

CORNWALL HOUSING

Cornish Housing Standard

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Notes

The Cornish Housing Standard seeks to set minimum quality standards, guidelines and targets for all of Cornwall Council's social housing stock managed by Cornwall Housing Ltd, both existing and future.

Legal influences on this strategy

All current legislation will be complied with and will be reflected in any updates or amendments

Other documents linked to this strategy

Asset Management Strategy
Voids and Re-lets Policy
Gas Servicing Policy
Responsive Repairs Policy
Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Policy
Affordable Warmth Strategy
Disabled Adaptations Policy
Preferred Materials Specification
Consents and Alterations Policy
Refusals Policy
Looking After our Estates

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2.0 Purpose of this document

This document is intended to help any interested party, including tenants and housing applicants, to understand and interpret the quality standards that have been set in consultation with tenants themselves. It is also designed to aid the planning and monitoring that needs to take place on a continuous basis as part of the asset management of the housing stock.

3.0 Minimum requirements

The Standard will ensure that dwellings are of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents. It is recognised that it will not be economically or practically feasible to bring all existing dwellings up to the standards expected of a modern or newly built dwelling.

Minimum requirements have been specified within the Standard, together with higher aspirations which develop the Standard in greater detail. Each element of the Standard has been categorised as either a primary or secondary element:-

- A primary element is one that impacts on the safety of residents.
- A secondary element is focussed around the comfort of residents

The requirements are not intended to be exhaustive and stakeholders should always consider whether they are satisfied that the best possible solution has been achieved.

The document is designed to be a living document and annual reviews will be held to ensure the latest industry standards are reflected.

The Policy Statement can be found in [Appendix A](#)

4.0 Glossary

ALMO	Arms Length Management Organisation
CHS	Cornish Housing Standard
DHS	Decent Homes Standard
HHSRS	Housing Health & Safety Rating System
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
ASHP	Air Source Heat Pumps
GSHP	Ground Source Heat Pumps
PVCu	Unplasticised Polyvinyl Chloride
WC	Water closet

5.0 The Cornish Housing Standard

5.1 Good state of repair

5.1.1 The Decent Homes Standard (DHS) sets out the basic requirements under criterion B, *Good State of Repair*. This states a dwelling must be structurally stable, free from damp and from disrepair. The key building components must be in good condition. The walls must be in good condition as must the roof structure and coverings. External windows, doors and chimneys must also be in good condition. A home satisfies this criterion unless:-

- one or more key building components are old and in poor condition; or
- two or more non-key building components are old and in poor condition.

A component cannot fail this criterion based on age alone. It must also be in a poor condition that makes replacement or major repairs a requirement. A full list of the component life spans can be found in [Appendix B](#). Two main questions will need to be assessed:-

- Is the dwelling structurally stable and free from disrepair? (Primary)
- Is the dwelling free from damp? (Primary)

5.1.2 Minimum requirements

1a. Stable and free from disrepair.

To determine if dwellings are structurally stable and in a good state of repair, a property's external area will be inspected every 7 years during the external painting programme. In addition to this, an assessment of whether or not the dwelling is in a good state of repair will be determined by using general stock condition surveys. Category 1 hazards will be identified using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). All other building components that have a less immediate impact on the integrity of the dwelling must be in reasonable condition and have reasonable component life remaining. All properties will be inspected prior to being re-let and brought up to the voids standard.

1b. Free from damp.

This is referred to in the HHSRS Operating Guidance as HHSRS Hazard 1. This hazard assessment covers threats to health associated with an increased prevalence of house dust mites and mould or fungal growths resulting from dampness and/or high humidity. The hazard incorporates threats to mental

health and social wellbeing which may be caused by living with the presence of damp, damp staining and/or mould growth

There are many variables to understanding the causes, likely impact and potential hazards relating to dampness, which means that the assessment should be one of professional judgement rather than measurement.

Consideration should be given to the design, condition and state of repair of a dwelling.

The location, extent and duration of any dampness identified are important determinants of the effect it may have; populations of mould growth and consequent potential for harm.

Assessments will have to take into consideration tenant lifestyles and whether or not tenants have adequately ventilated their homes or provided adequate heating within the living space. Each dwelling will:-

- be free from penetrating damp;
- have adequate extraction to prevent or reduce the effects of condensation from kitchens and bathrooms; and
- have adequate insulation to prevent condensation forming on outside walls and ceilings.

The Standard

Where damp or condensation is reported or found tenants will be:-

- advised on the cause of the condensation and remedial action required to solve or reduce the outbreak;
- informed if we need to carry out any preventative work

5.1.3 Servicing and inspection

We will be undertaking regular cyclical servicing, testing and other inspection regimes to help maintain the good condition of our homes and their serviceable elements. Our surveyors will be trained to identify and propose remedial works in relation to dampness in buildings.

The Standard

1. Gas boilers and appliances will be inspected every 12 months and a LGSR landlord's gas safety record issued to the tenant by an appropriately qualified person at least annually and as required by law. This is in accordance with the Gas Servicing policy.

2. Solid fuel systems will be serviced and the flue swept upon completion, as per policy with the appropriate certificate issued by a suitably qualified person at least annually
3. Oil fired boilers and other appliances e.g. ground or air source pumps will be serviced by an appropriately qualified person annually.
4. Dwellings will be inspected for external defects every 7 years during the external painting programme and repair work will be carried out before decoration.
5. Electrical installations will be checked every 10, although we are moving to testing every 5 years
6. Fixed smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors will be checked and cleaned annually. Units and / or lithium batteries will be replaced in line with manufacturers' guidance.
7. Other areas that may require regular service and maintenance would include:
Radon measures, Positive Pressure Units, Unvented Hot Water Cylinders
8. Properties will be checked for Category 1 hazards during stock condition surveys or before re-letting
9. Asbestos surveys will be carried out prior to refurbishment in accordance with our asbestos policy
10. Day-to-day reported repairs will be carried out in accordance with our Responsive Repairs policy.

5.1.4 HMOs

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) or Category 2 properties will be covered by additional legislation. The main categories of HMOs include:-

- conversion of dwellings into bedsits;
- shared houses and flats;
- flats with common areas;
- hostels and some bed and breakfast accommodation;
- halls of residence and residential accommodation for staff; and
- conversions of houses into self-contained flats.

Regulations relating to HMOs are:-

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 or current if amended

Landlords must consider escape plans, fire notices and routine maintenance of fire precautions. They will need to keep records and may be asked to produce them to demonstrate that they are complying with the Order

- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

This system is a risk assessment of all the main hazards one may expect in a dwelling, replacing the Fitness Standard for Human Habitation.

- Smoke Free Legislation

Common areas must be kept free of smoke, including entrance lobbies, stairwells, lifts, corridors plus shared kitchens, living rooms and bathrooms (where these are shared by more than one household).

- Housing Act 2004 Pt 1 and HHSRS or current

All landlords providing rented accommodation will have responsibilities to ensure that the risks regarding Legionella are properly controlled.

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended or current

Access to public areas of buildings such as communal areas and community rooms will be made possible for all.

The Standard

We will carry out servicing to our HMOs: to communal heating systems and appliances and to fire alarms and equipment kept in communal areas. These properties will also have programmed inspection regimes such as:-

1. inspections for fire escapes and fire prevention;
2. inspections for Disability Discrimination Act compliance;
3. Legionella testing where water storage facilities are present;
4. inspections for general tidiness of common areas; and
5. Servicing of alarms and door entry systems, where applicable

5.2 Safe and secure

Safe and secure homes are provided through good asset management and inspection regimes. We will also ensure that our work is delivered safely in the home and aim to ensure that our tenants' particular requirements are complied with.

An inadequate level of security increases the fear of crime and makes people feel insecure in their own dwellings. All dwellings must provide tenants with a reasonable level of physical security and we will take every opportunity to improve the physical security through the provision of locks and other hardware.

The Standard

- Wherever possible we will work with tenants to introduce security improvements as part of our maintenance service. The dwelling must have a reasonable level of physical security.
- Implementing replacement programmes we will replace windows and doors with items that are 'Secured by Design' or of an equivalent standard.
- All opportunities must be taken before letting properties to make gardens safe and suitable for young children to play in, easy to maintain and reasonably private.
- The gas, solid fuel or oil service and safety inspection certificates must be current. All heating installations and appliances must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least annually and as required by law.
- Electrical lighting and power installations must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least every 10 years as a minimum standard, although we are moving to a 5 yearly testing programme
- Every opportunity must be taken to ensure sufficient smoke alarms and heat detectors are provided; where these are mains operated, they will be serviced annually
- Kitchens should have an adequate work surface for safe and convenient food preparation and adequate electrical sockets close to the main food preparation worktop

5.3 Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated

5.3.1 Heating and efficiency

The Standard

All dwellings must be capable of being adequately heated at an affordable cost to tenants. Dwellings with inadequate heating cause discomfort and can pose a health risk. This is not always an easy area to assess due to varying tenant incomes and constantly rising fuel prices. Whether the dwelling can be adequately heated depends on the cost of providing the heat required and the ability of the resident to afford it. A strategic priority of the Government is to reduce fuel poverty, - we have developed an Affordable Warmth Strategy which will be our strategy to tackle fuel poverty

5.3.2 Fuel poverty

In the UK, people can be defined as being in fuel poverty if their fuel bills are more than 10% of their household expenditure. And with the average fuel bill approximately £1,250 this means people with annual incomes of less than £12,500 fall into this bracket.

Meeting the cost of heating bills can be difficult for many tenants. At Cornwall Housing, we will do what is deemed reasonable to minimise the cost of heating dwellings to a comfortable level.

Minimum requirements

A home provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort if it has an efficient heating system in place (such as gas or oil heating, electric storage heaters, warm air heaters etc.) and an effective level of insulation (such as in the cavity wall or loft). If a dwelling does not meet the criteria above, then it would fail to meet the Decent Homes standard, which would be deemed as the minimum acceptable standard.

5.3.3 Thermal comfort

A home has a reasonable degree of thermal comfort if it has both efficient heating and effective insulation.

Gas central heating, modern electric storage heaters and air source heat pumps are efficient forms of heating as long as they cover all the rooms in your home.

For your home to have effective insulation it should have sufficient wall insulation (if applicable) and loft insulation at least 200mm thick.

Any other form of heating, such as ceiling heating and open fires and oil boilers shall be replaced within a planned programme or when it is not possible or viable to maintain the appliance

Where fireplaces have been blocked and roofing works are being undertaken to the property, we will remove any redundant chimneys so that they are below the apex of the roofline.

The Standard

- When a boiler is changed, a new energy efficient unit will be fitted along with thermostatic radiator valves (where these are not already fitted).
- Any hot water cylinder must be effectively insulated. A factory foam jacket would be considered adequate. Existing un-lagged hot water tanks should have a jacket fitted.
- Whenever a loft is 'topped up' this will be carried out to ensure at least 200mm thickness of insulation
- All pipes and tanks in the roof space should be lagged. 20-25mm is the minimum thickness of pipe insulation that should be used

Our approach to fuel poverty, including the capability to adequately heat a dwelling, is fully addressed at a strategic level within our Affordable Warmth Strategy.

5.3.4 Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

From October 1st 2008, it became necessary when marketing a property for rent, to be able to provide the prospective tenant with an EPC. The EPC provides tenants with information about how energy efficient a property is. The certificate provides a rating between A to G where A is very efficient and G is very inefficient.

The rating is based on factors such as age, property layout, construction, heating, lighting and insulation. The certificate provides information about how much it is likely to cost the tenant to run the property. With this information, the tenant can then determine if the property is affordable for them to heat. The certificate lasts for 10 years.

The certificate also shows recommendations to improve the energy efficiency of the property; however, the landlord is not obligated to carry out that work, however our minimum requirement will be level E by 2020, level D by 2025 and level C by 2030.

5.4 Up-to-date facilities

5.4.1 The Decent Homes Standard sets out the minimum requirements to ensure facilities are up-to-date. Homes which fail to meet this standard are those which do not have three or more of the following:-

- a kitchen which is 20 years old or less;

- a kitchen with adequate space and layout;
- a bathroom which is 30 years old or less;
- an appropriately located bathroom and WC;
- adequate external noise insulation (where noise is a problem); and
- adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats.

5.4.2 Kitchens

We recognise that a kitchen should be less than 20 years old and reasonably modern. However in the interests of best value, we also believe that a kitchen may not need replacing when it is older if it is free from deficiencies, is in good condition and is of reasonable design and layout suitable for the property type. During the production of the Standard, tenants have chosen to improve upon this standard and have set out the requirements that follow below in addition to the minimum standard.

A kitchen will be installed complete with units, worktop, wall tiles, electrics, floor coverings, extractor fans and redecoration and will have adequate smoke and / or heat detection. The tenant will have a choice of kitchen units, worktops, floor covering, paint colour and tiles, as well as having an influence over the layout design process. During the kitchen upgrade and design process, kitchen facilities should be:-

1. Free from Category 1 hazards such as cookers installed adjacent to doorways or electrical sockets close to sinks;
2. located in a designed room or area, laid out so as to make easy the safe and hygienic preparation and cooking of food;
3. laid out so that they are easy to use, provide space for the equipment and provide storage;
4. able to provide an unbroken sequence of worktop, cooker and sink space, with adequate electrical sockets and space for modern day appliances where existing kitchen size allows;
5. laid with an even, easily cleanable floor and furnished with worktops which have cleanable, impervious surfaces. Flooring will be replaced with non-slip flooring where tenants existing flooring has to be removed to facilitate the installation of a new kitchen;
6. fitted with seals between the sink, drainer or worktop and the adjacent wall surface;
7. fitted with at least 2 (and where space allows, 3) rows of tiles above worktops; and
8. provided with adequate lighting, appropriate ventilation and with an extractor fan fitted where practical.

HHSRS recognizes that deficiencies with space and crowding can increase the risks associated with a number of other hazards. Small kitchens also increase the risk of accidents. Where necessary, we will remove existing block pantries to improve the size and wall space of new kitchen layouts.

5.4.3 WCs and bathrooms

We recognise that a bathroom should be less than 30 years old and reasonably modern. However in the interests of best value, we also believe that a bathroom's sanitary ware may not need replacing when it is older if it is free from deficiencies, is in good condition and is of reasonable design and layout, suitable for the property type. The minimum requirements set out for existing bathrooms are the same for replacement and new bathrooms, which should be designed in accordance with the guidance set out below. This element is dealt with by HHSRS Hazard 17. Guidance here is given to highlight key points for consideration and to illustrate the relationship between size, layout, design and clean ability.

A bathroom will be installed complete with sanitary ware, wall tiles, floor coverings (where a tenant's existing floor covering has to be removed to facilitate bathroom renewal), extractor fan and redecoration (with wall and floor colours of the tenant's choice) and where practical, an over bath shower will be fitted.

Space and layout

1. There should be a sufficient number of baths or showers and wash hand basins for the tenant use.
2. Houses for eight or more people should have a second WC with a wash hand basin, and a second bathroom or shower room where this can be facilitated.
3. Bathrooms should not be more than one storey away from the bedrooms.
4. In dwellings with more than one bedroom, it should be possible to reach the bathroom without passing through a bedroom.
5. The WC should be provided with natural or artificial ventilation and light. Further, the bathroom or separate WC compartment should not open directly and immediately onto a space intended for the storage or preparation of food.
6. The washbasin should be located in or near the room containing the WC.
7. We are proactively fitting level access / wet floor showers where we have ground floor flats within older persons accommodation or where this would be considered of practical benefit to the current tenants due to disability (in particular, bungalows with suitable access).

Clean ability

Where there are deficiencies with the bathroom and WC facilities themselves, this clearly can increase the risk of hazard. In terms of clean ability:-

1. Water closet basins should have a smooth and impervious surface (such as vitreous china) and be able to be cleaned easily.
2. Internal surfaces of the sinks and baths should be smooth, impervious, and capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition. Cracks, chips or other damage to the internal surface may prevent thorough cleansing and therefore may mean that a unit needs to be replaced.
3. Wall, ceiling and any supplied floor surfaces must be cleanable.
4. Adequate ventilation must be installed to prevent condensation causing a build up of mould.

More information about kitchens and bathrooms is available in our Planned and Cyclical Maintenance policy

5.5 Fire prevention

5.5.1 Smoke Detectors Act 1991 or current

This Act requires that all new houses that have been built since 1992 must have a smoke detector installed; minimum requirement being one smoke alarm on each level of the building. This law is not retrospective meaning it does not apply to older properties.

CHL have decided that all of our homes will have a smoke detector fitted, and that this should be mains operated.

Dwellings should have easily accessible escape routes by having routes from the rooms used for sleeping to an external door which may be via a landing and staircase to a front door, back door or fire escape. Rooms used for sleeping which cannot normally be exited except by passing through another room should be capable of providing an alternative means of escape as agreed with a Fire Officer.

The Standard

1. Every property will be fitted with mains operated smoke detectors
2. All void properties will be fitted with hard wired linked smoke detectors.

3. All properties with communal areas will have up-to-date Fire Risk Assessments carried out as per Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 or current applicable.
4. Where required by law the dwelling should have an external fire escape that is regularly inspected and maintained.
5. Dwellings should not have windows fitted with window locks with an automatic locking action in rooms used for sleeping.

5.5.2 Fire Safety in HMOs or Category 2 schemes

Fire safety within the home is an extremely important issue, especially in mixed use premises and where unrelated occupiers who live independently from one another, share common areas of the same building. As a Landlord of HMOs, we must ensure that there is adequate fire safety in these types of accommodation

This area of law is covered by both the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005 or current. Each of these properties requires Fire Risk Assessments to be carried out and reviewed each year.

5.6 Estates and environmental work

Areas covered in this section include:-

- Estate inspections
- Grounds maintenance
- Trees
- Communal cleaning
- Refuse collection including bulky refuse
- Fly-tipping
- Recycling
- Abandoned vehicles
- Dogs
- Pest control

5.6.1 Our commitment and aims

We aim to provide a high quality and responsive estate cleaning and grounds maintenance service. The main aim of estate improvements is to reflect the objectives and priorities of our Landlord Services. Outside of the programmed

estate visits, Housing Officers are always out and about and will report any defects found.

5.6.2 Estate inspections

Estate services such as cleaning, grounds maintenance and the repair of common parts of buildings affect tenants' enjoyment of their homes and the areas in which they live. Some tenants and leaseholders are already involved in monitoring cleaning and grass cutting services. Estate inspections go a step further by offering tenant and leaseholder representatives an opportunity to inspect areas on housing estates with our staff.

5.6.3 Estate improvements

Each year, we make budgets available to fund small scale housing estate improvements. Both tenants and leaseholders are encouraged to make any suggestions for works which may help to improve the appearance of housing land around their homes.

An estate improvement refers to an improving alteration to, or installation of, fencing, paving and the cleaning of moss, parking or lighting facilities, estate cleanliness, hedge and tree cultivation, graffiti cleaning and can even include identifying breaches of tenancy and major improvements within our estates.

5.6.4 Communal cleaning

Cleaning of communal areas within certain communal blocks of flats is carried out by our contractors currently Cormac. All of the cleaning of communal areas is subject to a service charge to those living within the blocks.

5.6.5 Grounds maintenance

The grounds maintenance of most of our estates is carried out by CORMAC as well as a selection of contractors. We will only maintain communal housing land under our management.

Grassed areas are cut and maintained to an agreed height throughout the growing season between March and November.

Any litter will be picked up prior to the grass being cut and the grass clippings will be blown off paths and hard surfaces. We do not pay for grass clippings to be picked up. Plant management of shrub beds is also carried out. Communal

hedges will be maintained throughout the year but mainly during the winter months to avoid peak nesting seasons.

Where an amenity is shared by the community as a whole, Cornwall Council must have regard to paragraph 3 of Part 3 of Schedule 4 to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 or current applicable. This requires a contribution to be made from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account, reflecting the general community's share of the amenity

5.7 Specific household requirements

The Standard

The accommodation provided within the dwelling should, as far as possible, suit the needs of the household.

The dwelling should provide sufficient space for everyday living and bedrooms should be appropriate for the number of householders.

Dwellings should have rooms that can accommodate sufficient furniture and circulation space to meet tenant needs. Circulation space should not be reduced to the point where rooms are cramped or inconvenient. A lack of storage can impede upon the actual space dwellings provide for everyday living.

Where existing dwellings are intended for tenants with specific needs, wherever possible they should be improved so that the layout of the dwelling reflects current good practice. All necessary aids and adaptations to meet the specific requirements of any tenant, including those with disabilities, should be provided.

The quality of housing provided by our house design is related to household numbers. It is intended that amenities such as bathroom and kitchen facilities complement the intended number of householders.

The dwelling should have the necessary physical adaptations to suit any professionally assessed requirements of tenants. We will therefore consider the particular requirements of individuals and/or groups and where an existing dwelling falls short of their needs, look at possible remedies. Similarly, accessibility issues should be addressed when considering the allocation of dwellings to be occupied by those with mobility impairment.

More information about disabled adaptations and aids is available in our current policy

6.0 Milestones

In setting milestones, we will have to plan and integrate various policies and strategies for responsive repairs and planned maintenance, improvements for estates, advances in energy efficiency, void management and re-let works. The outcome of this process will determine the corporate targets and objectives arising from the Standard, which will be a key factor in our business planning process. This will lead to the development of an improvement programme that takes into account the views of our tenants and other customers. It will also help us to set priorities on the basis of tackling first those properties which are most in need of improvement.

The Standard will be reviewed annually by analysing information provided by officers and using it to plan the management of their property assets. This is a standard and important part of our business and financial planning

7.0 Integral Appendices

Appendix A: Policy statement

The Cornish Housing Standard Policy Statement

At Cornwall Housing, we undertake a significant programme of repairs and maintenance to homes we manage every year. One key objective of this work is to maintain the Government's Decent Homes Standard (DHS). According to the DHS, a 'Decent Home' must meet the following four criteria which state that a home must have:-

- A. Achieved current statutory minimum standards for Housing (HHSRS).
- B. A reasonable state of repair.
- C. Reasonably modern facilities and services.
- D. A reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Government stresses that the DHS is the minimum that is to be attained and also that landlords' delivery plans should be sustainable.

We believe our tenants deserve a higher standard than 'Decent Homes' and we aim to deliver a Cornish Housing Standard over and above the DHS. We seek to achieve the Cornish Housing Standard in every council owned property in Cornwall, albeit in a sustainable way that continues to deliver excellent value for money.

Our approach to Asset Management, including the important functions of effective planning and delivery, is defined within our Asset Management Strategy.

Our approach to 'fuel poverty', including the capability to adequately heat a dwelling, is addressed within our Affordable Warmth Strategy.

The preferred material types that we will use to deliver our programmes of works are defined within our Preferred Materials Specification.

Any adaptations to your home will be delivered as set out in the our Disabled Adaptations Policy

External areas will be maintained as laid out in the Taking Care of Housing Estates customer pamphlet.

In summary, in the Cornish Housing Standard we make a series of commitments. These include:-

1. Providing a variety of opportunities for tenants to feed into our service standards and to facilitate positive monitoring of compliance with these standard;
2. Consultation with you about any works to be undertaken in your home, including items of choice;
3. Keeping rents within the Government's target range;
4. Provision of an effective responsive repairs service and to standards agreed with tenants;
5. Delivery of an agreed void standard;
6. Undertaking of regular cyclical servicing and testing, to help maintain good condition of heating systems, flues and general serviceable elements;
7. Ensuring all gas, solid fuel or oil heating systems have a current safety certificate which has been issued by a qualified person and a CO detector is fitted;
8. Use of good quality, durable and low maintenance products;
9. Making an external overview (like an MoT test for a car) of all our dwellings on a 7 year cycle to undertake all the external redecoration and repairs required;
10. We will aim to maintain the DHS in accordance with a sustainable programme;
11. Checking that all our dwellings are free of any 'Category 1' (severe) HHSRS hazards as soon as possible after identification or before re-letting;
12. Providing a reasonable level of physical security to all dwellings.
13. Committing that if you have a kitchen, bathroom or heating distribution system that is old or in poor condition, it will be renewed or repaired in accordance with the agreed lifecycle of the element and within a planned works programme;

14. Committing that when we plan internal works, we will consider all works that are required at the same time, helping to avoid repetitive visits and also helping to keep costs down;
15. Undertaking that both internal and external general works programmes will deal with any minor unreported repairs whilst a contractor is on site;
16. Recognising that a kitchen should be less than 20 years old and reasonably modern. However in the interests of best value, we also believe that a kitchen may not need replacing when it is older if it is free from deficiencies, is in good condition and is of reasonable design and layout suitable for the property type;
17. Recognising that a bathroom and facilities should be less than 30 years old and reasonably modern. However to ensure good value for money, we also believe that a bathroom may not need replacing when it is older if it is free from deficiencies and in good condition;
18. Guaranteeing that when renewed, a bathroom will be installed complete with adequate extractor fans, sanitary ware, wall tiles, floor coverings, and redecoration (with a choice around wall and floor colours) and where practical, an over bath shower;
19. Promising that when renewing bathrooms under our planned programme, consideration will be given to your needs, especially as to whether a bath or shower is more suitable if you are disabled;
20. Guaranteeing that when renewed, a kitchen will be installed complete with units, worktop, wall tiles, electrics, floor coverings, redecoration and smoke and / or heat detectors. You will have a choice of kitchen units, worktops, floor coverings, paint colours and tiles, as well as having a hand in the design and layout process;
21. Ensuring new kitchens and bathrooms will be fitted with extractor ventilation where required;
22. Guaranteeing that when renewed, windows will be double glazed to 'Secured by Design' standards or equivalent;
23. Guaranteeing that when renewed, doors will be double glazed composite or PVCu units, to 'Secured by Design' standards or equivalent;

24. Guaranteeing that when a boiler is changed, a new energy efficient unit will be fitted along with thermostatic radiator valves (where these are not already fitted);
25. Ensuring that all dwellings fitted with an immersion heater have an immersion heater thermostat that incorporates an overheat safety cut-out;
26. Fitting at least one mains operated smoke detector with battery back-up, in your home;
27. Installing a hard-wired mains smoke detector in your home's hallway and landing and a heat detector within your kitchen when electrical systems are renewed;
28. Supplying additional electrical sockets where needed when a property is rewired, or within a kitchen when it is renewed, to meet modern living requirements;
29. Installing loft insulation to a depth of not less than 200mm;
30. Filling cavity walls with suitable insulating material where possible;
31. Inspecting all non-traditional stock for structural defects, repairing externally insulation where necessary;
32. Maintaining communal aerial systems;
33. Assessing your requirements in terms of aids and adaptations when planning works and, wherever possible, incorporating these into the works;
34. Providing adequate fire escapes or routes to all properties over three stories, and protecting communal stairways with suitable fire/smoke warning devices and carrying out cyclical inspections of escape routes to ensure they remain clear of obstructions

Appendix B: Component lifespans

Table 1: Component lifespans used in the disrepair criterion

Building components (key components marked *)	Houses and bungalows	All flats in blocks below 6 storeys	All flats in 6 storeys or above
Wall structure*	80	80	80
Lintels*	60	60	60
Brickwork (spalling)*	30	30	30
Wall finish*	60	60	30
Roof structure*	50	30	30
Roof finish*	50	30	30
Chimney*	50	50	N/A
Windows*	40	30	30
External doors*	40	30	30
Kitchen	20	20	20
Bathroom/s	30	30	30
Heating: central heating gas boiler*	15	15	15
Heating: central heating distribution system	40	40	40
Heating: other*	30	30	30
Electrical systems*	30	30	30

Alternative formats

Furvasow Erel

If you would like this information on audio CD, audio tape, Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact:-

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Address

Cornwall Housing Ltd
Chy Trevail
Beacon Technology Park
Bodmin
PL31 2FR

Website

www.cornwallhousing.org.uk