



CHISEL Home Standards

1. General – Decent Home Standard

As a minimum we expect all CHISEL homes to meet the government's Decent Home Standard. To be classed as a decent home, a home has to pass four tests:

1. It meets the statutory minimum standards for housing, currently defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
2. It is in a reasonable state of repair
3. It has reasonably modern facilities and services
4. It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

More details on the Decent Home Standard can be found on the Communities & Local Government website at: -

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/decenthome>

All CHISEL homes should:-

- Have a properly functioning central heating system with easy to manage controls
- Be free from damp and water penetration
- Have thermal insulation that meets current standards (e.g. 270mm loft insulation).

To keep our homes decent we:-

- Carry out an annual gas safety check and service on all gas boilers and heaters
- Provide a responsive maintenance service that aims to rectify maintenance problems reported to us by tenants between 1 day (emergency) and 90 days (long-term) depending on the urgency of the problem
- Provide a cyclical maintenance service to decorate the external and communal areas of our properties every six years
- Provide a planned maintenance service that ensures that building elements that require renewal are replaced as necessary
- Arrange to inspect the communal external elements of all our properties every three years
- Carry out periodic Fire Risk Assessments of all properties with internal communal areas every 4 years or more frequently depending on the assessed fire risk at the property.
- Carry out a full inspection of our directly managed homes every six years linked to our cyclical decoration cycle
- Carry out electrical safety checks of our directly managed homes every six years.
- Insure our homes for loss or damage due to storm, fire, flood or accident.

2. Tenant responsibilities

As a tenant you are responsible for:-

- Reporting repairs promptly
- Providing us and our contractors access to your home as required
- Internal decorations except to internal communal areas
- Complying with your tenancy agreement, and carrying out minor repairs that are your responsibility as defined in your tenancy agreement
- Repairing damage caused by your neglect or by members of your family, friends and visitors
- Maintaining your garden, including trees, in a reasonable condition unless you pay a service charge for the garden to be maintained by CHISEL
- Seeking our approval if you wish to make any improvements or alterations
- Insuring you own personal fittings, furnishings and belongings.

3. Lettable standard

We inspect all properties that become void and carry out any work that is required before reletting the home to a new tenant so that:-

- All rubbish has been removed and the property is reasonably clean
- Floor coverings left by the previous tenant can be left if in good condition at the discretion of the inspecting officer and housing manager and if the new tenant would like them to remain (The new tenant must be informed that they have been gifted to him/her and will not be replaced)
- All electrical and gas fittings such as fans and boilers have been inspected and tested to ensure that they are safe and working properly
- All electrical sockets, switches and light fittings are undamaged and securely fixed
- Non standard light fittings left by the previous tenant are checked and replaced with standard fittings as necessary at the discretion of the inspecting officer
- Cookers and white goods left by the former tenant can be left in the property for the incoming tenant at the discretion of the inspecting officer and housing manager if the new tenant would like them to remain. (The new tenant must be informed that they have been gifted to him/her and will not be replaced and that CHISEL does not guarantee that they are fit for purpose.)
- There is an extractor fan fitted in kitchens and bathrooms. (The kitchen fan can be an extractor cooker hood)
- Windows and doors open and close satisfactorily and have adequate handles and furniture including window locks to ground floor windows. Window glass should be secure and crack free and failed sealed double glazed units should be replaced.
- Doors meet fire safety requirements
- Smoke detectors are fitted and functioning. (It is the tenant's responsibility to check and replace batteries in battery operated detectors.)
- Central heating systems and controls are working properly and radiators and piping are leak free

- The hot water tank where fitted is leak free and adequately insulated
- Sanitary fittings are clean, leak free, operate effectively and have plugs and handles as necessary; wcs should have seats and baths may have minor scratching but not noticeable chips or cracks
- Taps are clean and operate satisfactorily
- The mains stop cock is working and is labelled
- Waste pipes and drains run freely and are leak free
- Tiles are secure and grouting and mastic is reasonably clean and mould free
- Wall and floors are sound
- Kitchen and bathroom flooring is reasonably clean and tear free
- Kitchen units are reasonably clean and in a serviceable condition with all cupboard doors and drawer fronts securely fitted and opening and closing satisfactorily
- Worktops are reasonably clean and undamaged apart from minor scratches only
- The property is free from damp and water penetration
- Rubbish is removed from any garden and external space
- A garden shed left by the former tenant can be left at the property for the incoming tenant at the discretion of the inspecting officer and housing manager if the new tenant would like it to remain. (The new tenant must be informed that the shed has been gifted to him/her and will not be replaced.)
- Internal decoration will only be carried out if deemed essential by the inspecting officer and as confirmed by the housing manager. The housing manager may offer a decoration allowance to the incoming tenant in line with the limits set out in CHISEL's Maintenance Policy.

Additional Lettable Standards in Shared Housing

When rooms are let in shared housing the following additional items will also be checked and work carried to ensure that:-

- Cookers and white goods provided by the association are fully operational and reasonably clean
- Furniture provided by the association is reasonably clean and in a satisfactory and usable condition
- Floor coverings provided by the association are reasonably clean and a satisfactory and usable condition.

The housing manager has discretion to allow a new tenant to move in to a property if some works remain outstanding provided that these works are not of an essential nature and have been programmed to be carried out once the new tenant has moved in.

The housing manager will check that valid gas safety, energy performance, and electrical test certificates have been completed and supplied.

4. Improvement Standards

To maintain our homes to the decent home standard we will replace:-

- Kitchens every 20 years
- Bathrooms every 30 years but usually every 25 years
- Boilers as required – usually every 15 years.
- Windows as required.

Kitchens

Tenants will be offered a choice* of a minimum of

- 3 ranges of kitchen unit cupboards
- 8 worktops
- 6 floor coverings
- 4 border tiles

** Note: Choice will be restricted for tenants in arrears who are not keeping to an agreed arrears repayment plan in line with CHISEL's Arrears Policy.*

The design of each kitchen will be discussed with the tenant. Provided space permits the following will be fitted:-

Bedsit or one-bedroom home

- ❖ Double base unit with single bowl stainless steel sink and drainer with mixer or pillar taps
- ❖ Double base unit with worktop
- ❖ Double or two single wall units
- ❖ Spaces for a 60 cm cooker, washing machine and fridge with appropriate electrical, gas, cold water and waste water connection points below the worktop
- ❖ Cooker point and two double electrical sockets above the worktop
- ❖ Extractor fan or cooker hood.

Two-bedroom home

- ❖ Double base unit with one and one-half bowl stainless steel sink and drainer with mixer tap
- ❖ One additional double and one additional single base unit with worktop
- ❖ Double or two single wall units
- ❖ Spaces for a 60 cm cooker, washing machine and fridge with appropriate electrical, gas, cold water and waste water connection points below the worktop
- ❖ We will provide space for a dishwasher and appropriate electrical and coldwater feed and waste water below worktop connections if possible and requested by the tenant although this will be at the expense of fitting a base unit
- ❖ Cooker point and three double electrical sockets above the worktop
- ❖ Extractor fan or cooker hood.

Three-bedroom home or larger

- ❖ Double base unit with one and one-half bowl stainless steel sink and drainer with mixer tap
- ❖ Two double base units with worktop
- ❖ Two double wall units
- ❖ Spaces for a 60 cm cooker, washing machine and fridge with appropriate electrical, gas, cold water and waste water connection points below the worktop
- ❖ We will provide space for a dishwasher and appropriate electrical and coldwater feed and waste water below worktop connections if possible and requested by the tenant although this will be at the expense of fitting a base unit
- ❖ Cooker point and three double electrical sockets above the worktop

- ❖ Extractor fan or cooker hood.

Quality standards

- ❖ Minimum 300mm high tiles plus a border tile will be fitted on walls above all sinks and worktops; tiling to be carried down to skirting board level in cooker space.
- ❖ Good quality taps with option of lever handles if tenant prefers or is elderly or disabled
- ❖ Adequate kitchen lighting including low energy worktop/under cupboard lighting
- ❖ Laminate worktop to be 38mm thick and 600mm deep
- ❖ Flooring to be good quality tear resistant vinyl sheet or tiles
- ❖ Kickboards to be fitted below all base units
- ❖ Matching side/end boards to be fitted to each visible base and wall unit side.
- ❖ Isolating valves to be fitted to inflow pipes to all taps.

➤ Like for Like Promise*

If the kitchen being replaced has a greater number of base and wall units than the numbers indicated above we will match the number previously provided as long as the layout and space permits.

➤ Tenant Funded Enhancements*

We will try and incorporate the wishes of tenants who would prefer different taps, sinks, base and wall units, tiles and floor coverings to those supplied by CHISEL provided that:-

- In our opinion the tenant's chosen fittings or fixtures are of a quality at least equal to that which CHISEL would have supplied
- In our opinion the chosen fittings or fixtures will not impose an increased future maintenance liability on CHISEL e.g. if a tenant chooses non standard tiles we would expect the tenant to purchase and store an agreed number of spare tiles for future repairs
- The tenant pays the extra cost of their chosen fittings or fitments and organises their purchase
- The tenant agrees to leave the fittings and fixtures in the property if s/he decides to vacate the property at a future date.

**Note: In line with CHISEL's Arrears Policy, our Like for Like Promise and Tenant Funded Enhancements options are not available for tenants in arrears who are not keeping to an agreed arrears repayment plan.*

Bathrooms

Replacement bathrooms will include:-

- ❖ A bath or shower (occasionally both in larger homes)
- ❖ A wc (occasionally in a separate room)
- ❖ A pedestal basin
- ❖ An extractor fan.

Tenants will be offered a choice* of

- 6 floor coverings
- 4 border tiles

** Note: Choice will be restricted for tenants in arrears who are not keeping to an agreed arrears repayment plan in line with CHISEL's Arrears Policy.*

Quality standards

- ❖ Steel bath
- ❖ Removable bath panel
- ❖ Above basin mirror
- ❖ Above basin light only in bathrooms without natural light
- ❖ Good quality mixer tap to bath with shower attachment and above tap attachment rail (if space permits)
- ❖ Shower rail and curtain (if above tap shower)(The replacement of shower curtains is a tenant responsibility)
- ❖ Shower tray and enclosure (if separate shower)
- ❖ Good quality standard pillar taps to basin
- ❖ Minimum of 300mm high tiled basin splash back, 600mm high tiled splash back around bath, and to above shower curtain/enclosure height extending 900mm down bath side if shower attachment fitted
- ❖ Non slip vinyl sheet or vinyl tile flooring
- ❖ Option of lever handle taps if tenant prefers or is elderly or disabled.
- ❖ Bath to have integral hand rail(s) or separate hand rail to be fitted
- ❖ Isolating valves to be fitted to inflow pipes to all taps and wcs.

Boilers

We will replace boilers over 15 years old where the boiler is located in a kitchen and we are replacing the kitchen. We will otherwise replace boilers when they fail and are uneconomic to repair. All replacement boilers will be energy efficient condensing boilers of a proven and reliable type and make specified by CHISEL (currently either Worcester Bosh or Valiant boilers are usually specified).

Windows and doors

Window and door replacements are linked to our cyclical decoration programme. We will replace windows and doors where in our opinion the existing windows/doors will not have a 6 year life if painted. All replacement windows and any glazing panels in doors will be double-glazed.

When replacing windows we will seek to use window types and styles that respect the character and aesthetics of the property and its location and which ensure coherence in the style of window used in each elevation. Within these constraints we will generally use the most cost effective solution but where there is little difference in price between materials we will use sustainable timber framed windows in preference to UPVC windows for all windows that can be maintained and decorated without the use of scaffolding. For ongoing cost reasons, we will generally use UPVC windows where the location of the windows means that scaffolding is required to redecorate or maintain them.

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