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Welsh Government

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The Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023

Draft for consultation

Maintaining and improving social housing in Wales

May 2022

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This document is also available in Welsh

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Ministerial Foreword

The turn of the century saw the introduction of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). Welsh Government, together with social landlord delivery partners, have invested billions of pounds to significantly improve and maintain the quality of social homes across Wales over the last two decades. By the end of 2020 99% of social housing in Wales has met the challenging Standard¹ and social landlords continue to maintain that standard today.

Spanning six administrations, to date, WHQS is an example of how Governments can take the long view; investing in long term policies and programmes, with long term funding models, enabling social landlords to confidently invest over the long term in assets and communities. This has resulted in driving up the standard of social housing in Wales compared to housing in other sectors. Everyone accepts that living in a quality home brings benefits to both the physical and mental wellbeing of those who live in them.

The 2020's have already brought rapid and unexpected change with a once in a century global pandemic shifting how people live, feel about, and what they expect from a home. Social justice and equality issues such as broadband access and flooring provision, building safety and the ability to live safely and securely in homes have become even more paramount; appreciation of our homes is perhaps higher than it has been for a very long time.

Wales led the way in declaring a climate emergency. The 2020's will need to be a decade of decarbonisation for housing, where we learn how to effectively and efficiently upgrade social housing, in ways which reduce carbon emissions, and energy bills for tenants. What is learnt upgrading the 230,000 social homes in Wales, will drive how we as a nation approach the making of the 1.2 million privately rented or owner occupied homes in Wales net zero carbon. The challenge of retrofitting the existing housing stock is vast. Every single house has a different history, therefore our mission is to reduce carbon emissions home by home, and street by street.

In October last year I launched an intentionally bold new-build standard for affordable homes in Wales. It banishes fossil fuelled heating and hot-water to history. It demands a 'Fabric First' approach, setting a minimum thermal performance standard, plus an assessment of overheating risk – which as the planet warms, and more extreme weather events continue to occur, seems sensible. It is important to ensure our existing social homes mirror where possible, the quality, environmental impact and affordable warmth of newly built ones.

It would be easy to be overwhelmed by the scale of the challenge of upgrading social housing once again. However, we have done it before, and together we can do it again. We need to be pragmatic, rise to the challenge and make a start – Welsh tenants, their children and grandchildren are counting on us.

¹ [Welsh Housing Quality Standard: as at 31 December 2020](#): Welsh Government Statistical First Release, 30 September 2021 SDR 275/2021

I am therefore delighted to introduce WHQS2023. This standard builds on the excellent achievements of its predecessor and will continue to drive up and maintain the quality of social housing in Wales. WHQS2023 once again raises the bar for social housing and aims to be both bold and achievable. It is deliberately demanding. But I am determined that social housing in Wales becomes a tenure of choice providing modern, low carbon, quality homes which are fit for the 21st century and beyond.



Julie James AS, Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

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QUALITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING IN WALES

Housing is a key priority for Welsh Government

The purpose of this Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is to improve the quality of social homes in Wales. Welsh Government continues to drive up the standard of existing social housing by setting a demanding standard which all social landlords in Wales are legally obliged to meet.

It is widely recognised that living in a quality home brings a wide range of benefits to health, learning and prosperity. This supports the Government's desire to improve outcomes in health and wellbeing and educational attainment as well as alleviating poverty and reducing carbon emissions.

Tenants at the heart of WHQS

At its heart, WHQS2023 is a tenant focused standard, designed to upgrade social homes in a way that contributes to positive health, education and wellbeing outcomes for tenants. The investment required to enable homes to meet the standard, also provides a significant opportunity to generate and retain prosperity for local communities, through the creation of jobs, training and apprenticeships in the supply chain. The Welsh Government recognises that to foster pride, belonging and ownership, tenants should be encouraged to take the opportunity to be involved in making any decisions that affect their community and environment.

Whilst WHQS2023 sets out the minimum quality standards for existing social homes, Welsh Government encourages social landlords to aim for standards beyond the minimum requirements specified here. It is expected that social landlords adopt a holistic view of quality, recognising the benefit that quality and culturally suitable homes will have on both physical and mental wellbeing for all. It is expected that all homes should be of high quality, be healthy to live in and meet community, family and individual needs.

Social landlords are encouraged to engage with their tenants to shape their programme of works and to take account of feedback from other tenants' lived experience of retrofits, in order to improve how homes can be efficiently and effectively maintained, upgraded and decarbonised in future.

WHQS2023 and digital connectivity

Consideration should be given to how landlords can alleviate digital exclusion amongst tenants. Digital connectivity is a social justice matter, with Ministers expecting social landlords to be innovative in maximising the opportunity for individual households and communities to have, where possible equal access to online opportunities. Landlords will be expected to provide an explanatory statement in their Compliance Policy to highlight work that is being done to progress this.

WHQS2023 driving towards a Net Zero Wales

WHQS sets out standards relating to the decarbonisation of social homes and aims to reduce carbon emissions from the Welsh housing stock. This Standard

contributes towards governmental climate change goals expressed through the [Net Zero Wales](#) plan published in 2021.

In time, it is anticipated that the Standard will apply to other types and tenures of housing, and this will be kept under regular review.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (the Standard) sets the target for the condition of all social housing in Wales. The Standard was originally introduced in 2002 and has been successful in raising the quality of social homes in Wales. By the end of 2020 almost all of social housing was reported to have met the 2002 Standard¹. This level of quality must be maintained and stretched to further improve quality taking account of changes and expectations in, and impacts from, the wider world such as climate change and technical advancements in building fabric.

The Senedd Cymru/ Welsh Parliament is committed to bringing all existing social housing up to the new standard by 2033.

The Standard sets the requirements that all social housing is updated and kept in good condition so social tenants have the opportunity to live in a home that:

- Is in a good state of repair;
- Is safe and secure;
- Is affordable to heat and has minimal environmental impact;
- Has an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Has an up-to-date bathroom;
- Is comfortable and promotes wellbeing;
- Has a suitable garden; and
- Has an attractive outside space.

Scope

All social housing in Wales must meet and maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. The Standard applies to all self-contained properties owned and managed by local housing authorities (LHA's) under Part 4 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and registered social landlords (RSL's) who are regulated by the Welsh Government. It includes intermediate rent properties and properties owned for the purposes of social housing by Local Authorities not in a Housing Revenue Account.

The Standard consists of individual elements, supporting guidance, good practice examples and details on assessment. In working towards the Standard, social landlords must seek, and take account of, the views of tenants. Any planned programmes should be the product of authentic tenant dialogue and mutual understanding.

Background and context

The original standard was introduced in 2002 with revised guidance being issued in 2008. By 2020 99% of social housing in Wales met the Standard². Evaluation of the existing programme and planning for the next iteration began in 2020 with a programme of engagement with social landlords. A series of workshop and feedback sessions were undertaken to provide a practitioner's view on the Standard and to understand the appetite for change. From this, volunteers for a practitioner's group

² [Welsh Housing Quality Standard \(WHQS\), as at 31 December 2020](#): Welsh Government Statistical First Release, 30 September 2021 SDR 275/2021

came forward and this group became part of each stage of evaluation and co-creation of the new Standard.

This landlord focussed engagement was followed by a survey conducted by Welsh Government to assess the attitudes of social housing tenants to the WHQS³. The findings from both areas of research were fed in to an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme⁴ which was commissioned by Welsh Government and published in 2021.

The evaluation concluded **‘that the WHQS had been effective in achieving its key objective of raising standards of social rented housing’** and **‘has benefits for tenants and should be continued into the future...’**

The evaluation process identified areas of the Standard that required updating and improving, areas where research and societal changes had changed expectations since the original Standard was launched as well as new areas to include, are listed below:

- Data collection and reporting;
- Compliance policies;
- Fire and electrical safety;
- Affordable Warmth and Environmental Impact (new elements);
- Flooring (new element);
- Water efficiency (new elements);
- Biodiversity (new element);
- Active travel (new element); and
- Noise nuisance (new element).

Please note that whilst other areas of the Standard remain largely unchanged they have been updated to reflect current thinking.

It is acknowledged that decarbonisation will present the biggest challenge to social landlords in achieving this new standard in the short term. The **Welsh Government’s Optimised Retrofit programme** launched in August 2020 is a strategic approach led and funded by Welsh Government and Social Landlord partners to establish effective and efficient ways of upgrading homes in order to reach Wales’ carbon targets.

The approach recognises that four crucial, interrelated factors are required, and these are:

1. **Surveys** – it is essential the condition of every home is known and therefore the potential measures required to reduce the homes’ carbon emissions are understood.

³ [Welsh Housing Quality Standard: tenants’ survey](#). Welsh Government, GSR report number 6/2021

⁴ [Welsh Housing Quality Standard: Summative Evaluation](#) Three Dragons, Cyngor Da and Ulster University: Built Environment Research Institute (2021). Welsh Government, GSR report number 43/2021

2. **Understand the fabric of homes** – in relation to insulation, draught proofing and airtightness of walls, floors, roofs, windows, doors, together with appropriate mechanical ventilation measures.
3. **Technology** – used for space heating and hot water supply (services) and energy generation and storage (renewables).
4. **Decarbonisation of energy supply grids** – continued improvements to the electricity and gas supply system.

All landlords are expected to take these factors into consideration when planning their decarbonisation works.

A full list of terms used can be found in the [Glossary](#).

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Chapter 2 – WHQS2023

The Standard sets the requirements that all social housing is updated and kept in good condition so social tenants have the opportunity to live in a home that:

- Is in a good state of repair;
- Is safe and secure;
- Is affordable to heat and has minimal environmental impact;
- Has an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Has an up-to-date bathroom;
- Is comfortable and promotes wellbeing;
- Has a suitable garden; and
- Has an attractive outside space.

All social housing in Wales must meet and maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. The Standard applies to all self-contained properties owned and managed by local housing authorities (LHA's) under Part 4 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and registered social landlords (RSL's) who are regulated by the Welsh Government. It includes intermediate rent properties and properties owned for the purposes of social housing by Local Authorities not in a Housing Revenue Account.

A home will meet the standard when all relevant elements are achieved. It is recognised that some elements of the Standard are not applicable to all homes. It is also recognised that not all homes will be able to achieve some elements for various reasons.

1. Homes must be in a good state of repair

- 1a Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair
- 1b Homes must be free from damp

2. Homes must be safe and secure

- 2a External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security
- 2b Staircases & balustrades must be safe
- 2c Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard
- 2d Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements
- 2e Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person
- 2f A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue

- 2g Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less
- 2h All electrical equipment supplied by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually
- 2i Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements
- 2j All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment.

3. Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact

- 3a Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92- EPC A)
- 3b Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)
- 3c Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes
- 3d All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented
- 3e Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation
- 3f Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances
- 3g Water butts to be installed when appropriate

4. Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area

- 4a Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition
- 4b Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances
- 4c Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces
- 4d Homes must have sufficient general storage
- 4e Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements
- 4f Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets
- 4g Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring
- 4h Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes

5. Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom

- 5a Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition
- 5b Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring
- 5c Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)

6. Homes must be comfortable and promote wellbeing

- 6a Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living
- 6b At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings
- 6c Exposure to noise should be minimised
- 6d As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household
- 6e Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments
- 6f Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries

7. Homes must have a suitable garden

- 7a There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m² directly accessible from the home
- 7b There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate
- 7c There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present
- 7d Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe
- 7e There must be a robust and lockable external store

8. Homes must have an attractive and practical outside space

- 8a External storage for cycles and equipment must be made available
- 8b There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)
- 8c Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly

Chapter 3 – The Standard: elements and guidance

The purpose of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard is to ensure that by the end of March 2033 all social housing in Wales is of good quality. All social homes must:

- Be in a good state of repair;
- Be safe and secure;
- Be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact;
- Have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Have an up-to-date bathroom;
- Be comfortable and promote wellbeing;
- Have a suitable garden; and
- Have an attractive outside space.

To meet the Standard homes must pass each of the following elements. Full details of the assessment of the Standard can be found in [Chapter 5](#).

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS is used to assess a number of elements within the standard.

The HHSRS is a health-based risk assessment tool for the evaluation of housing conditions. The system operates by evaluating potential risk of harm to an actual or potential occupier from their living environment and is a means of rating the seriousness of any hazard identified. A hazard is any risk of harm to the health and safety of an occupier that arises from a deficiency. A deficiency is a failure of an element to meet the 'ideal', i.e. the perceived optimum standard intended to prevent avoid or minimise the hazard. The failure could be inherent, such as a result of the original design, construction or manufacture, or it could be a result of deterioration, disrepair or a lack of repair or maintenance.

A hazard rating is expressed through a numerical score, there are 10 possible numerical score ranges or 'Bands'. Numerical scores of a 1000 or over (Bands A to C) are Category 1 hazards, imposing a duty on enforcing local housing authorities to take appropriate action under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. Numerical scores under 1000 (Bands D to J) are Category 2 hazards, a local housing authority has a power but not a duty to act against any significant hazard in the case of Category 2 hazards.

The following conditions would result in a home failing a particular element of the standard (listed below):

- **The presence of one or more deficiencies, in any element of the standard, that contribute to a HHSRS Category 1 Hazard/s.**
- **A hazard rating score (expressed as a band) which is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling, where one or more of the prescribed HHSRS hazards are referenced within any element of the standard.**

Note: The national average hazard rating scores and bands are given in a table for each of the 29 prescribed hazards, detailed within the HHSRS Operating Guidance.

The [Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance](#) can be obtained from the Welsh Government website and is free to download, the Guidance is hereinafter referred to as the 'HHSRS Operating Guidance'.

Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 and HHSRS requirements

It is proposed that Fitness for Human Habitation (FFHB) requirements are updated by the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 in 2022. Under the 2016 Act, landlords (private and social sectors) must ensure that the dwelling is FFHB on the date of occupation by tenant/s, and throughout the term of occupation under a tenancy agreement (contract). Landlords are also required to keep the dwelling in good repair, including the structure and exterior of the dwelling as well as the service installations. It is proposed that FFHB requirements under the 2016 Act and associated regulations refer to the 29 hazards (matters and circumstances) set out in Schedule 1 of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006.

Reference to the HHSRS replaces the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 implied contractual obligation to ensure the dwelling is FFHB and previous reference made to nine matters including repair, stability, damp, lighting, ventilation and water supply. The FFHB obligation provides a remedy for contract holders to address concerns regarding the quality of their accommodation that fall outside the landlord's repairing obligations. It is for the courts to determine whether a dwelling is FFHB. [The Renting Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](#) may result in case law that may modify the application of the HHSRS. Landlords should ensure their interpretation of the application of the HHSRS is up to date with any such case law.

Elements of the Standard

1. Homes must be in a good state of repair

1a Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 29 - Structural Collapse and Falling Elements 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

Building components, which have an immediate impact on a home's integrity, must be in good condition by being free from fault or deficiency. This Hazard covers the threat of whole home collapse, or of an element or a part of the fabric being displaced or falling because of inadequate fixing, disrepair, or as a result of adverse weather conditions. Structural failure may occur internally or externally within the curtilage threatening occupants, or externally outside the curtilage putting at risk members of the public.

1b Homes must be free from damp

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 1- Damp and Mould Growth 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

This Hazard assessment covers threats to health associated with increased prevalence of house dust mites and mould or fungal growths resulting from dampness and/or high humidity. The hazard incorporates threats to mental health and social wellbeing which may be caused by living with the presence of damp, damp staining and/or mould growth.

There are many variables to understanding the causes and, likely impact of dampness meaning that the assessment should be one of professional judgement rather than measurement. Consideration should be given to the design, condition and state of repair of the home. The location, extent and duration of any dampness identified are important determinants of the effect it may have on dust mite populations and mould growth, and the consequent potential for harm.

Assessments by Landlords under this element should take particular account of the HHSRS Operating Guidance requirements that 'The structure and finishes of a home should be maintained free from rising damp, penetrating and traumatic dampness or persistent condensation.'

2. Homes must be safe and secure

2a External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security

A home has a 'reasonable level of security' if it is being capable of complying with Secured By Design (SBD), although it may not necessarily have a SBD certificate. SBD is the official police initiative to encourage the adoption of crime prevention methods in new and existing housing and aims to achieve a good standard of security for both the home and the surrounding environment:

www.securedbydesign.com

- **When fitting new doors and windows:** the replacements must comply with the Police Force's 'Secured by Design' (SBD) most recent specification and be certified as such.
- **When retaining existing doors or windows:** delivering a reasonable level of security can be achieved by modification of existing installations to comply with SBD. Any such works e.g. in heritage buildings, require consultation with the Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) of the local police force.

SBD changes over time and Landlords should ensure they are **operating to the most recent edition when undertaking works**. When considering whether historical works meet the requirement, reference should be made to the version current at the time.

In summary the SBD standard for new properties and the SBD standard for refurbished properties (as agreed with the local police DOCO) is highly detailed and should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with this element. Contact details for DOCOs can be found at www.securedbydesign.com

[Link to good practice](#)

2b Staircases & balustrades must be safe

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 21- Falling on stairs 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

Staircases and balustrades must be free from deficiency. Where deficiencies are present, mitigating measures must be undertaken to remedy those defects and to sufficiently mitigate any significant hazards identified.

[Link to good practice](#)

MEANS OF ESCAPE FROM FIRE: HOMES

2c Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard

All homes must have suitably designed and located, mains-powered (with a back-up secondary power source such as a sealed lithium battery) and interlinked smoke and/ or heat detectors conforming to BS 5839-6: 2019⁵. These must be regularly tested and properly maintained⁶. As a minimum all homes must contain a system incorporating detectors in the following locations:

- A smoke detector in all circulation areas on each storey that form part of the escape routes from the premises, such as hallways and landings.
- A smoke detector in the principal habitable room used for general daytime living purposes (normally the living room/lounge).
- A heat detector installed in every kitchen (including open plan kitchen / living areas; smoke detectors should not be used in such rooms).

2d Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements

Homes must be easy to escape from in the event of fire by having an escape route from the rooms used for sleeping. The escape route should be via an enclosed hallway, or landing and staircase, leading directly to an external door or an external fire escape to a place of safety outside the building. Rooms used for sleeping which cannot be normally exited, except by passing through another room, must have an alternative means of escape (escape window or any external door provided for escape purposes) in accordance with building regulation requirements. Any external doors or windows required for means of escape purposes should be easily capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key, pass or code.

Where the layout and structure of the building mean that the above requirements cannot be achieved, alternative compensatory measures must be applied to the building in consultation with competent fire and building safety professionals.

Existing homes do not normally require the introduction of an automatic fire suppression system, however, building regulation requirements must be followed where material alterations, extensions or other qualifying works are undertaken. Automatic fire suppression systems may however provide alternative compensatory measure as part of an overall fire safety solution to ensure an appropriate means of escape from fire from a building or residence.

⁵ BS 5839-6: 2019+A1:2020. Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings - Code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in domestic premises.

⁶ See BS 5839-6: 2019 Clause 25 (Routine Testing) and Clause 26 (Maintenance)

COMBUSTION APPLIANCES AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION: HOMES

2e Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person

Gas appliances

All homes containing gas-fired combustion appliances must comply with the most current gas safety requirements⁷ and the landlord must ensure that any gas appliances, fittings, chimneys and flues are safe and working efficiently. All homes must have an annual safety check carried by a Gas Safe registered engineer on each gas appliance/ flue. A record of each gas safety check must be retained for at least two years and a copy of the latest gas safety check record must be provided to existing tenants within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in (in certain cases there is an option to display the record).

All gas installations, maintenance and safety checks must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Any safety defect must be rectified (by a Gas Safe registered engineer) before the equipment is used again and a record kept of work done to rectify defects identified by the safety check.

Oil-fired combustion appliance

All homes containing oil-fired combustion appliances must have a current periodic inspection report undertaken by suitably competent person (e.g. OFTEC registered technician) that the oil installation in the home is safe and in proper working order and this must be undertaken annually (OFTEC CD/11 Service and Commissioning Report). BS 5410: Part 1 expects oil fired appliances and equipment to be serviced periodically in accordance with the Manufacturer's instructions. Oil storage tanks and oil supply pipe work should be checked for general condition and any leaks repaired. Certification can be achieved through the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) CD/12 Landlord Oil Installation Check form (www.oftec.co.uk).

Solid-fuel burning combustion appliance

Combustion appliances are defined as a fixed appliance (such as boilers, fires (including open fires), heaters and stoves) designed and installed to operate on a carbon-based fuel (i.e. oil, solid fuel or gas).

Homes containing solid-fuel burning combustion appliances must have an annual safety check of those appliances, which must be serviced and maintained. This should include ensuring that any flues are operating safely and swept in accordance with the recommendations in the installation checklist, typically annually.

The Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme, HETAS (www.hetas.co.uk), is the official body recognised by Government to approve biomass and solid-fuel heating appliances, fuels and services, including the registration of competent installers and servicing businesses. HETAS provide guidance on chimney sweeping for coal fires and sweeping flues to other solid-fuel appliances.

⁷ At the time of publishing the WHQS these are the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and the requirements are set out at <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/help-and-advice/gas-safety-certificates-records/>.

2f A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue

Homes must have a suitably designed and located carbon monoxide detector, which is in good repair and proper working order in each room of the home which contains a gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance, or an associated flue. Combustion appliances are defined as a fixed appliance (such as boilers, fires (including open fires), heaters and stoves) designed and installed to operate on a carbon-based fuel (i.e. oil, solid fuel or gas). Appliances include those supplied by the tenant.

CO detectors must comply with BS EN 50291 and be powered by a battery designed to operate for the working life of the detector. The detector must incorporate a warning device to alert the users when its working life is due to expire. Hard wired mains operated CO detectors complying with BS EN 50291 (Type A) with fixed wiring (not plug in types) may be used as an alternative, provided they are fitted with a sensor failure warning device. The detector should be regularly maintained and tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Provisions for this element are covered in the [Renting Homes \(Wales\) Act 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND TESTING: HOMES

2g Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less

All homes must have an electrical safety inspection (known as an Electrical Installation Condition Report or EICR) undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less. A copy of the EICR, setting out the results of the electrical safety inspection, must be given to the tenant. If works are carried out on a home's electrical service installations between electrical safety inspections, the tenant must be given written confirmation that the works have been carried out. All electrical service installations in the home must be kept in good repair and proper working order.

Note: [The Renting Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) require that the electrical service installations in a home are subject to inspection and testing ("an electrical safety inspection") by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less and that a copy of the condition report setting out the results of the electrical safety inspection is given to the contract-holder i.e. the tenant.

2h All electrical equipment supplied by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually

All electrical appliances and equipment (for example, fridges, cookers, televisions, telephones and wireless devices) supplied by landlords in rented residential premises must be safe and comply with current UK requirements for safety of domestic electrical products. Checks (known as Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)) must be undertaken annually by a competent person, namely a qualified electrician, and a record kept, in line with the IET Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (5th Edition). These requirements apply unless the appliances and equipment are under one year old and display a CE mark.

MEANS OF WARNING AND ESCAPE FROM FIRE: COMMON PARTS OF BUILDINGS CONTAINING FLATS AND OTHER MULTI-OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

2i Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements

(i) The common parts of flats and other multi-occupied buildings must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed as defined by the appropriate Building Regulations.

(ii) The common parts of flats and other multi-occupied buildings must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, capable of being safely and effectively used at all material times, as defined by the appropriate Building Regulations.

Where these requirements cannot be achieved in the common parts of flats or other multi-occupied residential buildings, alternative compensatory measures should be developed in consultation with competent fire and building safety professionals. Automatic fire suppression systems may provide alternative compensatory measures as part of an overall fire safety solution to ensure an appropriate means of escape from fire from a building or residence.

The following documents may be of use to those with responsibility for fire safety in buildings containing flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings:

- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (Local Government Association, currently under revision).
- Fire Safety in Specialised Housing (National Fire Chiefs Council, 2017).
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation (HM Government, 2006).
- BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings (new, or newly converted, buildings which have used the design guidance included in the standard).

The requirement for adequate means of warning and escape from fire in respect of purpose-built blocks of flats will normally be determined by the buildings fire safety and evacuation strategy, and whether a 'stay-put' or 'simultaneous' evacuation strategy applies. There may be circumstances where the Fire Rescue Service, building owners, responsible persons and associated fire safety specialists agree an alternative strategy appropriate to the building.

2j All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment.

All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment⁸ for the purposes of identifying and undertaking 'general fire precautions' to comply with the appropriate and current fire and building safety requirements.

Note: The Fire Safety Act 2021⁹ makes provisions for the application of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 where a building contains two or more sets of domestic premises. The 2005 Act clarifies that flat entrance doors and the structure of the building (including the external walls) fall within the scope of the 2005 Fire Safety Order.

The Fire Safety Order requires that the fire risk assessment must be "suitable and sufficient" for the premises. It is often possible for an informed lay person to conduct such an assessment of a small block of flats, but for larger and more complex premises, it may be more appropriate to engage a qualified fire engineer or fire safety consultant. The National Fire Chiefs Council has published [guidance](#) on finding a suitable assessor.

The following documents may be of use to those with responsibility for undertaking fire risk assessments in buildings containing flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings:

- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (Local Government Association, currently under revision).
- Fire Safety in Specialised Housing (National Fire Chiefs Council, 2017).
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation (HM Government, 2006).
- BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings (new, or newly converted, buildings which have used the design guidance included in the standard).
- PAS 9980:2022 - PAS 9980:2022: Fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of existing blocks of flats – Code of practice (for external walls of the building with cladding).

⁸ As defined under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended)

⁹ Fire Safety Act 2021 (c. 24): enacted 29 April 2021 and in force in Wales from 1 October 2021.

3. Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact

3a Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92- EPC A)

A 'reasonably economic to run' heating system would be one that is programmable (i.e. residents can control the temperature and timing), and of a size recommended for the home it serves.

The annual energy consumption for space heating, water heating & lighting is to be estimated using the latest version of the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings. For further information see [SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK](#)

A minimum rating of SAP 92 (EPC A) must be achieved.

The installation of measures to achieve SAP 92 must be implemented, unless the measures are not physically practical. If the measures to achieve the standard are currently cost prohibitive, the measures must be planned, and included as part of a future programme of works.

3b Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)

Landlords must have assessed the work programmes necessary to achieve net zero carbon emissions for their housing stock as a whole, to align with the [Net Zero Wales Plan](#). In order for Landlords to achieve this element, they should plan to stop installing fossil fuelled boilers from 2026 onwards.

The Environmental Impact Rating of dwellings is to be estimated using the latest version of the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings. For further information see [SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK](#)

A minimum rating of EIR 92 must be achieved.

The installation of measures to achieve EIR 92 must be implemented, unless the measures are not physically practicable. If the measures to achieve the standard are currently cost prohibitive, the measures must be planned, and included as part of a future programme of works.

This element needs to be taken in the context that a landlord's whole stock must achieve net zero; homes with a low EIR could be balanced by more efficient homes or other defined Community Carbon Benefits to provide a net-zero stock.

Please note: Additional reporting metrics will be required to monitor progress towards net zero; these will include: (i) total CO2 emissions and (ii) total CO2 emissions offset by a Community Carbon Benefit. It is anticipated that these additional metrics will be required by 2026 to help determine when net zero has been achieved for the housing stock.

Refer to separate guidance 'Guidance Note on stock wide Community Carbon Benefit' which will be published later in the year – see [Appendix 2](#) for guidance note outline

3c Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes

New homes that are WDQR2021 compliant i.e. SAP 92 (EPC A) will not need a Target Energy Pathway.

Refer to separate guidance 'Guidance Note on Whole Stock Assessment' which will be published later in the year – see [Appendix 3](#) for guidance note outline.

[Link to good practice](#)

3d All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented

All installation of measures must comply with PAS2035 Retrofitting Dwellings for Improved Energy Efficiency¹⁰.

An example of the installation of fabric energy efficiency measures in order to make homes ready to receive an effective and affordable low carbon heat source is set out below:

Step 1: Target a high SAP EPC C rating through fabric measures; EIR target to C. Compliance date: 2029

Step 2: Target SAP EPC B through fabric measures. Install energy generation and storage systems where appropriate. Effective implementation will prepare homes for Step 3. Compliance date: 2031

Step 3: Install only appropriate low carbon heat sources from 2026 onwards.

Note: Steps 1 & 2 need to be completed on those homes with a fossil fuel heating system known to require a new heating system from 2026, in order to be able to comply with Step 3.

¹⁰ BSI (2019), 'PAS 2035/2030:2019, Retrofitting dwellings for improved energy efficiency. Specification and guidance.' Accessed from <https://pas2035framework.bsigroup.com/> on 23/03/2022

Step 4: Net zero carbon emissions must be achieved for the housing stock as a whole. Compliance date: 2033

EPC C corresponds to a range of SAP ratings from 69 to 80; landlords should target the higher end of this range to ensure that the property is suitable for all low carbon heat sources. A building Heat Loss Parameter (HLP), which represents the heat losses occurring through the building fabric and ventilation, value of between 2.6 and 2.0 W/m²K (or lower) should be targeted.

The transition to the installation of a low carbon heat source should be completed in parallel with an assessment of fuel bill affordability for households. Any necessary fuel cost mitigation measures, including the installation of renewables (for example PV) and energy storage systems, should be in place ahead of the switch to a low carbon heat source.

The recommended staged approach to achieving net zero carbon emissions for the housing stock does not prohibit landlords from meeting the standard with a single set of actions, or other processes, for homes if that is more practical, cost-effective or desirable.

Notes on use of SAP in WHQS

1. The current version of SAP is SAP 2012; this will be superseded by SAP10.2 which is expected to go live around mid-2022. The SAP methodology is currently undergoing a review, with the aim of producing an updated version of SAP (SAP11). This will be designed to measure net zero and deal with retrofit in housing. This is likely to be in place from ~2025 onwards.
2. The SAP calculation methodology includes estimates for regulated energy use. Unregulated energy use, including appliance and cooking energy use, is not currently included in SAP. The move to electric vehicles will increase consumption here. If unregulated energy use is included in future version of SAP then this may have to be separated for the purpose of the WHQS.
3. A high SAP C rating should be targeted for step 1 (improving fabric energy efficiency) to ensure that the Heat Loss Parameter (HLP) is sufficiently low (between 2.6 and 2.0 W/m²K or lower) to ensure that the installation of low carbon heat sources, particularly heat pumps, have the greatest chance of meeting user requirements (high efficiency/low carbon, adequate heating effectiveness and low running costs). The EPC C target is for fabric measures excluding energy generation and energy storage. Some properties will be more challenging to improve towards SAP 80 and proposed measures may not currently meet thresholds for being practical, cost-effective and affordable. A whole stock assessment must be undertaken when deciding how far to improve each property. The building HLP and heat distribution system must be considered ahead of installing a low carbon heat source under step 3.
4. Appropriate energy generation and storage systems should be considered under step 2 when targeting EPC B or higher. Energy storage systems can improve energy flexibility and ensure that a greater proportion of the on-site electricity generated is utilised by householders. This will help to prepare the property for a low carbon heat source and should maintain householder fuel bills at affordable levels.

3e Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation

All measures to upgrade the ventilation performance of the home must be taken. Kitchen and bathrooms must have mechanical ventilation.

Whole house mechanical ventilation with heat recovery must be introduced if deemed necessary as part of the installation of safe and high-quality fabric energy efficiency retrofit measures.

3f Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances

Reducing water consumption reduces:

- energy and chemical inputs required to supply hot and cold water;
- the cost of metered water and potential water poverty; and
- the potential for Wales to be in water deficit by 2050.

Landlords should seek to reduce potential consumption to less than 110 litres per person per day by adhering to the performance standards below when replacing fittings and fixed appliances. Reduction of overall pressure to the property is not an acceptable solution.

Fitting Maximum performance level

Fitting	Maximum performance level
WC – Dual flush	4.5 / 3 litres per flush
Wash hand basin tap*	4.0 litres per minute
Shower*	8.0 litres per minute
Kitchen/Utility tap	5.0 litres per minute
Bath	170 litres capacity
Dishwasher	1 litre per place setting
Washing Machine	7.5 litre per kilogram

*Aerated shower heads / outlets should be used

Note: All fittings and appliances installed must comply with [The Water Supply \(Water Fittings\) Regulations 1999](#) with specific reference to Regulation 4.

[Link to good practice](#)

3g Water butts to be installed when appropriate

Water butts are suitable for nearly all gardens and can provide a ready supply of water for all gardening purposes. They can provide savings to tenants on water meters.

When undertaking any external work in gardens or at a change of tenancy a water butt should be installed when appropriate.

4. Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area

When replacing a kitchen consideration must be given to all elements within this section. Where it is necessary to create a new kitchen or to replace an existing one, landlords must adhere to the below bullet points. Where there is inadequate space to meet the below requirements, landlords must consider extending or reconfiguring the internal layout of the home.

- There is a work surface each side of the sink bowl, one of which may be the sink drainer
- There is a work surface each side of the cooker
- The cooker is at least 100mm from a corner base unit
- All work surfaces are at least 400mm long
- At least one double power socket provided close to the main food preparation area
- A food preparation area is provided between the sink bowl or drainer and the cooker must be at least 800mm long measured along its front edge, preferably in a straight line, and, if it has to be arranged around a corner, one front edge must be at least 1,000mm long
- Spaces at least 600mm wide are provided for a cooker and refrigerator. In most cases 600mm wide spaces will be required for a washing machine, and an additional appliance as meets the needs of the tenant (e.g. a dishwasher, tumble dryer etc.). The space for a washing machine, tumble dryer etc. may be positioned in a utility area;
- The cooker space is not in front of a window and cooker control units are offset to one side so that they can be used without reaching over the hob space;
- Wall cupboards are positioned at least 150mm away from the cooker space and such that they can be used without reaching over the hob;
- People passing through do not have to enter “the work triangle,” an imaginary triangle formed by lines drawn between the cooker, sink and fridge positions;
- There are adequate and convenient storage cupboards for food, crockery and pots and pans. This should be 1.1m³ in a two-person home, increasing by 0.2m³ for each additional person as determined by Nominal Occupancy referred to in [Appendix 4](#);
- There are enough convenient power sockets to avoid using multi-way adaptors and trailing flexes (not less than 6 twin sockets above worktop level in addition to those at fixed appliance positions); and
- There is sufficient provision for the collection of key recyclables and storage of food waste in homes including space including space for storage receptacles.

4a Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition

When considering whether a kitchen is in good condition landlords should read the HHSRS Operation Guidance in full.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 16- Food Safety and Hazard 25 – Flames and Hot Surfaces 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

4b Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances

Kitchens must have 600mm wide spaces for a cooker and a refrigerator and enough clear space in front of the cooker and other units and appliances to operate safely (1,200mm in front of the cooker, otherwise 1,000mm).

Kitchens must be sensibly and logically laid out with a minimum walking distance between major working areas. When planning a kitchen, employ the 'Work Triangle.' The 'Work Triangle' is formed by putting units and appliances, with appropriate work surfaces, in such a position as to allow the user to work in a logical sequence through the major work areas (Food Storage, Preparation, Washing/ Cleaning, Cooking and Serving). Ideally the length of the three sides of the triangle, when added together ought to be between 3,600mm and 6,600mm.

The space for a refrigerator can be located in a utility area.

4c Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces

The work surface must be permanent, non-porous and a minimum of 500mm deep, 800mm along the front edge if straight or 1,000mm if 'L' shaped.

4d Homes must have sufficient general storage

The home must provide adequate internal general storage space of not less than 1.5m² including:

- A tall cupboard suitable for storage of ironing boards, vacuum cleaners etc.
- Child proof or lockable storage for cleaning materials.

4e Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements

In addition to provision of receptacles and space for general waste storage there must be sufficient provision for the collection of key recyclables and storage of food waste in homes including space for storage receptacles. The provision of this may be a combination of internal and external storage.

4f Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets

Kitchens must have at least six conveniently located twin power sockets.

[Link to good practice](#)

4g Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 20 – Falls on Level Surfaces and Hazard 21- Falls associated with stairs (where a step or ramp greater than 300mm were present in the room) 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

[Link to good practice](#)

4h Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes

This includes:

- space, power and plumbing for a washing machine;
- provision for an external drying line; and
- a heated airing cupboard with at least 1m² of internal slatted shelving provided.

These may be provided in communal laundry facilities e.g. in some sheltered housing schemes and multi-storey flats.

If it is not possible to provide an external drying line, and there are no communal drying facilities, landlords must provide an energy efficient tumble dryer (e.g. heat pump dryer with drainage connection for condensate) or an energy efficient washer dryer together with a power supply. Space for this appliance will normally be in the kitchen, but may be in a utility area.

[Link to 7c](#)

5. Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom

5a Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition

When considering whether a bathroom is in good condition landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance full.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 17 – Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage and Hazard 19 – Falls associated with baths ‘average HHSRS scores’ tables) will fail this element.

5b Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring

When considering whether a bathroom has suitable flooring, landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in full

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 17 – Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage, Hazard 19 – Falls associated with baths, and Hazard 20 – Falls on Level Surfaces ‘average HHSRS scores’ tables) will fail this element.

There must be a cleanable, non-absorbent and water-resistant material on bathroom and WC floor surfaces, which are adequately sealed where they meet the surrounding walls. The type of floor covering used should provide sufficient slip resistance for occupants against damp or wet conditions that may be associated with bathroom and WC facilities. Damaged or deteriorated floor finishes should be avoided as they can make those surfaces difficult to clean and provide harbourage for pathogens.

[Link to good practice](#)

5c Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)

A level access shower would be considered a pass provided it is suitable for the tenants needs.

6. Homes must be comfortable and promote wellbeing

6a Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living

Homes should provide sufficient space for the occupants as determined by bedroom and living space floor area. [Appendix 4](#) provides guidance on what standards are sufficient to achieve this.

6b At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings

Floor coverings must be present at change of tenancy, but need not be renewed if they are suitable, appropriate and in good condition. When deciding on whether floor coverings are suitable and appropriate, consideration should be given to the specific needs of the tenant, and the durability and maintenance requirements. Choice should be offered where possible. The following British Standard BN EN 1307:2014 'Textile floor coverings' may be useful in the assessment of textile floor coverings.

6c Exposure to noise should be minimised

This element covers threats to physical and mental health resulting from exposure to noise inside the home caused by lack of sufficient sound insulation or within its curtilage. It does not cover unreasonable noisy behaviour of neighbours (domestic or commercial).

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 14 - Noise 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

The design and construction of homes should protect the occupants from ordinary domestic noise from one home entering another, and from traffic or other ambient external noise.

The attenuation measures will be for landlords to decide but they will need to be sufficient to mitigate the hazard to the average level for the stock and will be a direct response to their assessment of the cause of the hazard.

Measures that landlords should consider using include the following:

- double/secondary glazing and lobbies to external doors where there are high outside noise levels (e.g. traffic)
- possible triple glazing near airports/sources of very high noise levels
- internal insulation of upper floors, ceilings, and/or roof spaces
- external insulation
- Repairing any windows and/or external or internal doors to prevent noise penetration
- Siting of plumbing from WCs/cisterns away from separating walls

- Do not site bathrooms/WCs in flats above living rooms/bedrooms
- better construction/conversions of partitions and party walls especially in flats/maisonettes
- the use of self-closers on doors providing cushioning on kitchen units

Professional Judgement used to assess this element should be undertaken by a suitably qualified HHSRS surveyor. Measurement of noise levels using properly calibrated noise meters can be helpful to confirm the subjective assessment.

6d As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household

Landlords should consider the specific cultural needs of the tenants, such as their family structure, religious practices and the homes internal layout, security and external spaces. Particular attention should be paid to the design of kitchens to allow for consideration of high-volume storage and bathrooms for different bathing rituals.

Link to good practice

6e Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments

Lifetime Homes and higher accessibility requirements and standards must be properly considered during the refurbishment process and implemented if and where achievable, in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments. This includes requirements of people with physical, sensory, learning or other impairments.

Further, housing bodies must gather data on the need for wheelchair-accessible standard housing and ensure that disabled people and older people who use wheelchairs are provided with comfortable housing that will **safeguard** and promote their wellbeing and **ability to live independently**.

6f Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries

Homes should be clearly identifiable, have definable boundaries and there should be clear naming and numbering to assist residents and the attendance of Emergency Services.

7. Homes must have a suitable garden

When considering requirements for outside space landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in full.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 20 – Falling on level surfaces, Hazard 21 – Falls on stairs and Hazard 22 – Falls between levels 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail the appropriate element.

7a There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m² directly accessible from the home

Homes with external space should have a level useable area of no less than 10m² that is directly accessible. The 10m² level area should be provided as a single useable area but where spaces are steeply sloping, two areas not less than 5m² is acceptable. An area is to be considered directly accessible if access to it can be gained without leaving the home's plot boundaries. Paths and steps may be considered an acceptable method of access.

7b There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate

When considering how to deliver this requirement it may not be practicable to remove all HHSRS deficiencies especially in older dwellings. In such cases landlords should, wherever practicable, take action to mitigate any hazards present and as a minimum achieve the average for the dwelling age and type for the HHSRS Hazards (20) Falling on level surfaces, (21) Falls on stairs etc. and (22) Falls between levels.

7c There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present

See 4h for provision of a drying line.

When considering how to deliver this requirement it may not be practicable to remove all HHSRS deficiencies especially in older dwellings. In such cases landlords should, wherever practicable, take action to mitigate any hazards present and as a minimum achieve the average for the dwelling age and type for the HHSRS Hazards (20) Falling on level surfaces, (21) Falls on stairs etc. and (22) Falls between levels.

7d Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe

Outdoor space must be capable of complying with Secured by Design and be assessed in relation to the intended occupants; www.securedbydesign.com.

SBD is the official police initiative to encourage the adoption of crime prevention methods in new and existing housing and aims to achieve a good standard of security for both the home and the surrounding environment.

SBD changes over time and Landlords should ensure they are **operating to the most recent edition when undertaking works**. When considering whether historical works meet the requirement, reference should be made to the version current at the time.

In summary the SBD standard for new properties and the SBD standard for refurbished properties (as agreed with the local police DOCO) is highly detailed and should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with this element. Contact details for DOCOs can be found at www.securedbydesign.com.

Particular attention should be made to the rear garden space which must be easy to maintain. This should be assessed in relation to the intended occupants and will consider issues such as:

- Poor design;
- Space constraints; and
- Steep topography.

The rear garden space must be safe and suitable for young children to play in. This also includes allowing supervision from the dwelling. Issues that may be considered in relation to this element are:

- Boundaries should be suitable to prevent children leaving the garden and should not encourage climbing;
- If the garden is on an incline, the landlord must ensure that the retaining walls are structurally stable and have an appropriate guard rail/balustrade; and
- Ensure pathways are even and unobstructed.

7e There must be a robust and lockable external store

Homes with private external space must have safe and secure lockable external storage for items such as garden equipment, children's bikes etc.

8. Homes must have an attractive and practical outside space

8a External storage for cycles and equipment must be made available

Tenants must have access to a robust and lockable external store, which should include sufficient space for secure storage of bicycles, pushchairs and mobility aids to encourage sustainable travel. The number of spaces should be equal to the number of bedrooms of the respective home.

Provision for individual external storage need not be made if there is readily available and affordable secure communal provision. There are a number of lockable communal bicycle storage solutions now in the UK often provided in what was previously car parking spaces.

Where new provision is made, its design and location should be planned in consultation with tenants to ensure it reflects tenants' needs. This is recommended even where tenancies are typically short.

The [Active Travel Act guidance](#) provides detailed advice on design and location of cycle storage, primarily in section 14.8.

8b There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)

Consideration should be given to the provision of informal areas for members of the community, particularly children and young people. Use by other residents too (outdoor exercise, benches to enjoy fresh air etc.). Tenants should be consulted in the design and maintenance of such areas.

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

8c Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly

Biodiversity is important to help tackle nature and climate emergencies. Areas of biodiversity (flora and/or fauna) can also provide opportunities for residents, community groups, volunteers and schools to become involved, which can contribute to their health and wellbeing.

- Landlords should, where appropriate, adopt a range of measures to achieve this element, for example:
- Identify, and manage sensitively, areas that already provide a very good habitats for pollinators, for example; flowering hedgerows, patches of wildflowers on waste ground, areas of bramble or ivy and flowering meadows
- plant pollinator friendly plants

- encourage wildflowers and pollinator friendly plants by reducing mowing and collecting grass clippings
- plant and/or restore hedgerows where possible and manage them in rotation to benefit wildlife
- locally source trees, plants and flowers from native stock
- take action to remove or manage invasive non-native species where possible
- reduce dependence on chemical pesticides, only use them if absolutely necessary
- ensure that exterior lighting is not detrimental to biodiversity
- create hedgehog highways where fences are erected or renewed by cutting a 13cm² hole in them
- Use peat free compost
- Install bat and bird boxes
- Seek advice from a professional ecologist before developing plans for large areas of the estate.

Link to good practice

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

Chapter 4 – What social landlords need to do to achieve the Standard

Social landlords are expected to conduct an assessment of their stock, analyse the information, and plan the management of their property assets as part of their normal business and financial planning. It is expected that this assessment should initially take the form of detailed property surveys. With robust data collection and management it should be possible to keep these detailed assessments up to date as works are carried out on or in properties. Detailed property surveys should only be needed by exception going forward.

Landlords need to be aware of the work required to meet the Standard, their future liabilities, know when properties and their components are forecast to be replaced and when funds need to be available to meet these liabilities. All of this should assist landlords to develop of a programme to achieve the Standard, taking into account views of their tenants.

The programme must be dynamic and responsive to changes. It should set out the priorities for the various items of work with a forecast of the finance required and sources of funding available. A clear plan of how this is to be implemented is also required. The programme should be reviewed annually or following an up-date of stock information or stock condition data. These updates/ reviews should involve tenants.

The programme itself and the steps taken to develop it should be published and show the stages the landlord has gone through, highlighting the choices that have been made along the way and the rationale behind them. The programme must be part of a viable business plan.

Making good

It is generally accepted that when repairs are carried out in a tenant's home, there will be a certain amount of damage caused. Landlords must try to avoid damaging internal decorations and tenant's personal belongings. Landlords will be responsible for repairing any damage caused by the disrepair or by the work to fix it. For example, landlords should repair any damaged plaster or wall coverings, repaint if needed and replace any damaged items such as carpets.

Affordable warmth and environmental impact

When the option of demolition for redevelopment is being considered landlords should decide whether this is the best way to reduce carbon emissions and in particular whether it would be more effective to refurbish than to rebuild when embodied carbon is accounted for.

Landlords need to pay particular attention to the requirements of affordable warmth and environmental impact. Landlords are expected to undertake planned and phased improvements to homes, based on an understanding of their stock, before the Standard is achieved in its entirety. Acknowledging the changes made to the Standard, target / compliance dates for each element are set out in [Appendix 5](#) and fall into these three groups:

- **Elements which are unchanged** from the previous standard (or where changes are very minor) **or new elements introduced to reflect activity already undertaken by Social Landlords** (either as common practice or regulatory obligation). For such elements compliance is expected to continue to be maintained or be achieved immediately in new or acquired dwellings. These comprise the majority of the elements in the Standard.
- **New elements or elements where there has been substantial change** and compliance may take a number of years. Compliance dates have been set for each element depending on the challenge expected.
- **Affordable warmth and environmental impact elements** - a planned and phased program of achievement is expected with a first step of fabric improvement; where there should be a no regrets approach. More information on the stepped approach to affordable warmth and environmental impacts is provided in Part 3 of the Standard.

Timeline for achievement of the Standard

Within **3 years** of the publication of the updated standard, landlords must:

Assess the current condition of their stock and the work necessary to meet the Standard;

- Estimate the investment needed to achieve the Standard;
- Complete **tenant consultation** on the draft programme;
- Prepare and submit a Compliance Policy to the Welsh Government;
- Finalise and implement the programme for achieving the Standard; and
- Update the Business Plan to reflect the programme.

By the **the end of March of 2033** landlords should have:

- Confirmed that all their housing stock meets the Standard.

Tenant consultation on the draft programme

It is recognised that to foster pride and belonging, tenants should be encouraged to be involved in making any decisions that affect their community and environment. It is expected that tenants are shown how the draft programme was developed, and how their views and priorities have influenced the final programme. The precise process for tenant consultation is a matter for the individual landlord.

Chapter 5 – Assessment

All social housing in Wales must meet and maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. A home will meet the Standard when all relevant elements are achieved. It is recognised that some elements of the Standard are not applicable to all homes. It is also recognised that not all homes will be able to achieve some elements for various reasons. As such the following assessment process should be used:

- In general each element should be assessed for every home as either 'Pass' or 'Fail'.
- There are certain circumstances where an element may not be applicable e.g. elements concerning common parts of buildings in a single residence. In such circumstances these elements should be recorded as 'Not Applicable'.
- A 'Conditional Pass' is acceptable for certain elements. It is only to be used in situations where work to enable compliance cannot be undertaken e.g. physical constraints or heritage considerations. Conditional Passes are to be recorded with specific reason codes and only where directed as acceptable to do so (see [Appendix 6](#)).
- 'Temporary Fail' can be used as directed (see [Appendix 6](#)) in situations where social landlords are unable to make necessary changes to a home due to circumstances beyond their control, such as tenant refusal, or the changes are part of a wider programme of works planned within the next few years. Temporary Fails are to be recorded with specific reason codes and only where directed as acceptable to do so. Please note there are different reason codes provided for use with specific affordable warmth and environmental impact elements (section 3 of the Standard).

Where multiple reason codes could be appropriate, the main reason should be used.

Elements containing statutory or regulatory requirements, such as the presence of carbon monoxide detectors, should technically only be assessed as Pass or Fail. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances tenants may refuse to allow works to be carried out, as such reasons codes for this have been included. **Not applicable and Conditional Pass will not be accepted for such elements.**

In developing the Standard both practitioners and technical experts have considered the appropriate assessment criteria for each element. However, it is accepted there will be instances where additional reason codes will be required. In such instances social landlords should bring this to the attention of the Welsh Government for agreement prior to use. Any additional codes agreed will be shared with all social landlords.

Additional points:

- Disrepair claims – for the purposes of WHQS2023 social landlords should use their professional assessment of the home against the Standard and not the status of any live, or settled Disrepair Claims
- Social landlords should assess elements of the Standard on **actual condition/status** not life cycle.

- Cost prohibition should be established as a balance of the current Net Present Value, social value and occupancy etc.
- All homes in the social landlords' portfolio are to be assessed against the Standard and reported upon, including those that are vacant.

Any elements assessed as 'Temporary Fail' due to tenant choice (delay or refusal), tenant behaviour or vacancy should be remedied prior to re-letting the property.

Examples of using 'Not Applicable' relating to individual elements within the Standard

'Not Applicable' is only suitable for individual elements and not for the home as a whole. It is important to remember that it will not be appropriate for every home to be assessed on all elements within the Standard. For example:

- a ground floor flat will not need to be assessed on the thickness of any loft insulation present;
- the presence of 'A robust and lockable external store' is not needed for homes without dedicated outside space; and
- an external fire escape is not needed for a single storey property.

The above examples highlight differences in the nature and purpose of homes. Particular distinctions may be relevant between single household dwellings and dwellings of multiple occupation such as sheltered housing schemes, as well as flats and houses. Thus where appropriate it may be necessary for some elements to be reported as 'Not Applicable.'

Examples of using 'Conditional Pass' relating to individual elements within the Standard

A 'Conditional Pass' is only suitable for individual elements and not for the home as a whole. It may only be used in one or a combination of the following situations:

- Physical constraint;
- Heritage/ conservation constraint;
- Cost prohibition; or
- Community Carbon Benefit (offsetting) - for the elements of section 3, 'Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact', only.

As stated above, practitioners and technical experts have been involved in establishing which elements are appropriate to have a Conditional Pass assessment and in developing the associated reason codes. However, it is recognised there will inevitably be other instances where a Conditional Pass is appropriate or additional reason codes will be needed. In such instances landlords should bring this to the attention of the Welsh Government to agree prior to use. Any such agreements will be shared with all social landlords

Some practical examples (not exhaustive) of how 'Conditional Pass' of an element might occur:

- The garden is on a steep incline. It is *possible* to excavate the garden to provide 10m² of level garden but the risk of landslides etc. is deemed too great. This would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Physical constraint. If it was deemed to be safe, but the cost to do so is too great this would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Cost prohibitive.
- The home is a bedsit and only has a shower in the bathroom with no space for a bath. It is suitable for the tenant. This would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Physical constraint.
- The installation of PV panels, UPVC windows with trickle vents and or mechanical ventilation is deemed necessary to meet various elements but heritage restrictions do not allow these. Such elements would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Heritage/conservation constraint.

For element 3b: Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92), an additional reason code is available for use; Community Carbon Benefit (off-setting). This should be used when all that can be done to minimise the environmental impact of a home has been done, but it still falls short of the minimum EIR of 92. As such the social landlord has established some form of Community Carbon Benefit to counteract this (sometimes referred to as carbon off-setting). See [Appendix 2](#) for details on Community Carbon Benefits

It is worth noting that heritage/conservation constraints are not limited to external features of homes and as such this Conditional Pass reason code is available for use when assessing many of the elements in the Standard.

Examples of using 'Temporary Fail' relating to individual elements within the Standard

- Vacant homes

It is recognised that it may not be sensible or cost effective to ensure homes meet the Standard whilst they are vacant. As such, a vacancy code has been provided for use. All homes in the social landlords' portfolio are to be assessed against the Standard and reported upon, including those that are vacant.

Any outstanding work required to convert a 'Temporary Fail – Vacant' to a Pass must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

- Programmed works

Element 6a: Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living

Situation: A landlord may deem it necessary to consider the cost effectiveness of some works such as undertaking structural changes to the property in order to enlarge living spaces. It may be appropriate for the landlord to postpone the

achievement of this element until major investment, already planned, is required for that home.

Assessment: Temporary Fail – Programmed works within 5 years

- Tenant refusal

Element 5b: Bathrooms and WC facilities must have suitable flooring

Situation: A new bathroom has been installed. The floor was not replaced as the tenant had previously installed their own flooring and did not want it to be changed. The flooring installed by the tenant is deemed to be less slip resistant than required by the Standard. Providing the flooring does not give rise to a significant risk under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the flooring can remain. The landlord must issue the tenant with written advice on the hazard they have created.

Assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal.

Element 4a: Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition

Situation: The social landlord determines that the kitchen should be replaced. The tenant really likes their kitchen, is happy with it and does not want it changed. Providing the kitchen does not give rise to a significant risk under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the kitchen can remain. The landlord must issue the tenant with written advice on this action.

Assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Element 2g: Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less

Situation: The tenant is refusing to allow any work to be undertaken in their home including letting anyone in to carry out electricity certification. The landlord has set in motion processes to gain access.

Assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Element 4f: Kitchens should have sufficient and conveniently located power sockets

Situation: A tenant has installed their own kitchen but there are insufficient power sockets. They do not want 'their nice new kitchen messed up' and are happy with the number of sockets they have.

Assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Any outstanding work required to convert a ‘Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal’ to a Pass must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

- Tenant delay

Element 4a: Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition

Situation: The kitchen has been identified as needing replacement due to poor condition. One of the household is undergoing end of life care at home. The tenant is content to have the works done, but it is not appropriate at this time.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant delay

Any outstanding work required to convert a ‘Temporary Fail – Tenant delay’ to a Pass should be undertaken as soon as is acceptable to the tenant and must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

- Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions

Element 1b: Homes must be free from damp

Situation A: The landlord has carried out all necessary works to a home in terms of remedy and damp prevention, but the tenant is simply unable to afford to heat the home sufficiently to prevent damp.

Situation B: The landlord has carried out all necessary works to a home in terms of remedy and damp prevention and has advised the tenant how best to dry clothes and ‘live in their home’ but they have not changed their behaviour and damp has developed again.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions.

Any outstanding work required to convert a ‘Temporary Fail – Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions’ to a Pass must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

Examples of using ‘Temporary Fail’ relating to specific affordable warmth and environmental impact elements (section 3 of the Standard).

Whilst most of the ‘usual’ Temporary Fail reason codes are available for affordable warmth and environmental impact elements (section 3) of the Standard, 3 of them have some substitute or additional codes.

- Element 3a: Homes must have heating systems which are reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92)

The option of 'Temporary Fail - Currently cost prohibitive' is available to use for this element where all has been done to the home to meet this element and the only remaining actions are **currently** too expensive. Market developments should allow this situation to be rectified over time.

Situation: The windows, doors and loft insulation have been upgraded but the home is still heated by a gas boiler. Other options available to meet the element in full are still overly expensive per unit, not supported by the energy network (hydrogen) or installation of them would force the tenant into fuel poverty (heat pump).

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Currently cost prohibitive.

- Element 3b: Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)

Along with 'Temporary Fail - Currently cost prohibitive', 'Temporary Fail - Physical constraint' and Temporary Fail - Heritage/ conservation constraint' are available to use for this element.

Situation: A home in a rural location. The Target Energy Pathway indicates a heat pump is the best option for this home as it is unsuitable for alternative heat sources due to location and orientation. The current limited grid capacity is unable to provide the power required for a heat pump.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail - Physical constraint.

Situation: External wall insulation or solar panels are required to meet the requirements of this element. The home is in a conservation area and these are not permitted.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Heritage/ conservation constraint.

- Element 3f: Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances

Situation: Some fittings and fixed appliances have been replaced, but the remaining ones are still fit for purpose and or the tenant does not want the remaining ones replaced.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – some replaced.

Chapter 6 – Compliance and certification

All social landlords are required to develop and maintain a compliance policy. To allow landlords time to respond to the additional requirements within the new standard, this must be in place by the end of March 2025. The compliance policy must be:

- signed off by the Board or equivalent for LHAs;
- published to demonstrate open and transparent working; and
- reviewed annually.

The compliance policy has a key role in communicating the social landlord's approach to the WHQS programme, local circumstances and any relevant decision taken. WHQS statistical returns will demonstrate the progress made in meeting the Standard, whilst compliance policies will provide context for how progress is being/has been achieved. They should also provide assurance to stakeholders of the accuracy of the statistical returns.

An overview of key areas to be included in the compliance policy are provided below:

- Approach to WHQS, reflecting local resources and circumstances
- Data base/asset management software
- Tenant engagement
- Independent verification
- Compliance statements for tenants
- Elements not measured
- Cost prohibitive activity
- Redevelopment, demolition and carbon
- Community benefits

Approach to WHQS, reflecting local resources and circumstances

The Policy must set out each landlord's decision making in relation to complying with the Standard. The Policy must clearly articulate the landlord's approach to meeting and maintaining the Standard for their whole stock and on an element by element basis.

Database/asset management software

The Policy needs to state what kind of database or asset management software is being used.

Tenant engagement

Social Landlords should outline how they have engaged with tenants in meeting and maintaining the Standard.

Independent Verification

As a result of the Audit Wales review of WHQS in 2012¹¹ the requirement for independent verification has been introduced. The Policy must include information on the social landlord's arrangements for independent verification of their compliance with the Standard. This should include details of the processes to be undertaken and how independence is assured.

The verification process should include an initial review 2 years after the publication of the standard

This should be followed by annual review of the data collection procedures, the maintenance of the asset management database and the verification of the Standard results. It should also include random checks into the monitoring processes.

Independent verification may take different forms. This is not about spending large sums of money but the process must be undertaken by an independent party. It should be conducted by someone who is not directly involved in the delivery of the Standard. Independent verification could also be conducted by other social landlords or external consultants.

Compliance Statement

A Statement should be issued at the point of re-letting. This will support the EPC certificate that the new tenant already receives. Where a property does not meet the Standard at the point of re-letting, the Statement should include clear information about the purpose of the Standard, when it is to be met, what it covers, where the home complies and any areas that are yet to meet the Standard, ideally with a rationale.

The compliance policy should explain how this information is provided to tenants and provide an example of the Statement used.

Elements not measured (as such)

Previously a written response was provided to Welsh Government with the statistical return detailing how the requirements of elements not formally measured were being complied with.

For the revised Standard, a detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Compliance Policy to provide an understanding for all stakeholders of how the elements not formally measured are being progressed. This is to ensure that the approach taken to these valuable aspects of a tenant's home and neighbourhood are being considered.

The explanatory statement should outline how decisions have been made on programmes of work, how need has been assessed and prioritised and how tenants have been allowed a voice in the process.

¹¹ Audit Wales report on Progress in delivering the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, January 2012

The following elements require an explanatory statement:

- 8b Attractive Outside Spaces
- 8c Biodiversity
- Broadband (see page 6 WHQS2023 and digital connectivity)

Cost Prohibitive Activity

For elements assessed to be a conditional pass cost prohibitive landlords should provide an explanatory statement on the rationale for this.

Redevelopment, Demolition and Carbon

Landlords will be expected to explain how carbon considerations have been included in the assessment of options for any proposed redevelopment or demolition.

Welsh Development Quality Requirements (WDQR 2021) 1(c) require new development of social homes to adopt best practice in moving to a decarbonised and circular built environment. It requires landlords *'to consider an assessment for reducing upfront and embodied carbon during the design and construction phases, and when undertaking refurbishment.'*¹²

Landlords should present an assessment, using a recognised methodology such as RICS Professional Statement 'Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment'¹³. Landlords should also compare embodied and operational carbon in the proposal for retrofitting homes, as opposed to a proposal for demolishing and redeveloping homes.

Community benefits

Community benefits are positive outcomes for local people and communities including boosting employment and skills or providing community facilities. Each landlord must set out in their Policy how they plan and measure community benefits generated by the WHQS programme.

¹² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-08/development-quality-requirements-for-housing-associations.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/upholding-professional-standards/sector-standards/building-surveying/whole-life-carbon-assessment-for-the-built-environment-1st-edition-rics.pdf>

Glossary

Decarbonisation

To largely eliminate the release of Green House Gasses produced as a result of a process or activity.

Dwelling

A dwelling is any form of accommodation owned by the landlord and provided in return for rent to residents and which is used for human habitation or intended or available for such use. It includes:

- a “house,” whether it is detached, semi-detached or terraced;
- a “flat,” “maisonette” or “apartment;” that is a self-contained dwelling on one or more floors in a building containing other dwellings; and
- a “bed-sit,” or “flat,” and which is not self-contained. For example, some facilities such as a bath or shower-room, or kitchen may be shared.

Included as part of the dwelling are gardens and outbuildings for use with that dwelling. Gardens should be considered to be any outside space associated with the dwelling plot. In addition rights of way, paths, yards, easements, and common or shared parts and services necessary for the occupation and use of the dwelling, are included unless otherwise stated in the interpretation of an element.

Where the dwelling is a flat, maisonette or bed-sit, as well as including those means of access, amenities and services, the dwelling also includes any rooms, passageways, circulation areas, and facilities that are shared or used in common with others.

Fitness for human habitation (FFHH) requirements

It is proposed that FFHH requirements are updated by the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 in 2022. Under the 2016 Act, landlords (private and social sectors) must ensure that the dwelling is FFHH on the date of occupation by tenant/s, and throughout the term of occupation under a tenancy agreement (contract). Landlords are also required to keep the dwelling in repair, including the structure and exterior of the dwelling as well as the service installations. It is proposed that FFHH requirements under the 2016 Act and associated regulations refer to the 29 hazards (matters and circumstances) set out in Schedule 1 of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006. Reference to the HHSRS replaces the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 implied contractual obligation to ensure the dwelling is FFHH and previous reference made to nine matters including repair, stability, damp, lighting, ventilation and water supply. The FFHH obligation provides a remedy for contract holders to address concerns regarding the quality of their accommodation that fall outside the landlord’s repairing obligations. It is for the courts to determine whether a dwelling is FFHH. The Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2021 may result in case law that may modify

the application of the HHSRS. Landlords should ensure their interpretation of the application of the HHSRS is up to date with any such case law.

In addition to the [Housing health and safety rating system \(HHSRS\)](#), landlords will be required to attain to specific requirements for the installation of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and electrical safety testing for the purposes of satisfying FFHH obligations.

Garden

A garden is an area associated with the dwelling that may consist of a hard and/or soft landscaped area. This area will be for use by the residents of the dwelling but will not normally be a shared area.

Good condition - Free from deficiency

This definition is taken from the Household Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Deficiency: This is a failure of an element to meet the Ideal (The perceived optimum standard, at the time of the assessment, intended to prevent avoid or minimise the hazard). The failure could be inherent, such as a result of the original design, construction or manufacture, or it could be a result of deterioration, disrepair or a lack of repair or maintenance (HHSRS Operating Guidance ref: page 7).

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006

The [Housing health and safety rating system \(HHSRS\)](#) was introduced by the Housing Act 2004 and HHSRS (Wales) Regulations 2006. The system is a health-based risk assessment tool for the evaluation of housing conditions. The HHSRS has not changed since its introduction in April 2006. The system operates by evaluating potential risk of harm to an actual or potential occupier from their living environment and is a means of rating the seriousness of any hazard/s identified. A hazard is any risk of harm to the health and safety of an occupier that arises from a deficiency. Deficiencies can contribute to any one or more of the 29 different hazards subject to an HHSRS assessment.

A hazard rating is expressed though a numerical score which falls within a hazard, there are 10 bands. Scores in Bands A to C are Category 1 hazards, imposing a duty on enforcing local housing authorities to take appropriate action under Part 1 of the 2004 Act. Scores in Bands D to J are Category 2 hazards, a local housing authority has a power but not a duty to act against any significant hazard in the case of Category 2 hazards.

Category 1 Hazards are whole house judgements and deficiencies leading to the assessment of a Category 1 Hazard may impact on more than one WHQS element. Deficiencies in any element (listed in Part 7 of the standard below) that contribute to an HHSRS Category 1 Hazard would automatically result in a fail for that element

and thereby the dwelling failing the Standard. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System Guidance Operational Guidance can be obtained from the Welsh Government website and is free to download <https://gov.wales/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance>.

Social Housing

this refers to **all** properties owned and managed by local housing authorities (LHA's) under Part 4 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and registered social landlords (RSL's) who are regulated by the Welsh Government. It includes intermediate rent properties and properties owned by LHA's not in a Housing Revenue Account.

Tenants, Residents and Occupants

These terms are used interchangeably in some places of the document depending on the context and influence of other documents and policy statements. The meanings of the word tenant and resident for the purposes of this guidance are the same. In addition, the term Occupants is used specifically in reference to the Housing Health and Safety Rating Operating Guidance.

SAP

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the UK Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. SAP quantifies a dwelling's performance in terms of: energy use per unit floor area, a fuel-cost-based energy efficiency rating (the SAP Rating) and emissions of CO₂ (the Environmental Impact Rating). Further information can be found at [SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix 1 – Further information and good practice examples

2a External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security

Information on door security can be found below:

Door frames must be securely fixed to the building fabric in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and specifications.

New doorsets to be certified to one of the following standards

- PAS 24:2016 (Note 21.3b); or
- STS 201 Issue 7:2015 (Note 21.3c); or
- LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 Security Rating 2+ (Note 21.3d); or
- LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 Security Rating A3+; or
- STS 202 Issue 6:2015 Burglary Rating 2 (Note 21.3d); or
- LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating B (Notes 21.3d and 21.3e)

And to the appropriate material specific standard:

- BS 7412:2007 (PVC-U)
- BS 4873: 2016 (Aluminium)
- BS 6510: 2010 (Steel)
- BS 644: 2012 (Timber)
- BS 8529: 2017 (Composite)

Europrofile cylinders should be replaced with products certificated to Door Hardware Federation Technical Standard 007 (DHF TS 007) – 3-Star rating, or a DHF TS 007 1-star cylinder may be utilised if accompanied by DHF TS 007 2-star external hardware (handle set or secure escutcheon) or cylinder protection, or Sold Secure SS312 (Diamond) standard cylinders.

Locking systems – clear operating instructions must be attached to the inner face of the door but should be easily removable by the tenant. Glazing panels in and adjacent to doors must be laminated and meet or exceed the requirements of BS EN 356:2000 class P1A.

A door chain or opening limiter meeting the requirements of the Door and Hardware Federation Technical Specification 003 (TS 003) must be installed on the doorset to which a caller can be expected, normally the front door.

A door viewer meeting the requirements with the Door & Hardware Federation Technical Specification 002 (TS 002) standard must be fitted between 1200mm and 1500mm (in addition to 1050mm for wheelchair accessible homes) from the bottom of the door, this is not required if the doorset is installed with clear glazing or if there is a side panel with clear glazing.

Letter plates should not be retrofitted to any SBD compliant doorset as this will invalidate the certification.

Letter plates should have a maximum aperture size of 260mm x 400mm, not be removable from the exterior side of the doorset and be 400mm from the internal locking point or provided with a suitable internal deflector plate.

SECURED BY DESIGN HOMES 2019 Version 2, March 2019
<https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

Information on Communal Entrance Doors

- Communal entrance doors, should in addition, have an automatic closing and be fitted with an automatic deadlocking lock, with an internal thumb turn, knob or handle. External entry must be by latch withdrawal by use of the key, not by lever. On outward opening doors hinges should be protected by hinge bolts or similar.
- Where there are less than 5 flats but they are spread over more than 2 floors and are served by a common entrance the doors must be fitted visitor door entry system and access control system, with an electronic lock release and entry phone linked to the flats.
- Where 5 or more flats but less than 10 flats are served by a common entrance the doors must be fitted visitor door entry system and access control system to enable management oversight of the security of the building and , with an electronic lock release and entry phone linked to the flats. Doorsets within this category shall meet the following:
 - PAS 24:2016;
 - STS 201;
 - LPS 2081 Security Rating B+.
- Where 10 or more flats are served by a common entrance consideration must be given to the use of CCTV, for facial identification, to be used in conjunction with the unit access control release or concierge system. Doorsets may be required to meet higher standards to cope with greater use as agreed with the DOCO.

Information on Windows

- Easily accessible windows certified to:
 - PAS 24:2016 (Note 22.2b);
 - STS 204 Issue 6:2016 (Note 22.2c);
 - LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 Security Rating 1 (Note 22.2d);
 - LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 Security Rating 1/A1;
 - STS 202 Issue 7:2016 Burglary Rating 1; or
 - LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating A.
- Easily accessible windows must have key operated locks unless designated as emergency egress routes within the Building Regulations. Where necessary, opening restrictors or similar built-in mechanisms will be required. Where windows are required under the building regulations to act as a fire escape route, the opening window must not have key operated locks. In these circumstances glazing must be laminated glass to BS EN 356:2000 class P1A will be required.
- Windows that are not easily accessible will require either lockable hardware or an opening restrictor in the interests of child safety.

- Windows must also be fit for purpose and shall be certificated to the relevant material standard i.e.:
 - BS 7412:2007 (PVC-U)
 - BS 4873: 2016 (Aluminium)
 - BS 6510: 2010 (Steel)
 - BS 644: 2012 (Timber)
 - BS 8529: 2017 (Composite)
- The following performance requirements are also required: BS 6375 parts 1 & 2 (appropriate performance levels, relating to air permeability, water tightness and wind resistance)

Information on External Lighting

- Lighting should be designed to cover all external doorsets.
- The use of LED light sources is recommended with a colour temperature of no more than 4000 Kelvin and ideally below. This reduces blue light content and therefore the effects on human and ecology receptors.
- 24-hour lighting (switched using a photoelectric cell) to communal parts of blocks of flats will be required. It is acceptable if this is dimmed during hours of low occupation to save energy.
- Secured by Design encourages, wherever possible, the use of the most environmentally friendly light sources, encourages the use of good quality LED lighting and other energy effective light sources and advises against the use of fluorescent lighting which is environmentally unsustainable for a variety of reasons

Intruder Alarms

- Where an intruder alarm system is installed then it shall meet the requirements of BS EN 50131 (wired and wire free systems). All installations shall be in accordance with the current electrical regulations.

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2b Staircases & balustrades must be safe

There are in excess of two million injuries from accidents in the home each year, many due to trips and falls. Homes should be designed and maintained to reduce the risk of accidents and all opportunities should be taken by landlords to improve building related safety.

The Building Research Establishment Centre for Safety Health and Environment publish a Digest (458) 'Safe as Houses' that provides a useful checklist:

www.bre.co.uk

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3c Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes

Energy Performance and Insulation

1. For emerging research and tools on climate resilience and mitigation in Wales please see - 'Climate Vulnerability Modelling: How resilient is Welsh housing stock to a changing climate?' (link to follow when published)
2. Emerging best practice information on heating, thermal insulation and ventilation is available at: Energy Saving Trust: Measures to help reduce home heat loss - [Measures to help reduce home heat loss - Energy Saving Trust](#)

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3f Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances

There are many ways that properties can be made more water efficient and therefore use less water every time they are used whilst achieving the desired outcome (i.e. washing hands, showering, etc.). There are different types of consumption in the household which are predominately; flow use and frequency use. Flow use is seen from taps and showers and is controlled by the user and frequency use is for fittings that have a fixed volume such as a toilet or washing machine. Both types can be made more water efficient through either flow restriction/aeration or by purchasing fittings/appliances that consume less water per use.

For flow use, a simple and cost effective way of reducing the flow rate of existing and new fittings is through 'aeration'. Aeration is where air is passively mixed to the water and creates a 'bubble effect' with even flow distribution (this even distribution also reduces the risks of splashing and risks associated with water on hard surfaces). Fittings that create aeration can be retrofitted to the majority of fittings (predominately bathroom sinks and showers) and also restrict flows whilst still providing enough flow.

The provision of aerating showerheads have been shown to be a readily acceptable low cost method of reducing water consumption see Water and Energy Efficient Showers: Project Report, Richard Critchley, United Utilities and Dr David Phipps, Liverpool John Moores University May 2007, www.waterwise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/United-Utilities-Water-and-Energy-Efficient-Showers-Project-Report.pdf.

The EST report 'At Home with Water' presents analysis from the Energy Saving Trust's Water Energy Calculator and is a useful guide to reducing water consumption in the home. At Home with Water, EST 2013, www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/reports/AtHomewithWater%287%29.pdf

For volume use, options to make existing fittings/appliances more water efficient is more challenging with the main one being a displacement device for a syphon flush toilet cistern (these usually have a 9 litre flush which can be reduced to 6/7 litres). Other appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers would need to be

replaced by more water efficient models to achieve savings for the occupier in both water and energy.

There are many resources available with further detail on how landlords can make properties more water efficient and how occupiers can reduce water consumption through behaviour changes. Waterwise (an independent, not-for-profit NGO focussed on reducing water consumption in the UK) covers many areas of water use and gives both practical and behavioural advice - www.waterwise.org.uk/save-water

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4f Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets

Minimum provision of electrical socket-outlets

The charity Electrical Safety First provide a document 'Guidance on: Minimum provision of electrical Socket-outlets in the home'

<https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/1204/guidance-on-minimum-provision-socketsv2.pdf>

Not having sufficient socket-outlets may lead to risks such as:

- DIY extensions to circuits undertaken unsafely if the work is carried out by unskilled persons
- DIY extension to equipment flexes
- Cascading (daisy chaining) of extension leads
- Stacking of adaptor plugs

All of the above will create potential hazards, such as risk of tripping over leads, electric shock or injury and damage to property through fire.

Where a home is being rewired it is recommended that the minimum requirements set out of their guidance document are complied with. The table below is an extract from Table 1 of the guidance describing the minimum requirement for twin socket provision.

Minimum number of twin socket-outlets to be provided in homes:

Location Type	Smaller rooms (Up to 12m ²)	Medium rooms (12-25 m ²)
Main living area	4	6
Dining area	3	4
Single bedroom	2	3
Double bedroom	3	4
Kitchen area	6	8
Hallways and landings	1	2

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4g Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring

The Health and Safety Executive provides a technical information sheet on assessing the slip resistance of flooring which although intended for use in a commercial and industrial setting may be of use in assessing appropriate flooring coverings in these areas. 'Assessing the slip resistance of flooring A technical information sheet' HSE. Available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis2.pdf

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5b Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring

Due to the close proximity of water, heat and electricity there are a number of safety hazards that need to be considered.

Bathrooms are quite often small rooms with confined space; careful planning and the installation of helpful safety features can help to diminish the risk of accidents occurring, for example:

- Water and condensation cause slippery surfaces. The installation of non-slip mats or surfaces inside the bath, together with the fitting of grab rails at suitable positions could reduce the risk of nasty falls.
- Hot water can cause burns and the temperature of the water should be considered carefully. Consider whether there will be any dramatic change in temperature should other water appliances be used around the house.
- All light fittings operated from within the bathroom should be fitted with a pull cord. If a light switch is used, it should be situated outside the bathroom.
- Any electric heaters should be fitted with fixed and permanent wiring. Electric heaters should be situated out of reach of the bath.

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6b At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings

In May 2020, the Bevan Foundation published a report *Solving Poverty: Reforming help with housing costs*. This referenced specifically the provision of flooring.

www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Solving-Poverty-Support-with-housing-costs-pdf.pdf

The following standards may also be helpful:

- BS EN 1307:2014 - TEXTILE FLOOR COVERINGS. CLASSIFICATION
- BS EN 1307 specifies the requirements for classification, domestic or commercial, of all carpets and carpet tiles, excluding rugs and runners into use classes.
- BS EN 1307 is linked to BS EN ISO 10874:2012, which is a classification system for resilient, textile and laminate floor coverings. The classification is based on practical requirements for areas of use and intensity of use.

End use classification for domestic use is:

- Class 21 - Moderate Domestic Use
- Class 22 - General Domestic Use
- Class 23 - Heavy Domestic Use

6d As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household

Please see the two links below, that whilst refer to new housing do contain ideas that could be incorporated and considered for existing homes.

Case study from Canada:

www.housingresearchcollaborative.scarp.ubc.ca/files/2019/06/Culturally-Appropriate-Housing-2019PLAN530-CMHC.pdf

Case study from Ireland (pages 39-41):

www.housingagency.ie/sites/default/files/55.%2011_04_13-Good-Practice-Guidelines-in-Housing-Management_Housing-Minority-Ethnic-Communities_2011.pdf

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8c Biodiversity

Case study with Tai Tarian:

[40090 BFS Tai Tarian E.pdf](http://40090_BFS_Tai_Tarian_E.pdf) (biodiversitywales.org.uk)

Case study with the Gwent Green Grid Partnership:

[Nature Isn't Neat](#)

Further guidance can be found at:

- Wales Biodiversity Partnership: website for general information about biodiversity and what we can do to help [Wales Biodiversity Partnership - Home](http://WalesBiodiversityPartnership-Home(biodiversitywales.org.uk)) (biodiversitywales.org.uk)

Links to Planting for Pollinators:

- www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/809/en-GB

A longer list of suggested plants for pollinators can be found on:

- www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Content/Upload/Bee-friendly-plant-list-ENG.pdf
- Healthy for Bees: Healthy for People: Managing the grounds of public buildings for pollinators' www.naturalresources.wales/media/681901/managing-the-grounds-of-public-buildings-for-pollinators.pdf
- Plantlife road verges management guide: www.plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/management-guidelines
- [Pesticides: code of practice | GOV.WALES](#)

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Appendix 2 – Community Carbon Benefits

Guidance note outline

Welsh Government needs to develop with WHQS Technical consultants a guidance note for the process outlined in 3(b) 'Limit carbon emissions from homes'. The proposal is to co-produce this guidance with social landlords over Summer 2022 (May-July 2022)

The proposed guidance note will:

- Define a process for offsetting carbon emissions both between houses and across landlord assets.
- Establish a reporting framework under the WHQS.

Community Carbon Benefits

The guidance will provide a description of the proposal to balance EI ratings between homes.

It will also provide examples of acceptable offsetting schemes, such as district heating to produce heat for homes outside the landlord's ownership, using amenity land within housing schemes for renewable energy, PVs on community buildings, and set out how that will be reported under WHQS.

The guidance will provide a narrative to limit the use of offsetting – for example whether the scheme has to be physically located on buildings or land owned by the landlord.

Appendix 3 – Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathway

Guidance note outline

Welsh Government needs to develop with WHQS Technical consultants a guidance note for the process outlined in 3(c) Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathways. The proposal is to co-produce this guidance with social landlords over Summer 2022 (May-July 2022)

The proposed guidance note will:

- Support the development of an implementation plan, through a ‘Whole Stock Assessment’ and ‘Target Energy Pathways’ for decarbonisation of a landlord’s entire housing stock.
- Establish a reporting framework under the WHQS.

Whole Stock Assessment

The guidance will include a flow diagram setting out the processes describing a complete and integrated process of steps to complete a housing stock data review. This is to ensure pre-existing data is gathered and understood.

It will also provide notes on how the EPCs and other the energy survey tools integrate into the Whole Stock Assessment and to what extent landlords ought to carry out surveys to support planning retrofit programmes. This will necessarily be a relatively high level piece identifying energy survey tools as a single class and not mandating any proprietary tools.

The guidance will align the skills required to carry out a Whole Stock Assessment with PAS2035.

It will also reference PAS2035 and emphasise/document the need for the completion of a comprehensive house survey taking place ahead of the implementation of any energy efficiency measures

Target Energy Pathways

The Target Energy Pathway will include Part 3(d) (All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented). This is where the example of a 4 step approach – or similar landlord defined approach - is set out. This is integral to understanding the Target Energy Pathway concept.

The Target Energy Pathway output will relate to existing tools such as the EPC recommendations and asset management outputs.

The Target Energy Pathway will be required to be reported to Welsh Government as part of the WHQS2023 compliance. The format is proposed to be a property led spreadsheet noting current and proposed SAP/ EI scores, together with an indication of Target Energy Pathways for each home. A short narrative of archetypical Target Energy Pathways will accompany the spread sheet.

Appendix 4 – Nominal occupancy and spaces for everyday living

Social landlords should note that the nominal occupancy designation of properties held before 1 January 2023 may remain unless it is practical and cost effective to achieve the requirements below.

The requirements set out below are to apply to acquisitions and refurbished acquisitions from 1 January 2023 onwards. New builds space standards must comply with [WDQR2021](#).

Bedroom sizes required

The **minimum floor area applicable for bedrooms** are as follows:

- 6.0m² for a single bedroom
- 10.0m² for a double/ twin bedroom

The **ceiling height** of any habitable room should be at least 2.1m and, in any habitable room with a sloping ceiling, at least one-half of the floor area should have a ceiling height of at least 2.1m. Any part of the floor area of a room in relation to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.5m is not to be considered in determining the floor area of that room.

The **narrowest point** of any bedroom should be no less than 2.1m in width and measuring the minimum distance to a point in an alcove is not acceptable. The bedroom floor area is measured to the internal finished surfaces of the walls excluding chimney recesses, space taken up by mechanical/electrical installations or general storage e.g. an airing cupboard.

Ideal furniture requirements

Ideally alongside the minimum floor space and ceiling heights set out above, all bedrooms should be able to accommodate beds in more than one position and allow for sufficient bed-making space (400mm x length of bed(s)).

Furniture item and size (mm)	Number of items per bedroom type		
	Single	Double	Twin
Single bed (2,000 x 900)	1	2	2
Double bed (2,000 x 1,500)	-	1	-
Bedside table 400 x 400	1	2	2
Chest of drawers – 450 x 750	1	1	1
Single wardrobe (600 x 600)	1	-	2 singles or 1 double
Double wardrobe (1,200 x 600)	-	1	
Table (1,050 x 500) with seat	1	1	1

Note: The information contained in the table above is derived from the Housing Quality Indicator (HQI) system. The HQI System provides details on furniture provision, access, passing and activity zones for bedrooms and living spaces within a home. The system provides illustrations of spaces required to access the furniture and to perform activities typical to each room. If all listed furniture and appropriate activity and access zones are accommodated, a bedroom and living space meets the standard as defined by the HQI System¹⁴.

Nominal occupancy

Nominal occupancy is the maximum number of people that should be living in a specific home based on its size. The nominal occupancy for a home is established by the size of the bedrooms, which in turn places a requirement on the amount of living space required. A home with three bedrooms, two doubles (over 10.0m² floor area and ideally able to accommodate minimum furniture recommendations) and one single (between 6.0m² and 10.0m² and ideally able to accommodate minimum furniture recommendations), would be classified as being suitable for five people. It would require a dining room of at least 7m² and a lounge of at least 16m². These can be combined as indicated in the table below alongside how much floor space is required for households.

Number of Bedrooms		Nominal Occupancy	Living space minimums (m ²)	
Double or Twin Bedroom (Min 10.0m ²)	Single Bedroom (Min 6.0m ²)		Dining*	Lounge
0	2	2	6	10
1	0			
1	3	3	7	12
1	1			
0	4	4	7	16
1	2			
2	0	5	8	16
0	5			
1	3	6	8	16
2	1			
0	6	7	9	16
1	4			
2	2	7	9	16
3	0			
0	7	7	9	16
1	5			
2	3	7	9	16
3	1			

*The notional room size for dining (m²) may be combined with the kitchen.

¹⁴ For further information and guidance on meeting this standard see Buxton, P. (2018) Metric Handbook – Planning and Design Data, Routledge: London and 'Unit Size and Layout Sections' of the Housing Quality Indicator (HQI) system. The 'Metric Handbook' contains information about communal room sizes contained in houses and flats.

Note: The lounge and dining sizes may be combined.

Note: Where a property has additional rooms (e.g. rooms in a converted loft) that are not being used as bedrooms, then the lounge and dining room sizes need only be sufficient for the actual occupancy of the dwelling.

Factors to consider

At the allocations stage, landlords should also take into consideration the gender composition and relationship of occupants when considering the sufficiency of space within a home as laid out in the Bedroom Standard. The Bedroom Standard states that a separate bedroom is required for:

- an adult couple who are married, in a civil partnership or cohabiting as if they were married or in a civil partnership (double bedroom)
- any person aged 21 years or more (single or double bedroom)
- any two persons aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom)
- one child under 10 years of age and one person aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom), and
- 1 or 2 children under 10 years of age, not necessarily of the same sex (single or twin bedroom).

Any unpaired person aged 10-20 years is paired, if possible, with a child under 10 years of the same sex or, if that is not possible, they require a separate bedroom. The same applies to any unpaired child aged under 10 years.

Appendix 5 – Compliance dates for elements of the Standard

As laid out in [Chapter 4](#) each element had one of three expected compliance dates depending on the degree of change from the previous version of the Standard.

Element	Compliance date
1a) Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair	continuation
1b) Homes must be free from damp	continuation
2a) External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security	continuation
2b) Staircases & balustrades must be safe	continuation
2c) Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard	continuation
2d) Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements	continuation
2e) Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person	continuation
2f) A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue	continuation (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016)
2g) Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less	continuation
2h) All electrical equipment supplied by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually	continuation
2i) Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements	continuation
2j) All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment	continuation
3a) Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92- EPC A)	2033

Element	Compliance date
3b) Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)	2033
3c) Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes	2026
3d) All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented	Step 1 - 2029 Step 2 - 2031 Step 3 - 2026 Step 4 - 2033
3e) Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation	2033
3f) Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances	2023
3g) Water butts to be installed when appropriate	2026
4a) Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition	continuation
4b) Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances	continuation
4c) Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces	continuation
4d) Homes must have sufficient general storage	continuation
4e) Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements	2026
4f) Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets	continuation
4g) Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring	continuation
4h) Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes	continuation
5a) Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition	continuation
5b) Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring	continuation
5c) Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)	continuation
6a) Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living	continuation
6b) At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings	2023

Element	Compliance date
6c) Exposure to noise should be minimised	2026
6d) As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household	continuation
6e) Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments	continuation
6f) Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries	continuation
7a) There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m ² directly accessible from the home	continuation
7b) There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate	continuation
7c) There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present	continuation
7d) Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe	continuation
7e) There must be a robust and lockable external store	continuation
8a) External storage for cycles and equipment must be made available	2026
8b) There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)	continuation
8c) Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly	2023

Appendix 6 – Assessment reason codes

Element	NA	NA	Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail	Temporary Fail - DeCarb only			
		No works or new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Offset (CCB) DeCarb only	Vacant	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Tenant behaviour/financial restrictions		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Some replaced (water only)	Currently cost prohibitive
Homes must be in a good state of repair																	
1a) Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair			X					X		X	X		X				
1b) Homes must be free from damp			X					?				X	X				
Homes must be safe and secure																	
2a) External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security			X		?			?					X				
2b) Staircases & balustrades must be safe			X		?			?					X				
2c) Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard			X					X					X				
2d) Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements			X					X					X				
2e) Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person			X					X		X	X		X				
2f) A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue			X					X	X	X	X		X				
2g) Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less			X					X		X	X		X				
2h) All electrical equipment supplied by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually			X					X		X	X		X				

Element	NA	NA	Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail	Temporary Fail - DeCarb only			
		No works or new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Offset (CCB) Decarb only	Vacant	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Tenant behaviour/financial restrictions		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Some replaced (water only)	Currently cost prohibitive
2i) Common part of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate fire detection, alarm systems and means of escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements	X		X					X					X				
2j) All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment	X		X					X					X				
Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact																	
3a) Homes must have heating systems which are reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92)			X	X	X			?	X	X	X		X				X
3b) Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)			X				X	?	X	X	X		X	X			X
3c) Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes	X		X						X	X	X		X				
3d) All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented			X						X				X				
3e) Homes and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation			X		X			?	X	X	X		X				
3f) Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances	X	X	X					?		X	X		X			X	
3g) Water butts to be installed where appropriate	X	X	X	X	?			?	X	X	X		X				
Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area																	
4a) Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition			X					?	X	X	X		X				
4b) Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				

Element	NA	NA	Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail	Temporary Fail - DeCarb only			
		No works or new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Offset (CCB) Decarb only	Vacant	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Tenant behaviour/financial restrictions		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Some replaced (water only)	Currently cost prohibitive
4c) Kitchens should be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
4d) Homes should have sufficient general storage to meet the needs of the nominal occupancy			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
4e) Homes should have adequate space for local recycling requirements			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
4f) Kitchens should have sufficient and conveniently located power sockets			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
4g) Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
4h) Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom																	
5a) Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
5b) Bathrooms and WC facilities must have suitable flooring			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
5c) Homes must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)			X	X	X	X							X				
Home must be comfortable and promotes wellbeing																	
6a) Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
6b) At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the dwelling should have suitable floor coverings			X	X	X	X		?					X				

Element	NA	NA	Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail	Temporary Fail - DeCarb only			
		No works or new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Offset (CCB) Decarb only	Vacant	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Tenant behaviour/financial restrictions		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Some replaced (water only)	Currently cost prohibitive
6c) Exposure to noise should be minimised			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
6d) As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
6e) Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments			X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X						
6f) Homes should be clearly identifiable with definable boundaries	?		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
Homes must have a suitable garden																	
7a) There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m ² directly accessible from the home	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
7b) There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
7c) There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
7d) Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
7e) There must be a robust and lockable external store	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
Homes must have an attractive outside space																	
8a) External storage for cycles and equipment must be made available	X		X	X	X	X		?	X	X	X		X				
8b) There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)																	

Element	NA	NA	Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail	Temporary Fail - DeCarb only				
		No works or new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Offset (CCB) <i>Decarb only</i>	Vacant	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Tenant behaviour/financial restrictions		Physical constraint	Heritage/conservation constraint	Some replaced (water only)	Currently cost prohibitive	
8c) Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly																		

Draft