

WHQS Addendum

Changes WEF: 01/04/26

Introduction

The following addendum introduces a new element 1c, a rule and statutory guidance under the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and forms part of Chapter 2 – the Standard: elements and guidance. The element, rule, guidance and associated reporting will come into effect from 01 April 2026 and is subsequent to the [announcement](#) made that the Welsh Ministers “.....propose to specify a rule(s) in relation to social landlords’ response to damp, mould and other hazards.” The change will all be included in an updated standard when it is next published.

New Element 1c

All Housing Health and Safety Rating System (“HHSRS”) Hazards¹ (except overcrowding), which present a potential significant risk to the tenant or occupier and where the hazard results from building component defects or disrepair within the landlord’s control, must be investigated and remedied within the timescales set out in the rule.

The HHSRS hazards are:

• Damp and mould growth	• Excess cold	• Excess heat	• Asbestos (and MMF)
• Biocides	• Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products	• Lead	• Radiation
• Uncombusted fuel gas	• Volatile Organic Compounds	• Entry by intruders	• Lighting
• Noise	• Domestic hygiene, Pests and Refuse	• Food safety	• Personal hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage
• Water supply	• Falls associated with baths	• Falling on level surfaces	• Falling on stairs
• Falling between levels	• Electrical hazards	• Fire	• Flames, hot surfaces
• Collision and entrapment	• Explosions	• Position and operability of amenities	• Structural collapse and falling elements

Rule

A hazard which may present a significant risk with an assessed likelihood of imminent harm to the tenant/occupier must be investigated within 24 hours and remedied within a further 24 hours. Any work to make safe should be carried out as soon as possible in any event.

A hazard which may present a significant risk with no assessed likelihood of imminent harm will be investigated within 10 working days and remedied within a further 5 working day period.

¹ See Schedule 1 to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006

On occasion and on the assumption of best endeavours, it will not be possible to remedy a hazard within the timescales above. In this case, a written summary plan must be provided to the tenant (hard copy or electrical) within 5 working days. The content of the summary plan is set out in the published statutory guidance.

Statutory Guidance

- The requirement to comply with the rule will be limited to where a significant risk is assessed. A 'significant risk' is one that poses a significant risk of harm to the health or safety of a tenant/occupant, specifically, a significant risk of harm is defined as a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a competent member of the landlord's workforce with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency.
- In assessing a significant risk and imminent harm, landlords must take into account
 - the tenants and other occupiers individual circumstances including age, any physical and/or mental health issues and any other vulnerabilities.
 - the condition of the home.
 - the nature of the hazard (likelihood of harm materialising and the potential severity of that harm in the specific circumstances).
- If applicable, the written Summary plan must include the following information as a minimum:
 - Confirmation of the nature of the hazard identified and whether it has been assessed as presenting imminent harm or not.
 - The action has been taken/will be taken to make the property safe.
 - Details of the work to be undertaken to remedy the hazard.
 - When the work is likely to start and finish.
 - Detail of the arrangements made to mitigate any risks to the tenant occupier in the interim.
 - How to contact the landlord – an individual should be named with a direct contact email/Tel no.
- A summary report can be provided to the tenant in hardcopy or email/electronic means, but the issue of the summary must be properly recorded in the landlords' records.
 - Compliance with this rule will be reported as an element part of the detailed WHQS compliance report. A separate high level summary compliance report will also be required as an element of the quarterly social landlord return. The first quarterly report will be due at the end of June 2026 with the full detailed report at the end of the 2026/7 financial year.