



Lettable standard for empty homes



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Our aim for lettable homes:

- Efficient turnaround times for empty homes management
- All homes meet this lettable standard
- All homes are free from health and safety hazards (as relevant)
- Value for money is achieved and works are delivered, within approved budgets
- Where possible we aim to achieve the Red Kite Standard
- This work supports the delivery of our requirements under the Decent Homes Standard, HHSRS and the Homes Standard
- We comply with relevant legislative standards and sector good practice

Designated person for managing this standard:

- Home Agency Manager

Requirements:

- Empty homes are inspected during the Notice to Quit period and within 5 days of notice being received
- Works are ordered and scheduled within 48 hours of the inspection
- In the case of abandonment or death, inspections will be carried out within 48 hours

- If the outgoing tenant does not return keys within 48 hours, locks will be changed immediately to enable the void inspection to be carried out

- Reference to be made to the investment programme, in all cases, to prevent duplication of work/waste

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- Target for void turnaround (i.e. time taken from tenancy termination to new tenancy start date): 20 calendar days or less
- All high cost voids will be subject to a financial and asset viability appraisal
- Every opportunity will be taken to carry out repairs in the most efficient way
- The Lettable standard will be applied accordingly to, ensure that homes are returned in an acceptable standard – See also Home Return Standard
- Recharges will be raised as appropriate
- Consideration will be given to draining down heating and domestic water systems. In inclement weather systems must be drained down
- Flushing intervals of domestic cold and hot water systems must be planned if a property is going to remain empty for any periods of time.
- Consideration should be given to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The Decent Home standard and the Home Standard.
- Fire compartmentation (particularly in flats) should be assessed, any concerns should be passed to the Compliance Stem for further investigation/advice



Task	Specification	When
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where necessary, homes should be fitted with appropriate security screens Risk assessment to be carried out in respect of potential security issues on termination Any recommendation for security screens to be approved by the Homes Agency Manager Security screening will be arranged for removal on the day of letting and any damage resulting made good In certain instances, additional security may be required ie sheds and outhouses - this will be discussed before implementing, with all relevant parties 	As appropriate, as soon as home becomes void
Locks	<p>Master keys/suited locks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Master Series/Suited locks should be replaced with new/recycled locks or cylinders. No additional locks to be fitted on doors with Master suited locks A key safe will be installed at the earliest appropriate time and an access key arranged so that access is available to all needing to visit Houses and bungalows with front and rear entrance doors should have at least one 5 lever mortice or cylinder lock per door All back doors to have a tower bolt (not to be installed to composite doors) No additional locks will be fitted. We will not normally provide a mortice lock where there is not one already present Any additional locks left in place will not be the responsibility of the landlord and this should be identified and recorded 	During void period
Keys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants should be supplied with a minimum of two keys to the front and rear entrance doors, and a minimum of one key to other locks such as windows, sheds, outhouses and garage etc. where available 	When void

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Task	Specification	When
Rubbish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A risk assessment may be required prior to the removal of any rubbish/bodily fluids or other contaminated waste• All rubbish must be removed including any in the roof/loft space, garage, outbuildings, and garden	When void
Items left in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally, a signed disclaimer will be required prior to any previous tenant belongings being removed, with a copy kept on file. Where required, an inventory including photographs will be taken• Two officers should carry out this inventory within 24 hours. The Experience Team will advise on whether items should be disposed of or stored for the statutory period. After this time a decision will be made to dispose. <p>Under no circumstances can officers or tradespeople take possession themselves of any items left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If storage is necessary, items should be removed to store within 48 hours of the inventory being taking. If tenants wish to have the 28-day period extended, they will be required to sign a disclaimer for any potential damage that may occur to their goods and will be recharged for the cost of extending the period of storage for a maximum of 3 months. Collection or disposal must be arranged after this time• A risk assessment should be carried out at the outset to ensure that any rubbish/fluids/sharps are removed in an approved manner <p>Floor coverings and curtains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If these are in good condition and well fitted, they should be left for the new tenant who will be advised that we do not have any future repairing or	When void



Task	Specification	When
	replacement responsibility for them. This must be noted on the void inspection form. If in poor condition or badly fitted, they should be removed. A tenant accepting any items left in the home should sign an agreement accepting full responsibility for replacement/repair	
Pest infestation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any suspected pest infestations should be treated before a full void inspection can be carried out.	When void
Electrical check	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A full electrical check must be carried out and an inspection report produced in accordance with the current IET Wiring RegulationsAny non-standard fittings, which do not comply with the regulations, must be removed. Additional or bespoke electrical fittings will not be provided unless these are required for safety reasonsTesting of existing electrical/battery smoke, carbon monoxide and heat detectors will be carried out. Where these are not installed they will be fitted . All batteries/capacitor to smoke detectors will be changed as requiredLight bulbs (low energy lamps) will be fitted, to cover main entrance, landing (where appropriate), lounge and bathroom	When void
Gas installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any gas cooker left in the premises must be removed. All gas pipes must be capped off when void, bayonet fittings must be removed and gas pipes cappedAn inspection of gas appliances, flues, roof tanks and stands, cylinders and pipe work etc will be undertaken to assess if any repair/renewal or replacement is requiredThe meter will be isolated on the first day of the void by inserting a disc at the meter	When void



Task	Specification	When
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open flue gas fires should be removed and the fire place opening bricked up. An electric fire should be installed as either the main or secondary form of heating as appropriate 	
Gas check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full gas check/service of appliances must be carried out by a GAS SAFE registered engineer on completion of the works. A report detailing the condition of the installation and heating appliances must be provided along with recommendations for essential repair works early in the void process. A Landlord Gas Safety Record (LSGR) must be provided to the incoming tenant at sign up and an electronic copy placed on the system 	When void and before home is let
Heating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there is no heating or solid fuel heating is installed, or where the existing gas/electric system requires renewal, details must be referred to the Compliance Manager/Compliance Specialist who will arrange for appropriate renewal A new heating system should be installed and other void work must continue whilst waiting for heating installation All replacement central heating must be gas where a supply is available (there may be exceptions) On the first day of the tenancy, all gas systems will be commissioned following the uncapping of the supply and the tenant informed how the system controls operate 	When void Day tenant moves in
Drain down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and heating systems should be drained down when the property is vacant for extended periods during cold weather. Refer to void procedures for further information The water and heating systems will need to be re-commissioned on the day of occupation 	When void



Task	Specification	When
Water services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out a full inspection of all internal water services and storage tanks. The hot water cylinder and any pipework in loft spaces or likely to freeze must be adequately insulated• Arrangements will be made by the Surveyor (voids and lettings) to ensure that the flushing of water systems is carried out during the void period to prevent the potential for Legionella• Asbestos tanks in use must be referred to the Compliance Manager immediately, who will advise on their removal in accordance with the Asbestos policy	When void
Sanitary ware	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All sanitary ware, including toilet seats, must be cleaned and in good condition. Replacement should be carried out where damage warrants this. Traps and wastes should be clear and cistern flushes working efficiently. WC will be left with a fresh smelling cleaning fluid in the bottom of the bowl• Enameling repairs should be considered to baths where necessary rather than replacement• Should full bathroom replacement be required, the Red Kite standard must be adopted and authorisation provided by the Homes Agency Manager• All taps should be free of leaks, easy to turn, marked hot and cold and all sinks should be supplied with a plug and chain• Baths, sinks, showers etc fitted by the tenant should not be removed unless they are in very poor condition, poor working order, or do not comply with regulations (e.g. electrical requirements for showers)	When void
Kitchen units and worktops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All units must be serviceable and wipe clean. Hinges, drawers and doors must be in proper working order. The number of cupboards supplied should meet the original specification. Worktops should be easily cleanable, secure and in an	When void

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Task	Specification	When
	<p>acceptable condition. The design of the kitchen/layout and relationship to facilities should aid the safe preparation of food and comply with HHSRS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New units should be supplied only where existing fittings cannot reach a suitable standard for a reasonable cost. Should full kitchen replacement be required, the Red Kite standard must be adopted. Authorisation for this work should be provided by the Homes Agency Manager• Where a new kitchen is required, the fitting of the kitchen will be installed during the main works, however if this work will delay the letting of the void consideration should be given to installing after the tenant has moved in to provide a choice of style and colour of units and to allow the tenant input in respect of the layout. Units fitted by tenants should not be removed unless they cannot be repaired at a reasonable cost or fail to meet current regulations	After the property is occupied
Fire doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The renewal of any door to the home (particularly kitchen doors) must be checked to ensure the correct specification of replacement door is used to ensure relevant compliance	When void
Washing machine/dishwashers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is a plumbed washer point e.g. for a washing machine or dishwasher, supplies and drainage must be temporarily capped off	When void
Sure Stop points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All kitchens will have a sure stop stopcock fitted to the cold water incoming supply, to provide a quick and easy means of isolating the water supply	When void
Cooker points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one cooker point must be provided. Where this is gas, it must remain capped. No additional or alternative cooker points should be supplied	When void
Ceiling tiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any polystyrene ceiling tiles and coving should be removed and the ceiling/walls made good for redecoration	When void



Floors

Kitchen

- **The floor should be covered with an impervious finish using either vinyl tiles or a vinyl sheet**
- **Any missing or cracked/damaged/loose tiles should be re-fixed or if necessary replaced with as close a colour match as possible. If perimeter tiling is required, consider using a contrasting colour if existing cannot be matched**
- **If ceramic tiles have been laid, there is a need to risk assess for potential slip hazard**

When void

Other rooms

- **Broken or loose perimeter tiles where carpets are likely to be fitted should be removed and replaced with a latex screed**
- **Carpets/laminate flooring should be left in situ if in good condition (see section on items left in the home) Loose or damaged floorboards should be re-fixed or replaced as necessary**
- **All redundant carpet grippers and nails should be removed**
- **If retiling a whole floor, or replacement of a whole wooden floor in any room is required, Homes Agency Manager approval is required**

Hand rails

- **All staircases should have a banister rail securely fitted to newel posts with vertical balustrades at no more than 100mm centers, any removed balustrading MUST be replaced.**
- **Missing rails, spindles and newel posts should be replaced**
- **All staircases should be fitted with an appropriate handrail on one side of the stairway**
- **Any hand rails/grab rails should be secure and safe and left in situ**

When void

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Stairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All nosings to treads should be sound, with no trip hazards or excessive wear• All redundant carpet grippers and nails should be removed from staircase where appropriate• Particular attention should be taken when inspecting staircases to ensure they are structurally safe and sound	When void
Decorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally, redecoration should not be carried out. The use of decorations vouchers should be considered on a limited basis. Rooms suffering from decorative damage should be stripped/made good and left ready for redecoration by the incoming tenant• Decoration may be required in exceptional circumstances such as excessively poor conditions or where graffiti or mould is present etc. In such situations all decoration should be kept to a minimum• Sheltered homes or homes designated for the elderly or disabled will be considered for decoration as appropriate• Polystyrene ceiling tiles and coving must be removed	When void
Ceramic/glazed tiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All tiled areas should be cleaned. Any loose tiles should be re-fixed. Cracked tiles should be replaced in as near a colour as possible to the existing	When void
Walls /ceiling (including textured coatings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All wall and ceiling coatings will be left free from damage and in good order. Where required damaged wall paper will be stripped and surfaces made good and left ready to receive decoration• All walls and ceilings should be free of excessive cracking or holes. Plaster should be checked to establish if it has blown etc. Any evidence of damp or condensation should be investigated and remedied• Textured coatings will be tested (if management survey information is not available) and dealt with in accordance with the requirements set out in the	When void



Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Internal procedures must be followed to ensure the safe repair/removal of this material

- Curtain hooks rails and other fittings that may be of use to the new tenant, should be left in situ provided they are in good condition and no health and safety implications are apparent

Doors

- All external doors and frames will be free of any rot or decay and hung correctly to allow easy opening and closure When void
- Any glazing will be in good condition and, if necessary, renewed to current British standards
- External doors will have a cylinder lock and/or a five-lever mortise lock with a minimum of two keys for each. All Master Series/Suited locks should be replaced with new/recycled locks or cylinders, as they are used in vulnerable homes e.g. Sheltered
- Side or rear doors will be fitted with a deadlock and/or barrel bolt or, where a composite door has been fitted, it will comply with British standard locks
- Where the home is a flat that opens out onto an internal communal corridor, it will be fitted with a FD30 certified fire-resistant door
- Any external replacement doors will normally be reinstated with composite type componets

Windows

- Hinges, fixings and catches should be in place, and in good working order and free from distortion When void
- Windows should be easy to close and eased and adjusted where necessary, windows above first floor should have opening restrictors installed where appropriate.
- Cracked panes and failed sealed units should be replaced



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there are window locks, a minimum of one key should be supplied to the new tenant. Frames must not be replaced or upgraded unless approved by the Homes Agency Manager 	
<p>Smoke / Heat / CO Detectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire detection in homes should meet LD2 requirements wherever possible. Generally this will mean installing smoke detection to the hallway, upstairs landing and living room and a heat detector in the kitchen. All will be mains fed, wired from the lighting circuit and provided with a 10 year lithium battery. All detectors will be interlinked and tamperproof Batteries and capacitors will be tested and renewed as necessary Battery operated CO detectors will be installed in all homes. Detectors will be located according to layout and positioning of gas appliances etc 	<p>When void</p>
<p>Tenant's own improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All detectors should be checked to ensure they meet relevant regulations and are installed to a good standard Any electrical fittings must be checked as part of the electrical check. Ceiling fans, which interfere with the airflow of open flued gas appliances, whether the fan is in working order or not will be removed. Note - Any open flued gas appliance should be removed. Any structural alterations undertaken should not affect the structural integrity of the building. Any missing supporting element or support to the structure must be properly assessed. If checks prove satisfactory, the improvement should be left in situ. If the improvement is not satisfactory, it should be removed and the outgoing tenant recharged for the work Any items allowed to remain become the Landlord's responsibility in terms of repair and maintenance Outgoing tenants may have the right to claim reimbursement for certain improvements they have made. If the work does not meet the relevant 	<p>When void</p> <p>At sign up stage</p>



	<p>standards required or are of a poor quality and they need to be removed the costs will be reclaimed from the tenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incoming tenants must be advised at sign up if the property has fixtures and fittings installed by a previous tenant that are non-standard, so that if replacement is required they are informed that like for like replacement may not be possible	
Aids and adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All adaptations are to be noted on the survey form and Letting Officers informed at the earliest point• These should be left in situ and relevant checks carried out• If baths have been removed and replaced by showers, baths must not be reinstated. The incoming tenant will be required to accept the property as it is• Every effort will be made to match the home to an applicant with needs that reflect alterations made• Where stair lifts are installed, every effort should be made to let the home to a tenant with specific need for this equipment to prevent removal. If this is not possible the stair lift will need to be removed	When void
Washing line posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loose posts should be removed. New posts should not be fitted. Tenants will be required to supply their own drying facilities• Facilities may be supplied for elderly or disabled people as required	When void
External building envelope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roofs, rainwater goods and drainage pipes should be free from defects• Pointing and render finish to walls must be in sound condition and windows and doors in good functional condition	
Footpaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The condition must be noted on the void inspection form• Front footpaths will be repaired, rear paths that run into the garden that are in a poor condition will be removed and replaced with levelled soil. Generally, front access paths to the home, and paths around the perimeter of the house up to	When void

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Fences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1m wide should be repaired and maintained. The area around the rear access door should also be repaired where necessaryOther uneven or loose paths should be removed and replaced with levelled soilFences should be securely fixed and in reasonable repair. Work on fences should be kept to a minimum but where necessary may be replaced. Large scale fence replacement should be authorised by the Homes Agency ManagerIf replacement of part of the fence is required, the fence supplied should match the existingGenerally fencing between gardens will be 1m high chain link, chestnut paling or 3 strand wire and posts	After tenant has occupied the home
Gates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gates must be securely fixed, operable and in good repair. If they cannot be repaired at a reasonable cost, they should be replaced	After tenant has occupied the home
Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All rubbish should be removed following a risk assessmentBrambles and excessive foliage will be cleared but the garden will not be landscapedTemporary or other structures, including sheds, garages and greenhouses erected by the tenant should be removedPonds should be emptied of contents and backfilled and topped with soil unless environmental issues prevent this, alternative measures will be consideredAreas of hard standing including patio areas where these are in poor condition should be removed and replaced with leveled soil	When void
Garages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Should be free from rubbish etc. Doors should be operable and secure. One key should be availableThe roof should be free of leaks and damage	When void



Asbestos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electrical supplies fitted by tenants should be checked and removed if regulations are not met. Tenants should be recharged accordingly.• The appropriate process must be followed before starting any works. All asbestos management information will be provided to the contractor before the works commence. Where necessary additional information such as R&D surveys will be sought	When void/during notice period
Vandalism or damage by outgoing tenant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The outgoing tenant must be charged for any repairs or work that is not caused by fair wear and tear. This includes paying for any fixtures or fittings missing, paying for any damage, removal of rubbish or other items left in the home and paying to remove and make good any defective or poor quality alterations made particularly where they do not meet appropriate regulations	When void
Cleaning or valeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All homes must be in a clean condition on completion of void works• Work to be done will include sweeping, washing and disinfecting floors, washing down all surfaces including window ledges and surrounds, skirting boards, doors and light switches removing dust, rubbish cob webs, etc; disinfecting sanitary appliances and leaving air fresheners in place; washing sinks and worktops, cleaning kitchen units inside and out, washing down ceramic tiles, cleaning glazing	When void
Photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where tenants are to be recharged, or items disposed of as rubbish or stored, photographs must be taken to provide supporting evidence	When void
Thermal insulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The level of thermal loft insulation must be noted on the void inspection form. If this is less than 100mm, this will be brought to the current standard of 270mm	When void



Inventory of items taken to store

Name of tenant		Inventory taken by (must be two officers)	1) 2)
Address		Address of store	
Date of inventory		Name of contractor taking items to store (e.g. XXXX)	
Date taken into store		Name or contractor's tradesman/ tradesmen	

Items taken into store			Subsequent removal from store			
Location of item (room/outbuilding etc)	Item	Condition G: good F: fair P: poor/no value	Date removed from store	Removed by (print name)	Signature of person removing item	Signature of Landlord officer present at time item removed from store

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Items taken into store			Subsequent removal from store			
Location of item (room/outbuilding etc)	Item	Condition G: good F: fair P: poor/no value	Date removed from store	Removed by (print name)	Signature of person removing item	Signature of Landlord officer present at time item removed from store

Signature of officers taking inventory **at time inventory taken**

First officer Date

Second officer Date

Signature at time **items removed to store**

Officer's signature Date

Print name

Contractor tradesman

Signature Date

Print name

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