



## **Lettable Property Standard**

Valid from: 09/05/2017

Valid to: 31/03/2018

Version 9

### **Purpose of the Standard**

1. To help ensure the properties we offer are safe, clean, fit for purpose and legally compliant.
2. To provide clear guidance to staff, contractors and potential tenants about the quality of the homes we offer.

### **Background**

The vast majority of our properties were built in the 1950's and reflect the building methods and materials of the time (although almost all have been refurbished or improved in other ways over the years).

This guidance is intended to help ensure that any properties we acquire or properties becoming available for reletting are brought up to a reasonable standard before they are offered to prospective tenants.

### **The Standard**

We want to ensure that any property we offer to prospective tenants is;

- Safe
- Clean
- Fit for purpose
- Legal

The following provides clarity on what we mean by each of these:

#### **Safe**

Inside the property

- Windows will be in good working order and glazing intact.
- External doors will be secure and in good working order. A new mortice lock will be fitted upon change of tenancy. If an additional deadlock is present and keys have been received this can remain.
- All handrails and banisters will be safe.
- All existing gas, electrical, water systems will be safe and in good working order.
- Kitchen fixtures will be safe and in good working order.
- A fully functioning smoke alarm will be present. The contractor should test this before handing the keys back to EPIC.
- Internal walls and ceilings will be free from major cracks, holes and be in a suitable condition to decorate.
- Internal doors and door furniture will be in good working order.
- Floors will be sound and secure.
- Dwellings will be visibly free from dampness and mould growth.

- Window vents and air bricks will be unobstructed and in good working order.
- Where it appears that components are non-standard or appear doubtful they should be checked by a suitably qualified person and treated in accordance with their recommendations.

#### The external fabric of the property

- The roof will be watertight and free from debris.
- Rain water goods, gutters and gullies will be in good working order.
- The building will be in good structural condition and watertight.
- Drainage systems will be free flowing and in good working order.

#### Outside the property

- Paths, steps and paving will be safe.
- Any existing fences, walls, hedges and gates will be safe.
- The shed allotted to any property should be removed as part of the reletting process.

### **Clean**

#### Inside the property

- The interior and all fitments will be clean.
- The loft space will be free from debris.
- No furniture or belongings of previous occupants will be in the property, unless agreed between the outgoing and the incoming tenants.
- There will be no cobwebs.
- Walls will be free of pins, sellotape or other items.
- All rooms will be deodorised.

#### The external fabric

- Walls will be free from graffiti.
- Where front doors require restaining this may be completed during the void period.

#### Outside the property

- External garden areas will be free of rubbish and hazards.
- Any outbuildings will be clear and free of graffiti.

### **Fit for purpose**

- All fixtures and fitments will be in good working order.
- The heating system is capable of providing a reasonable level of thermal comfort throughout the property.
- If there is an existing gas fire it should be removed, the gas supply safely capped and the opening made good with appropriate chimney ventilation. If a gas fire is removed the radiator to that room should be checked for size and replaced if necessary.

## **Legal**

- All properties offered will have a valid gas safety certificate and energy performance certificate.
- When a property becomes empty we will undertake a thorough health and safety inspection. Any concerns which cannot be addressed through the normal works process will be raised with EPIC's Asset Management Department.
- Prior to letting the previous gas safety certificate inspection should be checked. If the gas safety inspection has less than eight weeks left a new gas safety inspection and certificate should be ordered. If anyone involved in the reletting process has any concerns whatsoever they should raise them with the Asset Manager.

## **Central heating systems**

All systems should be thoroughly inspected and the existing gas safety certificate checked for its expiry date.

Any other replacement systems or components should result from inspections of the condition of the existing system.

## **Electrical systems**

A visual inspection of the electrical system should form a part of the thorough health and safety inspection. All electrical fittings which have paint on the front face should be replaced.

Any existing security light is to be removed and left in a safe manner.

## **Modernisations and major works**

In general modernisations should only be undertaken when a property fails to meet our Lettable Property Standard or contains serious hazards (as defined in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance 2004 - <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/142631.pdf>).

## **Replacement**

A component or feature will be replaced in the following circumstances:

1. It is broken and beyond reasonable repair.
2. It is unfit for its intended purpose.
3. It is likely to have deleterious impact on the environment which outweighs the impact of its replacement.
4. There is a documented legal reason for replacement.

The following items are exceptions to the above statement and are to be completed during the period the property is empty in order to help ensure the property is fit for purpose;

- Redundant airing cupboards are to be removed.
- Where there exists a large open space above the stairs the ceiling is to be lowered.
- A shower will be provided.

## **Customer Involvement**

The standard provides guidance on the minimum standards a property should achieve before being relet. Every effort will be made for prospective tenants to view the property before the repairs to the property have been completed and any additional requests will be considered by the viewing officer.

## **Environmental**

We should minimise waste and look to source components which have been produced in an environmentally responsible manner. New components or materials should outperform their predecessors and achieve excellent environmental performance.

Wherever possible we will look to redeploy components, for example, mixing and matching of internal doors or radiators and we will try to recycle any waste, for example, wood, bricks, metal components.