

North Northamptonshire Lettable Standard



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Introduction

North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is committed to providing high quality, safe and well-maintained homes. This Lettable Standard sets out the condition in which council-owned homes will be provided to new tenants. It has been shaped in consultation with tenants and tested by operational teams to ensure it is fit for purpose and consistently deliverable.

The focus of the standard is to provide homes that are safe, clean, secure, and in good repair at the point of letting. This supports our compliance with the **Safety and Quality Standard** and **Tenancy Standard** as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Where non-urgent repairs or external works do not prevent occupation, they may be completed after the tenancy starts (e.g. reglazing where glass is on order). We aim to complete any outstanding works within 28 days.

This Lettable Standard aligns with:

- The **Safety and Quality Standard**, ensuring homes are decent, safe and compliant with statutory requirements;
- The **Tenancy Standard**, by promoting tenancy sustainment and early support;
- The **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard**, by clearly setting out service expectations and encouraging tenant feedback;
- And where applicable, the **Neighbourhood and Community Standard**, by contributing to clean and safe environments through our management of external and communal areas.

This document should be read alongside the **Tenants Handbook** and **Repairs Handbook**, which outline the responsibilities of both tenants and the Council throughout the tenancy.



Safe and Compliant



North Northamptonshire Council will only let homes that meet our statutory health and safety obligations. This supports our duties under the **Safety and Quality Standard**.

This section sets out the different legal requirements.

- A Gas Safety Check will be completed, and a Landlords Gas Safety Record will be given to the incoming tenant at sign up for the property.
- An Electrical Safety Check will be completed.
- An Energy Performance Certificate will be completed and provided at sign up to inform both the Council and the tenant how energy efficient the property is.
- Best practice on water hygiene will be followed when our properties are empty to ensure water is safe and hygienic. This will include running all taps, flushing all systems and draining down any longer terms voids.
- Asbestos will be managed as part of the void process. Where we do not have an up-to-date management report, we will carry out an asbestos survey where applicable, including testing materials in the property.
- Smoke and heat detectors will be clean and fully operational with a hard-wired smoke detector fitted on each floor of the building and one heat sensor in the kitchen.
- Any fire hazards found will be removed.

A surveyor will assess the property and hazards will be removed.



Security



Homes will always be safe and secure prior to letting.

- All external locks will be changed including outhouses and stores
- Minimum 2 sets of keys will be supplied at sign up (We only supply 1 set of keys for sheltered schemes with suited locks). Additional keys may be provided by exception.
- External doors will be secure, watertight, and fully operational
- Doors and windows will be secure
- Windows will open freely
- All handles and restrictors will be operational
- Window keys will be present
- Broken glazed units will be replaced
- Security lights will be supplied and fitted where appropriate for sheltered accommodation



Kitchen



Kitchens will be in good workable condition and hygienically clean prior to letting.

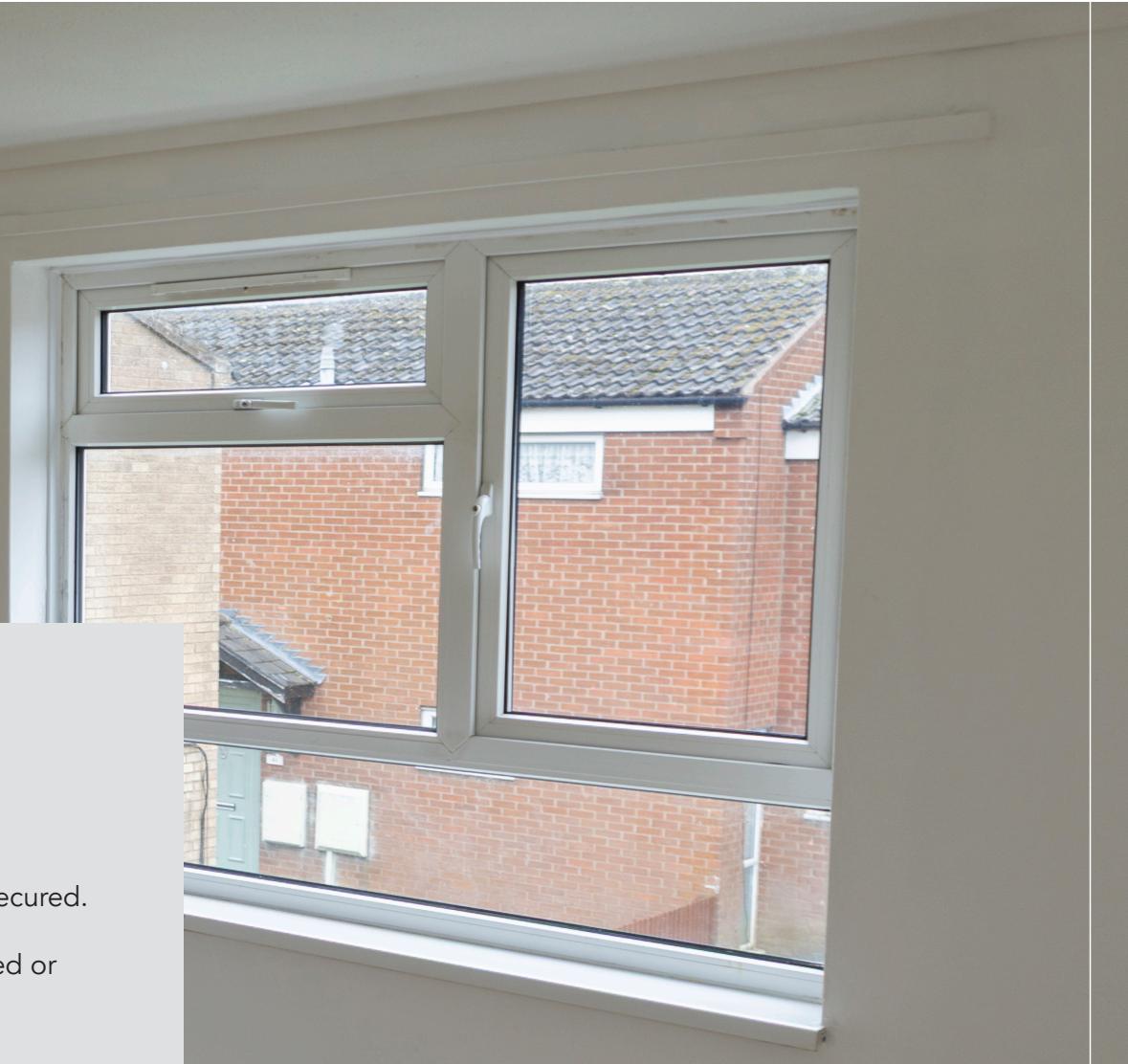
- There will be an appropriate amount of worktop space and units, suitable for the size of the property and for the size and layout of the kitchen.
- All door and drawer units will be adjusted to open and close freely.
- All internal shelves to units will be present and secure.
- The plumbing and stop cock will be effective and accessible.
- Suitable floor covering will be fitted and in good condition.
- Worktops will be clean and hygienic and free from major damage.
- The sink will be clean and free from rust and stains.
- Scratching in stainless steel sinks is acceptable, small dents are passable but unsightly large dents are not.
- Plug and chain will be fitted to sink.
- Taps will operate easily and be labelled hot and cold; taps should be cold right and hot left.
- Where space allows there will be provision to site a fridge, washing machine and cooker. We have a small number of properties that we cannot fit all the appliance spaces within the kitchen area. In these exception circumstances, the tenant will need to make alternative arrangements.
- Appropriate splash backs (tiles, aqua boards, etc.) will be provided behind the sink and cooking area.
- A cold feed and waste pipe will be supplied for a washing machine.
- A gas or electricity point will be supplied for a cooker. On some occasions both will be available, however the Council will not be changing supply to the cooker point.

Bathroom

Bathrooms will be in good workable condition and hygienically clean prior to letting.

- The plumbing will be effective and accessible.
- All toilets will work properly, easy to flush, no cracks, and securely fixed.
- The toilet seat will be renewed, unless it is already in very good condition.
- Any damaged silicone seals will be renewed.
- Plug and chain will be fitted to sink.
- Appropriate tiling or alternative splash back will be fitted to the rear of the basin and bath area.
- Suitable floor covering will be fitted and in good condition
- A hot and cold-water supply will be provided to the wash hand basin, bath, and shower where fitted.
- Taps will operate easily and labelled hot and cold.
- Where a shower is left in situ, appropriate tiling or alternative splashback will be in place.





Homes will be in good condition of general repair prior to being let.

- Walls will be de-nailed, and any holes filled.
- Stair treads will be free of nails, etc.
- Loose floorboards, stair treads, balustrades and risers, handrails will be secured.
- Skirting boards, architrave, internal doors, and windowsills will be replaced or repaired. All carpets grippers will be removed prior to let.



External areas



External areas will be clear of debris and in a manageable condition for the new tenant prior to letting.

- Sheds / outbuildings in unsafe condition will be removed, where in useable condition a shed may be gifted to the new tenant with their consent (not the Council's ongoing responsibility).
- Where necessary, possible and legally allowed hedges and trees will be cut back to a manageable level and all debris cleared away. Grass areas will be striped.
- Dangerous, dead, or diseased trees will be removed as advised by the Council's tree specialist.
- External boundaries, fencing and walls adjacent to the public area (pavement/alleyway) will be installed or replaced where required.
- Where the Council are responsible, internal boundaries will be denoted, and a suitable boundary will be provided where applicable.
- Footpaths (within the boundary) providing essential access and egress to the property will be repaired.

This approach aligns with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, ensuring that communal and external areas are safe, clear, and well-maintained at the point of let.

Decoration

Homes will be prepared ready for decoration for the new tenant prior to letting.

- The property will be prepared for decoration for the incoming tenant.
- All walls and ceilings will be free from cracks, holes, mould and defects and prepared ready for decoration.
- Where there is new plaster, walls will be given a mist coat to help prepare the surface for decorating.
- Where dark paint is left, walls will be given a sufficient coat of emulsion to cover the dark colour to make it easier to paint your colour of choice. Woodwork will receive undercoat.
- Where reasonably practicable, Windows, UPVC frames, sockets and switches will be free from paint.
- Where applicable wallpaper and textured surfaces will be inspected and if heavily damaged, remedial work will be undertaken.





Tenant Responsibilities and Restrictions:

Once a home is let, it becomes the tenant's responsibility to maintain it in a reasonable condition. The Council expects tenants to take ownership of the day-to-day upkeep of their home and behave in a way that protects both the property and the surrounding neighbourhood.

What tenants are responsible for

- **Decorating:** Internal decoration becomes the tenant's responsibility once the tenancy begins. The Council does not provide decorating services after let. In some cases (e.g. hard-to-let properties), decoration vouchers may be offered at the Council's discretion.
- **Fixtures and Fittings:** Any non-standard items left by the previous tenant – such as flooring, garden structures, or shelving – are gifted to the incoming tenant and will not be maintained by the Council. If accepted, they become the tenant's responsibility.
- **Gardens and Outdoor Spaces:** Tenants are responsible for maintaining gardens, grassed areas, hedges, and any outbuildings, unless otherwise specified in the tenancy agreement (e.g. some communal or supported schemes).
- **Repairs Reporting:** Tenants are expected to report any faults or damage in a timely manner. Deliberate damage or neglect may result in a recharge to the tenant.
- **Returning the Property:** When a tenancy ends, the property should be returned in a clean and tidy condition. Damage beyond fair wear and tear, or unauthorised alterations, may result in charges.

What tenants cannot do

- To ensure safety, consistency and compliance, the following are not permitted without prior written consent from the Council:
- Structural alterations – including removing walls, changing room layouts, or permanently altering kitchen or bathroom units.
- Unauthorised flooring – such as laminate in upper-floor flats or over designated fire escape routes, where it may pose safety risks.
- Removal of Council fixtures – including smoke detectors, fire doors, handrails, fitted kitchen units, or energy-efficiency measures.
- External decorating – including painting doors, windows, fences, or brickwork unless formally approved.
- Garden buildings or landscaping – such as installing sheds, patios, ponds, or fencing that alters boundaries or access.
- Running a business from home that causes nuisance, damage or excessive wear on the property (e.g. car repairs or storage of materials).
- Tampering with utilities or communal services – including gas, electricity, water, or shared heating and lighting systems.
- Storing flammable or hazardous materials in or around the property.

This section aligns with the **Tenancy Standard**, reinforcing the mutual responsibilities of the Council and its tenants, and the expectation that tenants will maintain their home in a reasonable condition. Where tenants require support, early contact and signposting are encouraged.



Feedback and Follow-Up

North Northamptonshire Council welcomes feedback from new tenants on the condition of their home at let. This supports our commitments under the **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** by ensuring tenant voice helps shape and improve service delivery.

To support tenants during the early stages of their tenancy, a settlement visit will normally be carried out by a Housing Officer within the first four weeks of moving in. This aligns with the **Tenancy Standard**, which promotes early engagement and tenancy sustainment.

This visit provides an opportunity to:

- Check that the tenant has settled in
- Identify any outstanding repairs or issues
- Offer advice on managing the tenancy and local services
- Signpost to additional support if needed

This visit forms part of our wider approach to tenancy sustainment and early intervention.

For further details about tenant responsibilities, permissions, and Council policies, please refer to the North Northamptonshire Council Tenants Handbook, which provides full guidance and support throughout the tenancy.



Reporting repairs

Emergencies

An emergency repair is needed urgently because it's:

- an immediate danger to the tenant or property
- a potential security or health and safety risk

We will attend an emergency repair within 24 hours and this doesn't need an appointment. A person over 18 years of age must be present.

You should report emergency repairs by calling us so we can help. Out-of-hours emergencies can be reported by calling **0300 126 3000**.

You can also report non-urgent repairs via our website:

www.northnorthants.gov.uk/repairs

Utilities

You should contact the utility company in the event of a gas, electric or water emergency:

Gas leaks: Cadent on **0800 111 999**

Electrical power cut: National Grid on **105**

Total loss of water: Anglian Water on **03457 145 145**





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