



# Empty Homes Standard

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Version 1

**Approved by:** Executive Team

**Approved date:** 23 May 2017

This document explains the minimum standards you can expect when you move into your new home. Our promise is your new home will be clean, safe, secure and in good repair. Please note some repairs may be carried out after you've moved in.

## Clean

We will:

- Remove any belongings or rubbish left by the previous tenant
- Clean your home thoroughly and ensure your home is pest free.

## Safe

We will:

- Test all gas installations to make sure they're safe and in good working order
- Check the wiring and electric installations and repair any faults
- Give you a copy of your:
  - Gas certificate
  - Electrical certificate
  - Energy performance certificate.
- Check, repair or replace any faulty fire-resistant doors and fire prevention mechanisms
- Fit suitable child-safety catches to all windows above ground floor
- Make sure handrails and banisters are present and securely fixed
- Check all glazing is intact and re-glaze where necessary.

## Secure

We will make sure:

- All external doors and windows throughout your home fit their frames and open and close properly
- Locks are fitted to your external doors and you're given at least two sets of keys

We may leave net curtains for security purposes.

## Inside your home

Your home will have a suitable heating system in the main living areas. And you'll find at least one double plug socket in each room, except the bathroom.

### Kitchen

We will:

- Provide a minimum of a double base and double wall unit, including worktop and stainless steel sink
- Make space for a cooker, fridge and washing machine (where possible).

You will either have an electric cooker panel or a gas cooker connection (both where possible). And if you have an extractor fan, it will be clean and in good working order.

### Bathroom

Your bathroom will have a bath or shower, a wash hand basin and a toilet in good working condition. They will be clean and free from lime scale.

### Wall tiling

We will:

- Replace missing and cracked tiles to match the existing ones as closely as possible
- Provide a cooker space tiled to the same height as the splashback
- Ensure the splashback to the bath will be greater where a shower or hair rinse facility has been installed
- Provide a minimum of a 300mm two course high splash backs to baths, wash hand basins/sinks and worktops
- Ensure all mastic seals are watertight.

### Floors & Flooring

We will:

- Replace any missing or damaged floor tiles in a colour or style to match existing as closely as possible
- We'll secure any loose floorboards and replace any damaged ones
- If we have to replace the entire floor covering in the kitchen or bathroom we'll use a slip resistant floor covering.

Carpets are a tenant's responsibility. In your home, the outgoing tenant has either lifted their carpets for their own use or we have removed them due to their condition. Please refer to your Terms and Conditions of Tenancy.

## Internal Doors

Bathroom and toilet doors will be lockable and we'll fit door closers to your fire doors.

## Plumbing & Drainage

We will:

- Ensure your stopcock is in good working order
- Inspect all pipework for leaks and suitable lagging
- Check and clear any blockages in the waste pipes
- Insulate all hot water cylinders.

## Decorating

Decorating is a Tenant's Responsibility. But as part of our work we'll re-stick small areas of loose wallpaper and strip any large areas of loose paper.

In some circumstances, where some rooms are in poor decorative condition, we may provide some decorating materials or vouchers.

## General

We will:

- Note all signs of structural damage or movement and take the appropriate next steps
- Rake and fill or re-plaster areas of badly cracked or blown plaster
- Remove all polystyrene tiles and adhesive and make good affected surfaces
- Remove all exposed nails and wall plugs, filling any holes and rubbing down surfaces to a smooth finish
- Trace and stop all sources of water penetration and rising damp
- Cover any stains with a stain inhibiting paint.

## Optivo provided white goods

Generally we do not provide white goods. But where we have provided a white good, such as a cooker or fridge, and not gifted it to you, we'll test it's safe to use and repair where necessary.

## Outside your home

We will:

- Fill any gaps or holes in the brickwork
- Check all roofing, guttering, down pipes and gullies for any defects/blockages
- Clear any blocked drains and/or broken manholes
- Leave communal bins and bin stores in a safe and useable condition.

If your new home has a private garden, we will:

- Clear the garden area of any rubbish
- Fill any garden ponds
- Cut back overgrown vegetation
- Remove any trees within an unsafe distance of the property
- Remove any diseased, self-sown/sapling trees and any fast-growing varieties
- Ensure any remaining trees are of a manageable size
- Ensure all paths and paving are sound and free from trip hazards
- Leave boundary walls, fencing and gates in a safe condition.

**Please note that once we've achieved this standard, the upkeep of your garden is your responsibility, including maintenance of the following items:**

- Grassed areas
- Plant/shrub bed
- Trees
- Fencing (unless the fence borders a public highway)
- Patio
- Rear garden path
- Sheds
- Anything within your property's boundary.

Please refer to the Terms and Conditions of your Tenancy.

## Once you've signed / accepted

We will:

- Visit shortly after you move in to see how you're settling in and to ask if there's anything else we can help with
- Arrange any further work we need to do to meet these standards.

## We want you to be happy in your new home

We will make every effort to ensure we meet these standards and that you're happy with the condition of your new home.

If you feel we have not met these standards, or there's something you think we've missed, please contact us.