



Chichester District Council Lettable Standard



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Chichester District Council Lettable Standard

The Council's expectation is that properties let by a Registered Social Landlord shall be to a consistently high standard, ensuring they are safe, secure, clean and in good condition. This is referred to as our lettable standard and is the minimum we expect tenants to find when they rent a property in our district.

Interior Standards:

- The property will be let in a condition ready for decoration. This will include the property being clean, free from mould growth, clear of waste and abandoned personal possessions, including from lofts, garages and associated cupboards. The housing provider may issue a decoration voucher for rooms requiring decoration.

Exterior Standards:

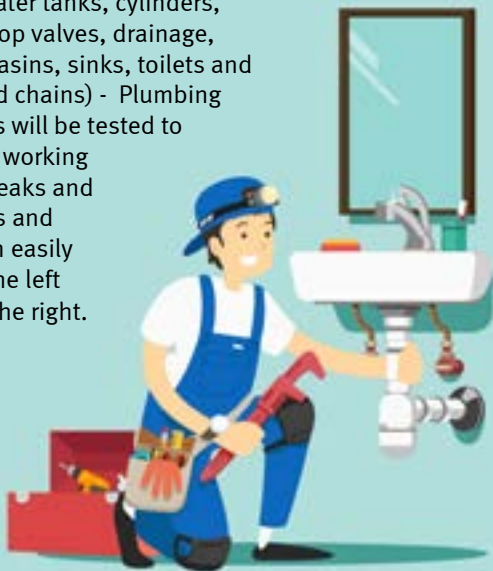
- Gardens and outside areas will be tidy and not overgrown and free from waste.
- Any non-authorized structures such as greenhouses, sheds etc will be removed and boundary fencing will be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Footpaths, ramps, external steps and driveways will be checked for trip hazards and repaired as necessary.

Asbestos checks

- Any asbestos identified during the void period will be removed or sealed as appropriate.

Utilities

- **Electric checks** - All electrical fittings will be tested to comply with the current safety regulations (NICEIC). As a minimum there will be two double switched sockets in each bedroom, one single in the hall and three double sockets in both the lounge and kitchen. All wiring, fuse boards, sockets, switches, heaters and light fittings to be in good working order.
- **Gas checks** - The gas system will be tested and a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record Certificate will be provided to new residents. The boiler, radiators, thermostat and timer to be in good working order.
- **Plumbing and water system** (to include all hot and cold water tanks, cylinders, pipework, taps, stop valves, drainage, baths, showers, basins, sinks, toilets and cisterns, plugs and chains) - Plumbing and water systems will be tested to ensure they are in working order and free of leaks and blockages. All taps and stopcocks will turn easily with hot taps on the left and cold taps on the right.



Role of the landlord through the lettings process

Throughout the lettings process landlords should: Accompany prospective tenants during property viewings, and treat them with respect, be polite and give support and advice where they can.

Check property meets the Lettable Standard and give details of any works that are required, including timescale for completion.

Provide contact details for those who can answer questions in relation to the tenancy.

Visit a let property within 12 weeks of the start of the tenancy to provide useful information about -the property, offer tenants advice and support and make sure they have settled into their new home.



Repairs after the tenancy begins

The Landlord must ensure repairs are completed within a reasonable timescale, which will depend upon the severity of the problem.

For example the Council's expectation is as follows:

24 hours - urgent issues affecting the health or safety of the occupants (e.g. major electrical fault, blocked WC).

3 working days - essential, affecting material comfort (e.g. hot water or heating failure).

7 working days - non-urgent, structural or services.

Where landlords are unable to meet the above timescales, for example if contractors are unavailable, they must keep the tenants informed of progress.



Making a complaint

If a property fails to meet the Lettable Standard or repairs are not dealt with within a reasonable time, tenants must contact their landlord to report the issues. If the landlord fails to acknowledge them, or propose a reasonable timescale to remedy them tenants must make a formal complaint.

Details of how to make a complaint will be found in the housing provider's complaints procedure, which should be available on their website.

Tenants who have exhausted all stages of their landlord's complaints procedure and fail to reach a resolution with their landlord should contact Chichester District Council's Housing Standards Team to seek advice.



Additional Protection for Tenants – The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act

In March 2019 a new law was introduced to ensure that rented properties are ‘fit for human habitation’ at the start of every tenancy, which means they are safe, healthy and free from things that could cause serious harm.

Most social landlords make sure the properties they rent are safe and secure, warm and dry but there may be occasion when they are not, and this means that some tenants live in dangerous or unhealthy conditions. The Homes Act will help these tenants and make sure poor landlords improve their properties.

If accommodation is not ‘fit for human habitation’, tenants can take their landlords to court. The court can make the landlord carry out repairs or put right health and safety problems. The court can also make the landlord pay compensation to the tenant.

Tenants can use the Homes Act immediately if you signed your tenancy agreement contract on or after 20 March 2019.

If you signed your contract before 20 March 2019, you will have to wait until 20 March 2020 before you can use the Homes Act (unless you sign a new tenancy or your tenancy becomes a monthly rolling contract).

For more information please see **www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018/guide-for-tenants-homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018**

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Bathroom:

- The bath, bath panel and shower will be clean, secure, free from chips and sealed where bath edges meet the tiling. The plug and chain to be secure. There shall be no leaks with free flowing waste. If a shower is present a new shower curtain and pole will be fitted where possible.
- Toilet pan/seat/cistern – To be secure, clean and easy to flush with a new toilet seat.
- Wash hand basin – To be provided in each WC room. Basins to be secure, free from chips and provided with a plug and secure chain. There shall be no leaks and free flowing waste.
- Taps – To be secure, clean, easy to operate, drip free and marked hot and cold.
- Two rows of tiles or similar splashback to be provided above the wash hand basin and three rows of tiles above the bath. Tiling to be clean, intact, with no cracks. Grout to be renewed where necessary.
- Extractor fans and duct covers to be cleaned and free of dirt and dust prior to letting.

Decoration:

It is a tenant's responsibility for decorating the inside of their home including filling small holes and cracks with filler.

Walls and ceilings:

To be in sound condition, free from damp, graffiti, large cracks, loose plaster, bulges and holes. Polystyrene tiles to be removed from property (including residue paste) and surfaces made good. Any room which is in a very poor state of decoration will be redecorated. Any mould growth to wall or ceiling surfaces will be treated with a fungicidal wash, leaving the surface ready for decoration.

Flooring:

- Vinyl flooring - Clean undamaged washable vinyl flooring or similar to be provided in the kitchen, bathroom and WC. This will be intact, secure, level and free of trip or slip hazards.
- Floors and skirting boards – To be clean, secure, free of rot, nails and not causing a trip hazard. Any damaged, missing or loose floors/skirting will be fixed or replaced as necessary, and painted to match the existing.
- Stairs - There should be at least one handrail per staircase. Handrails, steps, balustrades, Newell posts and treads to be securely fitted. The gap between balustrades will be no wider than 100 mm.

Windows:

Security locks to be provided to windows on the ground floor. Glazing must be intact and secure with any broken or de-gassed windows to be being replaced prior to letting. Windows must be easy to open and close and safety catches operational. Window restrictors to be fitted to all casements above ground floor level. Keys to be available at the time of letting.

Miscellaneous:

- Disabled adaptations will be clean, secure, working and have been periodically serviced as appropriate.
- Smoke detectors to be provided in the hall/lobby and one on the landing. For flats smoke detectors will be provided in the hall/lobby, unless already installed as part of a Fire Alarm system such as sheltered schemes. Smoke detectors to be clean and free of dust, and in sound working order
- All homes will be fitted with energy saving light bulbs
- A welcome pack will provided containing useful property information.

Cleanliness:

Properties will be in a clean and presentable condition.

This includes:

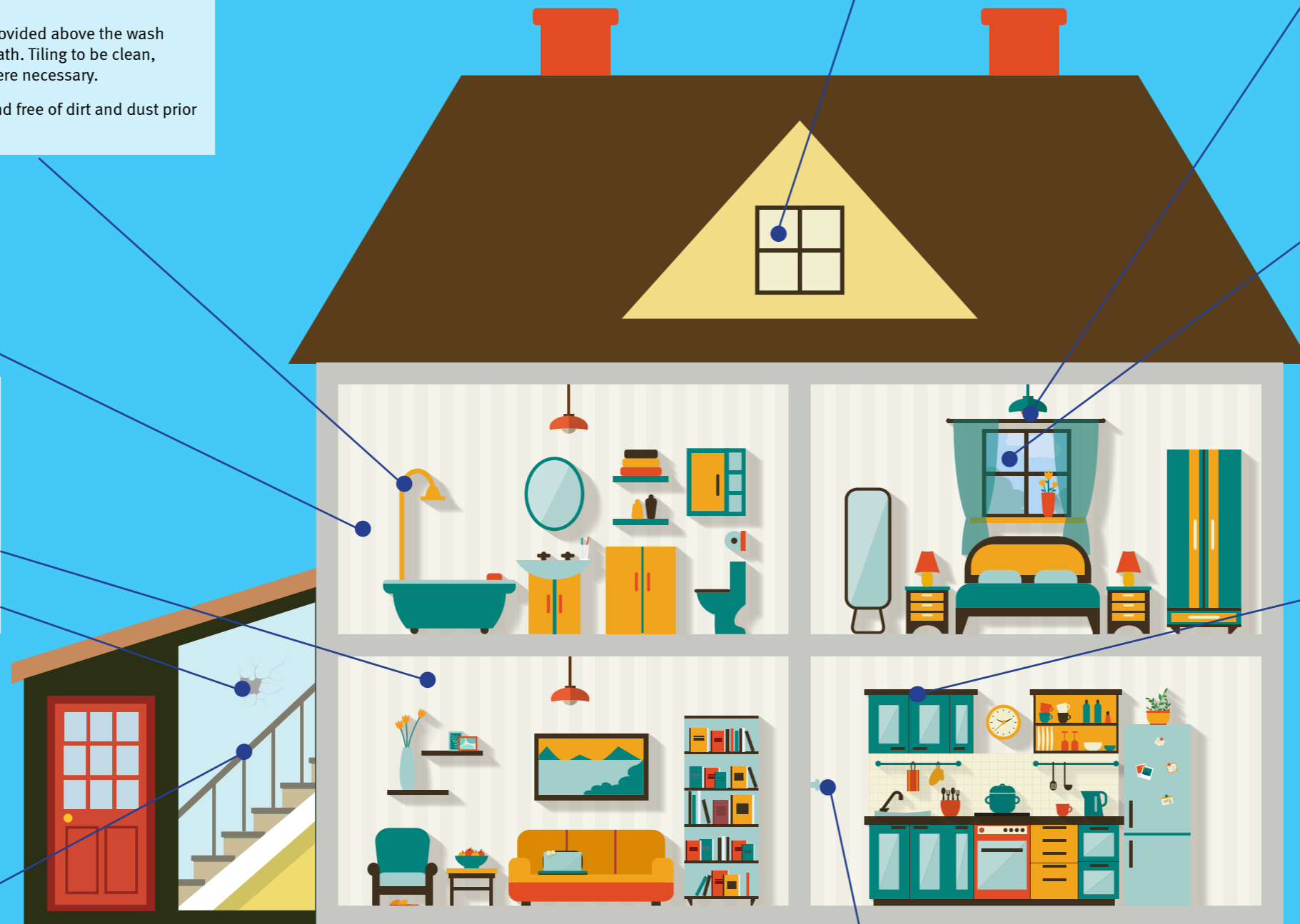
- Clean kitchen units and worktops.
- Wash down all paintwork.
- Clean windows (internally).
- Clean and disinfect sinks, toilets, baths and wash hand basins.
- Sweep and clean all floors.
- Clear rubbish from the property including gardens, outbuildings and communal areas.

Kitchen:

- Kitchen units to be in a sound, useable condition with wall and floor units matching if possible with provision for cooker and fridge freezer space. Any kitchen units that are damaged or unhygienic (beyond cleaning) will be repaired or replaced depending upon their condition. The number of kitchen units will depend on the size and layout of the kitchen. As a minimum, one unit with a stainless steel sink, one double base unit with work surface, and one double wall unit.
- Work surfaces and sealant to be free from damage, clean and sealed where work top meets the wall and around the sink.
- Sinks to be clean and free of rust and stains with no leaks and free flowing waste. Plugs and chains to be secure.
- Taps to be clean, easy to operate, marked hot and cold and drip free.
- Two rows of tiles or similar splash-back to be provided on the walls above the work surface and sink and be in clean condition, secure with no cracks. The splash-back to the cooker will also be tiled or similar to ensure an impervious surface.
- Cooker points -
- Gas: clean and capped off with bayonet removed, ready for cooker to be fitted by a Gas Safe engineer.
- Electric: power point supplied and clean, ready for cooker to be installed.
- Fused spur and adequate plumbing provided for a washing machine. Hot and cold valves clean and easy to open and close. Valves to be drip free and marked hot and cold. Waste pipe to be secure and drip-free.

Doors:

- All doors both internal and external will be in good working order with the ability to open and close easily. New locks will be fitted to all external dwelling doors.
- Flat front doors must be fitted with a fire door compliant with the British Standard, and if a letterbox is provided this must comply with current building regulations i.e. provided with fire resistant seals.



Please note it is a tenant's responsibility to arrange for appliances to be connected by a qualified engineer.



Housing Standards Team

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