accessible location, remote from the means of escape and not above, behind or adjacent to the hob.

13.7. Impervious flooring with laminate, vinyl or tiled floor coverings, the edges must be sealed to minimise water ingress.

14. **Bathroom**

14.1. Bathrooms and water closets (WC’s) must have adequate space to ensure their safe use. Any alterations to the bathroom and water closet need to comply with Building Regulation standards.

14.2. A shower and or a bath, and wash hand basin are required each with a tiled, or equivalent, splash back area.

14.3. Impervious flooring with laminate, vinyl or tiled floor coverings, the edges must be sealed to minimise water ingress.

14.4. Modern matching white or light coloured bathroom suites should be clean and fit for purpose

14.5. A shower may be acceptable but not always suitable for family occupation

14.6. Plugs should be fitted to baths and wash basins

14.7. Where shower is fitted above the bath then tiling must be to a minimum of 1.8 m around bath with suitable sealant and grouting suitable for this location

14.8. A shower screen or curtain should be provided

14.9. Bath panels should be securely fixed but accessible

14.10. Water supply to be of sufficient pressure to taps and cistern
14.11. An enclosed light fitting suitable for bathrooms should be fitted

15. Standards applying to partner scheme only

15.1. You will need to provide the council with proof of ownership which could be an office copy of the land registry entry or a recent letter from a solicitor confirming ownership of property or the title deed. If the property is held on a mortgage then we will need the mortgage lenders permission to let the property. If the property is leasehold then we will also need to seek permission to let from the freeholder

15.2. You will need to provide three sets of keys for all communal and external doors and window locks where you have them