

Property requirements.

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A licensed landlord shall ensure that any property under their control is maintained at the required standards in respect of freedom from hazards (Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme -HHSRS) and completion of timely repairs. The standards are designed to be fair, reasonable, and appropriate. The property standards are attached below. If a property does not meet the required standards, a schedule of works will be produced via the accreditation inspection form and a timescale for compliance agreed with the landlord.

The property standards take account of:

- Gas, electrical and fire safety
- Portable appliance testing (PAT)
- Provision of amenities: kitchen, bathrooms and WC's
- Security
- Furniture and furnishings
- Energy efficiency
- Condensation, mould and dampness
- Safety standards (window locks and restrictors, handrails etc)
- Property condition and decoration (external and internal)
- Outside space/gardens - clear of rubbish, not overgrown and of decent appearance

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Fire safety and smoke detection

Single household occupancy up to four Storeys

Escape routes:

No requirement for a full 30-minute protected route but the escape route should have sound, conventional construction and should not pass through risk rooms. No requirement for fire doors, but sound, well-constructed and close-fitting conventional doors are required.

Fire separation:

No requirement for additional fire resistance, but walls and floors should be of sound, conventional construction. If a basement/cellar is present, 30-minute separation between the cellar and the ground floor escape route should be provided.

Fire detection and alarm system:

In accordance with The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 one smoke alarm must be provided as a minimum on each storey of premises where there is a room

that is used wholly or partly as living accommodation. Landlords must ensure the detector is in proper working order at the commencement of each tenancy.

Lighting of escape routes:

No requirement for emergency escape lighting, other than conventional artificial lighting.

Further information can be found in **Lacors Housing– Fire Safety Guidance**. This document is the recognised guidance for fire safety in dwellings and gives further examples and scenarios. The document is freely available to download.

<https://www.cieh.org/media/1244/guidance-on-fire-safety-provisions-for-certain-types-of-existing-housing.pdf>

Carbon monoxide detection

Ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation (including a bathroom or a lavatory) and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or gas boiler/appliance and keep any such alarm in proper working order.

Legionella

A risk assessment must be carried out for Legionella bacteria at the outset of each tenancy and thereafter maintain control measures to minimise the risk. Landlords can carry out this assessment themselves so long as you do not have water storage tanks, are competent to do so and maintain a written record. Further information can be obtained at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/legionella-landlords-responsibilities.htm>



Refuse

Suitable wheeled bins for the storage and disposal of refuse must be provided at the property. The bins must be kept within the boundary walls and placed out on the day of collection and returned to the property once they have been emptied. Landlords must work with the tenant to ensure bins are not left outside of the curtilage of the property longer than necessary.

Landlords / managing agents must advise tenants of the arrangements for the collection of waste and provide information regarding recycling of their waste.

Bedrooms

Ensure that the property does not become overcrowded. Bedrooms may only be occupied by a certain number of people which is dependent on the size of the room and the age and the gender of the occupants. Maximum occupancies will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and advice should always be sought if there is concern about occupation limits.

Kitchen and Bathroom Facilities

Facilities for the preparation, cooking and storage of food must be safely and conveniently laid out. The kitchen must be of adequate size for the number of occupants to ensure it can be used in safety. The following amenities must be provided:

- Adequate cupboard/drawer space for the storage of food and equipment.
- An adequate fixed work surface for the preparation of food, being non-absorbent and capable of being easily cleaned.
- A fixed sink comprising at least a bowl and single drainer within a base unit and provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold running water.



- Provision for the installation of a cooker, usually being a 30-amp electric cooker point or a gas point, with sufficient space available adjacent to the point for the fitting of an oven and hob.
- Walls adjacent to preparation and cooking area are to be capable of being easily cleaned.
- There should be sufficient space for the fitting of a refrigerator or fridge/freezer.
- All units and any appliances provided must be in good repair and in good working order.
- There should be an adequate number of suitably located electric power points for the safe use of kitchen appliances.
- Suitable means of mechanical extract ventilation should be provided to the kitchen and / or bathroom where there is evidence of condensation mould growth.

Space Heating

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) must be provided to tenants (and prospective tenants) prior to the making of a new tenancy agreement.

- Properties must be free from excessive draughts.
- All habitable rooms must be provided with adequate and suitable fixed space heating appliances or be heated via a controllable central heating system.
- Any central heating system must be economical to run (please contact the Accreditation for further information). If a hot water cylinder forms part of the heating system it must be properly lagged with a suitable jacket.

Energy Efficiency

The property will need to meet the minimum legal energy efficiency standards and evidence this with a valid EPC.

We would recommend any of the following energy efficiency measures;



- Double glazing
- Energy efficient central heating boiler.
- Cavity wall insulation
- Draught-proofing
- Radiator thermostats
- Low energy light bulbs throughout

Condensation and mould

Provide tenants with an information leaflet advising them of how they can reduce condensation and reduce the changes of mould growth from excessive condensation and be prepared to offer advice to them should there be an issue with condensation where it can be established that it is caused by lifestyle, (for example excessive drying of clothes on a radiator). Condensation and subsequent mould growth could also be due to a structural consideration, this must be explored, and improvements made following specialist damp advice.

Fit suitable mechanical extraction ventilation to any bathrooms or kitchen that have suffered from excessive condensation and mould.

Security

The following must be provided to ensure the property is maintained in a safe and secure condition:

- All external doors and frames must be of sound construction and be well maintained and fitted with five lever BSI mortise dead locks, unless they are multi-point locking UPVC.
- The rear door (if any) must be fitted with a mortice lock in addition to a barrel bolt OR a shoot bolt locking mechanism.
- Window locks should be fitted to all ground floor and vulnerable first floor windows. Keys to window locks must be readily available to tenants at all times.



- All windows, first floor or above, with a sill below 800mm should have window safety catches fitted to prevent anyone falling out of a window, especially small children.
- A door viewer and/or door chain should be provided to the front door where there is not a suitable glass panel.
- The gate from the rear yard to the lane must be provided with additional security by fitting a slam latch lock or hasp and padlock and the keys provided to the occupiers.
- The rear boundary of the property must be maintained to ensure it is secure and in good repair at all times and, where fitted, lane gates/doors must be provided with a suitable locking device.
- Hedges and/or fences to the front must not provide a hiding place for intruders.

Gas Safety

All gas appliances must have a safety check carried out every 12 months by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer. A copy of the current certificate showing the installation has passed must be provided with the application form.

A record of this safety check must be given to tenants within 28 days or to a new tenant when they move in.

A copy of the safety check must be kept for at least two years.

Electrical Safety

Any alterations to the electrical system must be made in accordance with Part P of the Building Regulations and BS7671 2018 Requirements for Electrical Installations.

A satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be carried out on the property every 5 years. Any works identified as unsatisfactory must be completed before the property can be rented out. If the property is already tenanted these issues must be rectified immediately. The landlord must carry out a visual inspection at the beginning of a tenancy and at least annually thereafter. This inspection



should cover all electrical items including socket outlets, light switches and distribution boards. Arrangements must be made to rectify any defects immediately.

All white goods supplied by the owner must be PAT tested and clearly labelled with the date. This must be done before tenants move into the property.

Safety of Furniture and Furnishings

All furniture and furnishings provided by the landlord must meet the requirements of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. All new furniture must carry a permanent label describing the fire resistance of all the materials used. Unless a clause is included within the tenancy agreement this does not apply to the furniture provided by the tenant. Provision of furnishings and fittings which do not comply with the above regulations will be referred to Trading Standards and may result in legal action being taken against the owner, managing agent, and/or license holder.

For more information or for any queries please contact the selective licensing team on the details below:

Email us: selectivelicensing@northumberland.gov.uk

Call us on 07736623776 or 07966330748

