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The Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023

Maintaining and improving social housing in Wales

April 2024

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd /
This document is also available in Welsh

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Ministerial Foreword

The turn of the century saw the introduction of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). Welsh Government, together with social landlord delivery partners, have invested billions of pounds to significantly improve and maintain the quality of social homes across Wales over the last two decades. By 2022, all social housing in Wales has met the challenging Standard[1] and social landlords continue to maintain that Standard today.

Spanning six administrations, to date, WHQS is an example of how Governments can take the long view; investing in long term policies and programmes, with long-term funding models, enabling social landlords to confidently invest over the long term in assets and communities. This has resulted in driving up the standard of social housing in Wales compared to housing in other sectors. Everyone accepts that living in a quality home brings benefits to both the physical and mental wellbeing of those who live in them.

The 2020's have already brought rapid and unexpected change with a global pandemic fundamentally shifting how people live, feel about, and what they expect from a home. Social justice and equality issues such as broadband access and flooring provision, building safety and the ability to live safely and securely in homes have become even more paramount; appreciation of our homes is perhaps higher than it has been for a very long time.

Wales led the way in declaring a climate emergency. The 2020's will need to be a decade of decarbonisation for housing, where we learn how to effectively and efficiently upgrade social housing, in ways which reduce carbon emissions, and energy bills for tenants. What is learnt upgrading the 230,000 social homes in Wales, will drive how we as a nation tackle making the 1.2 million privately owned homes net zero carbon. The challenge of retrofitting the existing housing stock is vast. Every single house has a different history; therefore, our mission is to reduce carbon emissions home by home, and street by street.

In 2021, I launched an intentionally bold new-build Standard for new build social rented homes in Wales. It banishes fossil fuelled heating and hot water to history. It demands a 'Fabric First' approach, setting a minimum thermal performance Standard, plus an assessment of overheating risk – which as the planet warms, and more extreme weather events continue to occur will be essential. It is important to ensure our existing social homes mirror where possible, the quality, environmental impact and affordable warmth of newly built ones.

It would be easy to be overwhelmed by the scale of the challenge of upgrading social housing. However, we have done it before, and together we can do it again. We need to be pragmatic, rise to the challenge and make a start – Welsh tenants, their children and grandchildren are counting on us.

[1] Welsh Housing Quality Standard: as at 31 March 2022: Welsh Government Statistical First Release, 10 November 2022 SFR 224/2022

I am therefore delighted to introduce WHQS 2023. This Standard builds on the excellent achievements of its predecessor and will continue to drive up and maintain the quality of social housing in Wales. WHQS 2023 once again raises the bar for social housing and aims to be both bold and achievable. It is deliberately demanding. But I am determined that social housing in Wales becomes a tenure of choice providing modern, low carbon, quality homes which are fit for the 21st century and beyond.

Julie James AS, Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

Preface

QUALITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING IN WALES

Housing is a key priority for Welsh Government

The purpose of this Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is to improve the quality of social homes in Wales. Welsh Government continues to drive up the Standard of existing social housing by setting a demanding Standard which all social landlords in Wales are legally obliged to meet.

It is widely recognised that living in a quality home brings a wide range of benefits to health, learning and prosperity. This supports the Government's desire to improve outcomes in health and wellbeing and educational attainment as well as alleviating poverty and reducing carbon emissions.

Tenants at the heart of WHQS

At its heart, WHQS 2023 is a tenant focused Standard, designed to upgrade social homes in a way that contributes to positive health, education and wellbeing outcomes for tenants. The investment required to enable homes to meet the Standard, also provides a significant opportunity to generate and retain prosperity for local communities, through the creation of jobs, training and apprenticeships in the supply chain. The Welsh Government recognises that to foster pride, belonging and ownership, tenants should be encouraged to take the opportunity to be involved in making any decisions that affect their community and environment.

Whilst WHQS 2023 sets out the minimum quality Standards for existing social homes, Welsh Government encourages social landlords to aim for Standards beyond the minimum requirements specified here. It is expected that social landlords adopt a holistic view of quality, recognising the benefit that quality and culturally suitable homes will have on both physical and mental wellbeing for all. It is expected that all homes should be of high quality, be healthy to live in and meet community, family and individual needs of tenants.

Social landlords are actively encouraged to engage with their tenants to shape their programme of works and to take account of feedback from other tenants' lived experience of retrofits, in order to improve how homes can be efficiently and effectively maintained, upgraded and decarbonised in future.

WHQS 2023 and digital connectivity

Consideration should be given to how landlords can alleviate digital exclusion amongst tenants. Digital connectivity is a social justice matter, with Ministers expecting social landlords to be innovative in maximising the opportunity for individual households and communities to have, where possible equal access to online opportunities.

There can be no doubt that access to fast and reliable broadband is now an essential part of modern life for people across Wales: opening up access to lifelong learning opportunities, helping to tackle social isolation, providing access to public services, enabling working from home and bringing people together to tackle local

and global issues. The pandemic has undoubtedly brought the need for good connectivity into even sharper focus. Landlords can play an important role in supporting tenants to access good digital infrastructure.

Landlords should gain an understanding of the level of fixed broadband connectivity across their estate. This should include the number of their premises that do not have access to any fixed broadband infrastructure and which premises do not have access to at least superfast (at least 30Mbps download speeds) fixed broadband speeds. Access is defined as having fixed network infrastructure (copper cable, fibre cable etc.) in or near the property that enables the tenant to order a broadband service from an internet service provider at a Standard connection charge. Where practicable an assessment should also be made of the ability of the tenant to receive a usable 4G mobile signal. These measures can be achieved either by assessing all of a landlord's premises or basing the results on a representative sample, at least 10 per cent, of properties which are geographically spread across the landlord's estate.

Whilst this work will not be formally assessed, a detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this work is progressing.

WHQS 2023 driving towards a Net Zero Wales

WHQS sets out Standards relating to the decarbonisation of social homes and aims to reduce carbon emissions from the Welsh housing stock. This Standard contributes towards governmental climate change goals expressed through the Net Zero Wales plan published in 2021 and updated in 2022.

In time, it is anticipated that the Standard will apply to other types and tenures of housing, and this will be kept under regular review.

Chapter 1 – Introduction of WHQS 2023

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 (the Standard) sets the target for the condition of all social housing in Wales and is to be implemented from 1st April 2024. The Standard was originally introduced in 2002 and has been successful in raising the quality of social homes in Wales. By 2022, all social housing was reported to have met the 2002 Standard[2]. This level of quality must be maintained and stretched further, taking account of changes and expectations in, and impacts from, the wider world such as climate change and technical advancements in building fabric.

The Welsh Government is committed to bringing all existing social housing up to this new Standard by 2034 (elements in Part 3 may be reached at different times). The expectation is that WHQS 2023 will be reviewed within 3 years. The outcome of this iteration of the Standard will be reviewed and refreshed within ten years. The next review will then take into account the improvement made to the social housing stock from this Standard and the progress required to remain on track to meet 2050 climate obligations.

The Standard sets the requirements that all social housing is updated and kept in good condition so social tenants have the opportunity to live in a home that:

- Is in a good state of repair;
- Is safe and secure;
- Is affordable to heat and has minimal environmental impact;
- Has an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Has an up-to-date bathroom;
- Is comfortable and promotes wellbeing;
- Has a suitable garden; and
- Has an attractive outside space.

A home will meet the Standard when all relevant elements are achieved. It is recognised that some elements of the Standard are not applicable to all homes. It is also recognised that not all homes will be able to achieve some elements for various reasons.

Background and context

The original Standard was introduced in 2002 with revised guidance being issued in 2008. Evaluation of the existing programme and planning for this iteration of the Standard began in 2020 with a programme of engagement with social landlords. A series of workshop and feedback sessions were undertaken to provide a practitioner's view on the Standard and to understand the appetite for change. From this, volunteers for a practitioner's group came forward and this group became part of each stage of evaluation and co-creation of the new Standard.

This landlord focussed engagement was followed by a survey conducted by Welsh Government to assess the attitudes of social housing tenants to the WHQS[3]. The

[2] Welsh Housing Quality Standard: as at 31 March 2022: Welsh Government Statistical First Release, 10 November 2022 SFR 224/2022

[3] Welsh Housing Quality Standard: tenants' survey. Welsh Government, GSR report number 6/2021

findings from both areas of research were fed into an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme[4] which was commissioned by Welsh Government and published in 2021.

The evaluation concluded **'that the WHQS had been effective in achieving its key objective of raising standards of social rented housing'** and **'has benefits for tenants and should be continued into the future…'**

The evaluation identified areas of the Standard that required updating and improving, areas where research and societal changes had changed expectations since the original Standard was launched as well as new areas to include, these are listed below:

- Data collection and reporting;
- Compliance policies;
- Fire and electrical safety;
- Affordable Warmth and Environmental Impact (new elements);
- Flooring (new element);
- Water efficiency (new elements);
- Biodiversity (new element);
- Active travel (new element); and
- Noise nuisance (new element).

Powers

The Welsh Ministers have set the Welsh Housing Quality Standard pursuant to section 111 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act). All **Local Housing Authorities** in Wales must comply with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard elements and guidance. The elements and guidance are set out are pursuant to s111 (3) (a) and (b) of the 2014 Act and guidance is issued under s112 (1) (a) and (b).

The Welsh Ministers have also set the Welsh Housing Quality Standard to be met by **Registered Social Landlords** (The Regulatory Standards) under section 33A of the Housing Act 1996 (the 1996 Act). All RSLs must comply with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, elements and guidance. The elements and guidance set out are pursuant to s33A (2A) of the 1996 Act and guidance is issued under s33B (1) (a) and (b).

Scope

All social housing in Wales must meet and maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. **The Standard applies to all self-contained properties** wholly owned and managed by local housing authorities (LHA's) under Part 4 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and registered social landlords (RSL's) under Part 1 of the

[4] Welsh Housing Quality Standard: Summative Evaluation Three Dragons, Cyngor Da and Ulster University: Built Environment Research Institute (2021). Welsh Government, GSR report number 43/2021

Housing Act 1996 who are regulated by the Welsh Government. It includes intermediate rent properties and properties owned for the purposes of social housing by Local Authorities not in a Housing Revenue Account.

The Standard consists of individual elements, supporting guidance, good practice examples and details on assessment. In working towards the Standard, social landlords must seek, and take account of, the views of tenants. Any programmes should be the product of tenant engagement and their views should form part of the development of the programme.

A full list of terms used can be found in the Glossary.

Chapter 2 – The Standard: elements and guidance

The purpose of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard is to ensure that all social housing in Wales is of good quality. All social homes must:

- Be in a good state of repair;
- Be safe and secure;
- Be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact;
- Have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area;
- Have an up-to-date bathroom;
- Be comfortable and promote wellbeing;
- Have a suitable garden; and
- Have an attractive outside space.

To meet the Standard homes must pass each of the following elements. Full details of the assessment of the Standard can be found in Chapter 4.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS is used to assess a number of elements within the standard.

The HHSRS is a health-based risk assessment tool for the evaluation of housing conditions. The system operates by evaluating potential risk of harm to an actual or potential occupier from their living environment and is a means of rating the seriousness of any hazard identified. A hazard is any risk of harm to the health and safety of an occupier that arises from a deficiency. A deficiency is a failure of an element to meet the 'ideal', i.e., the perceived optimum standard intended to prevent avoid or minimise the hazard. The failure could be inherent, such as a result of the original design, construction or manufacture, or it could be a result of deterioration, disrepair or a lack of repair or maintenance.

A hazard rating is expressed through a numerical score, there are 10 possible numerical score ranges or 'Bands'. Numerical scores of a 1,000 or over (Bands A to C) are Category 1 hazards, imposing a duty on enforcing local housing authorities to take appropriate action under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. Numerical scores under 1,000 (Bands D to J) are Category 2 hazards, a local housing authority has a power but not a duty to act against any significant hazard in the case of Category 2 hazards.

The following conditions would result in a home failing a particular element of the standard (listed below):

- **The presence of one or more deficiencies, in any element of the standard, that contribute to a HHSRS Category 1 Hazard/s.**
- **A hazard rating score (expressed as a band) which is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling, where one or more of the prescribed HHSRS hazards are referenced within any element of the standard.**

A full HHSRS assessment will only be required for those hazards considered to be worse than the average, i.e. where the hazard scores are likely to be significantly

above the average for the housing stock. The national average hazard rating scores and bands are given in a table for each of the 29 prescribed hazards, detailed within the HHSRS Operating Guidance.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operational Guidance can be obtained from the Welsh Government website and is free to download, the Guidance is hereinafter referred to as the 'HHSRS Operating Guidance'.

There is no requirement within the WHQS 2023 Standard for all dwellings to have a full HHSRS assessment undertaken. Current methods of housing stock assessment for the purposes of the HHSRS remain appropriate. However, landlords should, as part of their Compliance Policy, detail how the organisation intend to comply with their HHSRS obligations, including circumstances that may trigger a full HHSRS inspection, assessment and follow-up action.

Sources of intelligence may trigger a HHSRS inspection which may include up-dated stock condition data, complaints of poor housing conditions by a tenant or their representatives, or other sources of information received by the organisation.

Meeting the requirements of the WHQS would generally avoid or minimise any HHSRS Hazard(s).

Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 and HHSRS requirements

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, landlords (private and social sectors) must ensure that the dwelling satisfies Fitness for Human Habitation (FFHH) obligations on the date of occupation by tenant/s, and throughout the term of the occupation contract (tenancy agreement).

Landlords are also required to keep the dwelling in good repair, including the structure and exterior of the dwelling as well as the service installations. The FFHH requirements under the 2016 Act and associated regulations include reference to the 29 prescribed hazards (matters and circumstances) set out in Schedule 1 of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006.

The FFHH obligation provides a remedy for contract holders to address concerns regarding the quality of their accommodation that fall outside the landlord's repairing obligations. It is for the courts to determine whether a dwelling is FFHH. The Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2021 may result in case law that modifies the application of the HHSRS. Landlords should ensure their interpretation of the application of the HHSRS is up to date with any such case law.

In addition, landlords will be required to attain to specific requirements for the installation of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and electrical safety testing for the purposes of satisfying FFHH obligations.

Elements of the Standard

1. Homes must be in a good state of repair.

1a Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 29 - Structural Collapse and Falling Elements 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

Building components, which have an immediate impact on a home's integrity, must be in good condition by being free from fault or deficiency. This Hazard covers the threat of whole home collapse, or of an element or a part of the fabric being displaced or falling because of inadequate fixing, disrepair, or as a result of adverse weather conditions. Structural failure may occur internally or externally within the curtilage threatening occupants, or externally outside the curtilage putting at risk members of the public.

1b Homes must be free from damp.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 1- Damp and Mould Growth 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

This Hazard assessment covers threats to health associated with 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 and, likely impact of dampness meaning 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 the home. The location, extent and duration of any dampness identified are important determinants of the effect it may have on dust mite populations and mould growth, and the consequent potential for harm.

Landlords when assessing this element, should note that the requirement is to be 'free from damp' and assessments under this element should take particular account of the HHSRS Operating Guidance requirements that 'The structure and finishes of a home should be maintained free from rising damp, penetrating and traumatic dampness or persistent condensation.' They should note in particular that the mere absence of a Category 1 hazard for dampness does not constitute a pass, nor would dwellings with minor problems of dampness assessed as Category 2 hazards pass the standard. The standard is that the dwelling should be 'free from damp', including persistent condensation.

2. Homes must be safe and secure.

2a External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security.

A home has a 'reasonable level of security' if it is capable of complying with 'Secured By Design' (SbD), although it may not necessarily have a SbD certificate. SbD is the official police security initiative to encourage the adoption of crime prevention methods in new and existing housing and aims to achieve a good standard of security for both the home and the surrounding environment: www.securedbydesign.com

- **When fitting new external doors and windows:** the replacements must comply with the product specifications for external doors and windows stated within the most recent edition of 'Secured by Design' and be independently certified as such.
- **When retaining existing doors or windows**: delivering a reasonable level of security can be achieved by modification of existing installations to comply with SbD. Components, hardware and glazing used in modifications must comply with the product and material specifications stated within the most recent edition of 'Secured by Design' and be independently certified as such. Any such works e.g. in heritage buildings, require consultation with the Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) of the local police force.

SBD changes over time and Landlords should ensure they are **operating to the most recent edition when undertaking works**. When considering whether historical works meet the requirement, reference should be made to the version current at the time.

In summary the SbD standard for new properties and the SbD standard for refurbished properties (as agreed with the local police DOCO) is highly detailed and should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with this element. Contact details for DOCOs can be found at www.securedbydesign.com

Link to good practice

2b Staircases & balustrades must be safe.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 21- Falling on stairs 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

Staircases and balustrades must be free from deficiency. Where deficiencies are present, mitigating measures must be undertaken to remedy those defects and to sufficiently mitigate any significant hazards identified.

Link to good practice

MEAN OF ESCAPE FROM FIRE: HOMES

2c Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard.

All homes must have suitably designed and located, mains-powered (with a back-up secondary power source such as a sealed lithium battery) and interlinked smoke and/ or heat detectors conforming to BS 5839-6: 2019[5]. These must be regularly tested and properly maintained[6]. As a minimum all homes must contain a system incorporating detectors in the following locations:

- A smoke detector in all circulation areas on each storey that form part of the escape routes from the premises, such as hallways and landings.
- A smoke detector in the principal habitable room used for general daytime living purposes (normally the living room/lounge).
- A heat detector installed in every kitchen (including open plan kitchen / living areas; smoke detectors should not be used in such rooms).
- See also the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (legislation.gov.uk). Guidance refers to BS 5839 (Part 6) as a reference to ensuring the requirements for the proper fitting of smoke alarms in domestic properties.

2d Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements.

Homes must be easy to escape from in the event of fire by having an escape route from the rooms used for sleeping. The escape route should be via an enclosed hallway, or landing and staircase, leading directly to an external door or an external fire escape to a place of safety outside the building. Rooms used for sleeping which cannot be normally exited, except by passing through another room, must have an alternative means of escape (escape window or any external door provided for escape purposes) in accordance with building regulation requirements. Any external doors or windows required for means of escape purposes should be easily capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key, pass or code.

Where the layout and structure of the building mean that the above requirements cannot be achieved, alternative compensatory measures must be applied to the building in consultation with competent fire and building safety professionals.

Existing homes do not normally require the introduction of an automatic fire suppression system, however, building regulation requirements must be followed where material alterations, extensions or other qualifying works are undertaken. Automatic fire suppression systems may however provide alternative compensatory measure as part of an overall fire safety solution to ensure an appropriate means of escape from fire from a building or residence.

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[5] BS 5839-6: 2019+A1:2020. Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings - Code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in domestic premises.

[6] See BS 5839-6: 2019 Clause 25 (Routine Testing) and Clause 26 (Maintenance)

COMBUSTION APPLIANCES AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION: HOMES

2e Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person.

Gas appliances

All homes containing gas-fired combustion appliances must comply with the current gas safety requirements[7] and the landlord must ensure that any gas appliances, fittings, chimneys and flues are safe and working efficiently. All homes must have an annual safety check carried by a Gas Safe registered engineer on each gas appliance/ flue. A record of each gas safety check must be retained for at least two years and a copy of the latest gas safety check record must be provided to existing tenants within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in (in certain cases there is an option to display the record).

All gas installations, maintenance and safety checks must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Any safety defect must be rectified (by a Gas Safe registered engineer) before the equipment is used again and a record kept of work done to rectify defects identified by the safety check.

Oil-fired combustion appliance

All homes containing oil-fired combustion appliances must have a current periodic inspection report undertaken by suitably competent person (e.g. OFTEC registered technician) that the oil installation in the home is safe and in proper working order and this must be undertaken annually (OFTEC CD/11 Service and Commissioning Report). BS 5410: Part 1 expects oil fired appliances and equipment to be serviced periodically in accordance with the Manufacturer's instructions. Oil storage tanks and oil supply pipe work should be checked for general condition and any leaks repaired. Certification can be achieved through the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) CD/12 Landlord Oil Installation Check form (www.oftec.co.uk).

Solid-fuel burning combustion appliance

Combustion appliances are defined as a fixed appliance (such as boilers, fires (including open fires), heaters and stoves) designed and installed to operate on a carbon-based fuel (i.e. oil, solid fuel or gas).

Homes containing solid-fuel burning combustion appliances must have an annual safety check of those appliances, which must be serviced and maintained. This should include ensuring that any flues are operating safely and swept in accordance with the recommendations in the installation checklist, typically annually.

The Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme, HETAS (www.hetas.co.uk), is the official body recognised by Government to approve biomass and solid-fuel heating appliances, fuels and services, including the registration of competent

[7] At the time of publishing the WHQS these are the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendments) Regulations 2018 and the requirements are set out are set out at https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/help-and-advice/gas-safety-certificates-records/.

installers and servicing businesses. HETAS provide guidance on chimney sweeping for coal fires and sweeping flues to other solid-fuel appliances.

2f A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue.

Homes must have a suitably designed and located carbon monoxide detector, which is in good repair and proper working order in each room of the home which contains a gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance, or an associated flue. Combustion appliances are defined as a fixed appliance (such as boilers, fires (including open fires), heaters and stoves) designed and installed to operate on a carbon-based fuel (i.e. oil, solid fuel or gas). Appliances include those supplied by the tenant.

CO detectors must comply with BS EN 50291 and be powered by a battery designed to operate for the working life of the detector. The detector must incorporate a warning device to alert the users when its working life is due to expire. Hard wired mains operated CO detectors complying with BS EN 50291 (Type A) with fixed wiring (not plug in types) may be used as an alternative, provided they are fitted with a sensor failure warning device. The detector should be regularly maintained and tested in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Provisions for this element are covered in the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (legislation.gov.uk)

ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND TESTING: HOMES

2g Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less.

All homes must have an electrical safety inspection (known as an Electrical Installation Condition Report or EICR) undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less. A copy of the EICR, setting out the results of the electrical safety inspection, must be given to the tenant. If works are carried out on a home's electrical service installations between electrical safety inspections, the tenant must be given written confirmation that the works have been carried out. All electrical service installations in the home must be kept in good repair and proper working order.

Note: The Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2021 require that the electrical service installations in a home are subject to inspection and testing ("an electrical safety inspection") by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less and that a copy of the condition report setting out the results of the electrical safety inspection is given to the contract-holder i.e. the tenant.

2h All electrical equipment supplied and owned by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually.

All electrical appliances and equipment (for example, fridges, cookers, televisions, telephones and wireless devices) supplied and owned by landlords in rented residential premises must be safe and comply with current UK requirements for safety of domestic electrical products. Checks (known as Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)) must be undertaken annually by a competent person, namely a qualified electrician, and a record kept, in line with the IET Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (5th Edition). These requirements apply unless the appliances and equipment are under one year old and display a CE mark.

MEANS OF WARNING AND ASCAPE FROM FIRE: COMMON PARTS OF BUILDINGS CONTAINING FLATS AND OTHER MULTI-OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

2i Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements.

(i) The common parts of flats and other multi-occupied buildings must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed as defined by the appropriate Building Regulations.

(ii) The common parts of flats and other multi-occupied buildings must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, capable of being safely and effectively used at all material times, as defined by the appropriate Building Regulations.

Where these requirements cannot be achieved in the common parts of flats or other multi-occupied residential buildings, alternative compensatory measures should be developed in consultation with competent fire and building safety professionals. Automatic fire suppression systems may provide alternative compensatory measures as part of an overall fire safety solution to ensure an appropriate means of escape from fire from a building or residence.

The following documents may be of use to those with responsibility for fire safety in buildings containing flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings:

- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (Local Government Association, currently under revision).
- Fire Safety in Specialised Housing (National Fire Chiefs Council, 2017).
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation (HM Government, 2006).
- BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings (new, or newly converted, buildings which have used the design guidance included in the standard).

The requirement for adequate means of warning and escape from fire in respect of purpose-built blocks of flats will normally be determined by the buildings fire safety and evacuation strategy, and whether a 'stay-put' or 'simultaneous' evacuation strategy applies. There may be circumstances where the Fire Rescue Service, building owners, responsible persons and associated fire safety specialists agree an alternative strategy appropriate to the building.

2j All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment.

All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment[8] for the purposes of identifying and undertaking 'general fire precautions' to comply with the appropriate and current fire and building safety requirements.

Note: The Fire Safety Act 2021[9] makes provisions for the application of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 where a building contains two or more sets of domestic premises. The 2005 Act clarifies that flat entrance doors and the structure of the building (including the external walls) fall within the scope of the 2005 Fire Safety Order.

The Fire Safety Order requires that the fire risk assessment must be "suitable and sufficient" for the premises. It is often possible for an informed lay person to conduct such an assessment of a small block of flats, but for larger and more complex premises, it may be more appropriate to engage a qualified fire engineer or fire safety consultant. The National Fire Chiefs Council has published guidance on finding a suitable assessor[10].

The following documents may be of use to those with responsibility for undertaking fire risk assessments in buildings containing flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings:

- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (Local Government Association, currently under revision).
- Fire Safety in Specialised Housing (National Fire Chiefs Council, 2017).
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation (HM Government, 2006).
- BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings (new, or newly converted, buildings which have used the design guidance included in the standard).
- PAS 9980:2022 - PAS 9980:2022: Fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of existing blocks of flats – Code of practice (for external walls of the building with cladding).

[8] As defined under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended)
[9] Fire Safety Act 2021 (c. 24): enacted 29 April 2021 and in force in Wales from 1 October 2021.
[10] See also Building Safety Act 2022

3. Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact

3a Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92 – EPC A).

A 'reasonably economic to run' heating system would be one that is programmable (i.e. residents can control the temperature and timing), and of a size recommended for the home it serves.

The annual energy consumption for space heating, water heating & lighting is to be estimated using the latest version of the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings. For further information see SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK

A minimum rating of SAP 92 must be achieved.

The installation of measures to achieve SAP 92 must be implemented, unless the measures are not physically practical. If the measures to achieve the standard are currently cost prohibitive, the measures must be planned, and included as part of a future programme of works.

3b In the interim, all homes must meet a minimum standard of SAP 75 – EPC C.

The installation of measures to achieve SAP 75 must be implemented unless the measures are not physically practical.

3c Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92).

The Environmental Impact Rating (EIR) of dwellings is to be estimated using the latest version of the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings. For further information see SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK

A minimum rating of EIR 92 must be achieved.

The installation of measures to achieve EIR 92 must be implemented unless the measures are not physically practicable. If the measures to achieve the standard are currently cost prohibitive, the measures must be planned, and included as part of a future programme of works.

This element needs to be taken in the context that a landlord's whole stock must achieve carbon emissions equivalent to an EIR 92; homes with a low EIR could be balanced by more efficient homes or other defined Carbon Balancing Measures.

Refer to separate Guidance Note in Appendix 2 – Balancing Carbon Emissions across a Housing Portfolio

3d Landlords must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes.

A 'Whole Stock Assessment' (WSA) must be made, together with a 'Target Energy Pathway'(TEP) for each home to develop a future programme of works towards the targets in 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c).

Fabric measures must be considered primarily and planned where possible. Landlords should target a building Heat Loss Parameter (HLP) value of between 2.6 and 2.0 W/m^{2}K (or lower).

The transition to the installation of a low carbon heat source should be completed in parallel with an assessment of fuel bill affordability for households.

All installation of measures must comply with current version of 'PAS2035 Retrofitting Dwellings for Improved Energy Efficiency[11]'.

For further guidance on 'Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathways' please refer to separate Guidance Note in Appendix 3 – Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathway.

Landlords must provide a narrative of activity in their annual compliance policy detailing progress with their WSA's and TEP's. *Link to Chapter 5 Compliance*

New homes that comply with WDQR 2021 Requirement 1d) or the 2023 WDQR update to the Requirement, will not need a Target Energy Pathway.

When planning measures for homes landlords should also take into account resilience to Climate Change. *Link to Good Practice*

Notes on use of SAP in WHQS

- The current version of SAP used in assessments of existing buildings (RdSAP) is SAP 2012. This will be superseded by SAP 10.2 in 2024, bringing existing building assessments into line with new build assessments which already use SAP 10.2. The SAP methodology is currently undergoing a review, with the aim of producing a new model to replace SAP. This will be designed to measure net zero and deal with retrofit in housing. This is likely to be in place from ~2025 onwards.
- The SAP calculation methodology includes estimates for regulated energy use. Unregulated energy use, including appliance and cooking energy use, is not currently included in SAP.
- A Heat Loss Parameter of between 2.6 and 2.0 W/m2K or lower should be targeted (improving fabric energy efficiency) to ensure that the installation of low carbon heat sources, particularly heat pumps, have the greatest chance of meeting user requirements (high efficiency/low carbon, adequate heating effectiveness and low running costs).

[11] BSI (2019), *'PAS 2035/2030:2023, Retrofitting dwellings for improved energy efficiency. Specification and guidance.'*

3e Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation.

All measures to upgrade the ventilation performance of the home must be taken. Kitchen and bathrooms must have mechanical ventilation.

Whole house mechanical ventilation with heat recovery must be introduced if deemed necessary as part of the installation of safe and high-quality fabric energy efficiency retrofit measures.

3f Landlords must make arrangements for a smart meter to be installed in each home.

Smart meters are a tenant's choice and tenants can arrange for a smart meter to be installed, at no charge, with their energy supplier. At change of tenancy, landlords must make arrangements for a smart meter to be installed in each home.

Smart meters have a wide range of benefits for tenants. For example, tenants with smart meters are only charged for the energy they use rather than receiving estimated bills, helping them to budget better. Smart Meters also enable tenants to take advantage of smart tariffs.

Evidence shows that this information can helps to manage energy use, save money and reduce emissions that lead to climate change.

3g Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances.

Reducing water consumption reduces:

- energy and chemical inputs required to supply hot and cold water;
- the cost of metered water and potential water poverty; and
- the potential for Wales to be in water deficit by 2050.

Landlords should seek to reduce potential consumption to less than 110 litres per person per day by adhering to the performance standards below when replacing fittings and fixed appliances. Reduction of overall pressure to the property is not an acceptable solution.

Fitting Maximum performance level

Fitting	Maximum performance level
WC – Dual flush	4.5 / 3 litres per flush
Wash hand basin tap*	4.0 litres per minute
Shower*	8.0 litres per minute
Kitchen/Utility tap	5.0 litres per minute
Bath	170 litres capacity
Dishwasher	1 litre per place setting
Washing Machine	7.5 litre per kilogram

*Aerated shower heads / outlets should be used

Note: All fittings and appliances installed must comply with The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 with specific reference to Regulation 4.

Link to good practice

3h Water butts to be installed when appropriate.

Water butts are suitable for nearly all gardens and can provide a ready supply of water for all gardening purposes. They can provide savings to tenants on water meters.

Landlords should provide visible warning labels on the side of the water butt to ensure tenants have advice on how to operate, maintain and minimise any risks created by water stored in water butts (i.e. Legionella).

When undertaking any external work in gardens or at a change of tenancy a water butt should be installed when appropriate.

4. Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area

When replacing a kitchen consideration must be given to all elements within this section. Where it is necessary to create a new kitchen or to replace an existing one, landlords must adhere to the below bullet points. Where there is inadequate space to meet the below requirements, landlords must consider extending or reconfiguring the internal layout of the home.

- There is a work surface each side of the sink bowl, one of which may be the sink drainer
- There is a work surface each side of the cooker
- The cooker is at least 100mm from a corner base unit
- All work surfaces are at least 400mm long
- At least one double power socket provided close to the main food preparation area
- A food preparation area is provided between the sink bowl or drainer and the cooker must be at least 800mm long measured along its front edge, preferably in a straight line, and, if it has to be arranged around a corner, one front edge must be at least 1,000mm long
- Spaces at least 600mm wide are provided for a cooker and refrigerator. In most cases 600mm wide spaces will be required for a washing machine, and an additional appliance as meets the needs of the tenant (e.g. a dishwasher, tumble dryer etc.). The space for a washing machine, tumble dryer etc. may be positioned in a utility area;
- The cooker space is not in front of a window and cooker control units are offset to one side so that they can be used without reaching over the hob space;
- Wall cupboards are positioned at least 150mm away from the cooker space and such that they can be used without reaching over the hob;
- People passing through do not have to enter “the work triangle,” an imaginary triangle formed by lines drawn between the cooker, sink and fridge positions;
- There are adequate and convenient storage cupboards for food, crockery and pots and pans. This should be 1.1m³ in a two-person home, increasing by 0.2m³ for each additional person as determined by Nominal Occupancy referred to in Appendix 4;
- There are enough convenient power sockets to avoid using multi-way adaptors and trailing flexes; and
- There is sufficient provision for the collection of key recyclables and storage of food waste in homes including space including space for storage receptacles.

4a Kitchens must be in good condition.

When considering whether a kitchen is in good condition landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in full. Kitchens over 16 years old should be replaced unless in good condition.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 16- Food Safety and Hazard 25 – Flames and Hot Surfaces 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

4b Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances.

Kitchens must have 600mm wide spaces for a cooker and a refrigerator and enough clear space in front of the cooker and other units and appliances to operate safely (1,200mm in front of the cooker, otherwise 1,000mm).

Kitchens must be sensibly and logically laid out with a minimum walking distance between major working areas. When planning a kitchen, employ the 'Work Triangle.' The 'Work Triangle' is formed by putting units and appliances, with appropriate work surfaces, in such a position as to allow the user to work in a logical sequence through the major work areas (Food Storage, Preparation, Washing/ Cleaning, Cooking and Serving). Ideally the length of the three sides of the triangle, when added together ought to be between 3,600mm and 6,600mm.

The space for a refrigerator can be located in a utility area.

4c Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces.

The work surface must be permanent, non-porous and a minimum of 500mm deep, 800mm along the front edge if straight or 1,000mm if 'L' shaped.

4d Homes must have sufficient general storage.

The home must provide adequate internal general storage space where one unit is not less than 1.5m^2 Gross Internal Area (GIA). These can include:

- A tall cupboard suitable for storage of ironing boards, vacuum cleaners etc.
- Child proof or lockable storage for cleaning materials.

4e Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements.

In addition to provision of space for general waste storage there must be sufficient provision for the collection of key recyclables and storage of food waste in homes. The provision of this may be a combination of internal and external storage.

4f Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets.

Kitchens must have at least six conveniently located twin power sockets. These can include sockets for household appliances such as cookers, fridges and freezers, to avoid the use of multi-way adaptors or trailing flexes.

Link to good practice

4g Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring.

When considering whether a kitchen has suitable flooring, landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in full.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 20 – Falls on Level Surfaces and Hazard 21- Falls associated with stairs (where a step or ramp greater than 300mm were present in the room) 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

There must be a cleanable, non-absorbent and water-resistant material on kitchen floor surfaces, which are adequately sealed where they meet the surrounding walls. The type of floor covering used should provide sufficient slip resistance for occupants against damp or wet conditions that may be associated with kitchens.

Link to good practice

4h Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes.

This includes:

- space, power and plumbing for a washing machine;
- external drying line; and
- a heated airing cupboard with at least 1m^2 of internal slatted shelving provided.

These may be provided in communal laundry facilities e.g. in some sheltered housing schemes and multi-storey flats.

If it is not possible to provide an external drying line, and there are no communal drying facilities, landlords must provide an energy efficient tumble dryer (e.g. heat pump dryer with drainage connection for condensate) or an energy efficient washer dryer together with a power supply. Space for this appliance will normally be in the kitchen but may be in a utility area.

See 7c for access requirements to an external drying area

5. Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom

5a Bathrooms and WC facilities must be in good condition.

When considering whether a bathroom is in good condition landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance full. Bathrooms over 26 years old should be replaced unless in good condition.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 17 – Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage and Hazard 19 – Falls associated with baths 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

5b Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring.

When considering whether a bathroom has suitable flooring, landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in full.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 17 – Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage, Hazard 19 – Falls associated with baths, and Hazard 20 – Falls on Level Surfaces 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail this element.

There must be a cleanable, non-absorbent and water-resistant material on bathroom and WC floor surfaces, which are adequately sealed where they meet the surrounding walls. The type of floor covering used should provide sufficient slip resistance for occupants against damp or wet conditions that may be associated with bathroom and WC facilities. Damaged or deteriorated floor finishes should be avoided as they can make those surfaces difficult to clean and provide harbourage for pathogens.

Link to good practice

5c Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath).

A level access shower would be considered a pass provided it is suitable for the tenants needs.

6. Homes must be comfortable and promote wellbeing

6a Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living.

Homes should provide sufficient space for the occupants as determined by bedroom and living space floor area. Appendix 4 provides guidance on what Standards are sufficient to achieve this.

6b At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings.

Floor coverings must be present at change of tenancy. However, floor coverings do not need to be replaced if they are suitable, appropriate and in good condition. When deciding on whether floor coverings are suitable and appropriate, consideration should be given to the specific needs of the tenant, and the durability and maintenance requirements. Choice should be offered where possible. The exact detail of the flooring (e.g. loose lay or glued down) is for the landlord to determine. The landlord can 'gift' the flooring to the tenant to remove ongoing maintenance obligations.

The following British Standard BN EN 1307:2014 'Textile floor coverings' may be useful in the assessment of textile floor coverings.

Link to standard

6c Exposure to noise should be minimised.

This element covers threats to physical and mental health resulting from exposure to noise inside the home caused by lack of sufficient sound insulation or within its curtilage. It does not cover unreasonable noisy behaviour of neighbours (domestic or commercial).

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazard 14 - Noise 'average HHSRS scores' table) will fail this element.

The design and construction of homes should protect the occupants from ordinary domestic noise from one home entering another, and from traffic or other ambient external noise.

The attenuation measures will be for landlords to decide but they will need to be sufficient to mitigate the hazard to the average level for the stock and will be a direct response to their assessment of the cause of the hazard.

Measures that landlords should consider using include the following:

- double/secondary glazing and lobbies to external doors where there are high outside noise levels (e.g. traffic)
- possible triple glazing near airports/sources of very high noise levels

- internal insulation of upper floors, ceilings, and/or roof spaces
- external insulation
- Repairing any windows and/or external or internal doors to prevent noise penetration
- Siting of plumbing from WCs/cisterns away from separating walls
- Do not site bathrooms/WCs in flats above living rooms/bedrooms
- better construction/conversions of partitions and party walls especially in flats/maisonettes
- the use of self-closers on doors providing cushioning on kitchen units

Professional Judgement used to assess this element should be undertaken by a suitably qualified HHSRS surveyor. Measurement of noise levels using properly calibrated noise meters can be helpful to confirm the subjective assessment.

6d As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household.

Landlords should consider the specific cultural needs of the tenants, such as their family structure, religious practices and the homes internal layout, security and external spaces. Particular attention should be paid to the design of kitchens to allow for consideration of high-volume storage and bathrooms for different bathing rituals.

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

Link to good practice

6e Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments.

Lifetime Homes and higher accessibility requirements and standards must be properly considered during the refurbishment process and implemented if and where achievable, in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments. This includes requirements of people with physical, sensory, learning or other impairments.

Further, housing bodies must gather data on the need for wheelchair-accessible standard housing and ensure that disabled people and older people who use wheelchairs are provided with comfortable housing that will **safeguard** and promote their wellbeing and **ability to live independently.**

Link to good practice

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

6f Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries.

Homes should be clearly identifiable, have definable boundaries and there should be clear naming and numbering to assist residents and the attendance of Emergency Services.

7. Homes must have a suitable garden

When considering requirements for outside space landlords should read the HHSRS Operating Guidance in fullhttps://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/health-and-safety-rating-system-operational-guidance.pdf.

Any home where a hazard rating score (expressed as a band) is assessed to be worse than the national average for that particular type and age of dwelling (as detailed in the HHSRS Operating Guidance, Hazards 20 – Falling on level surfaces, Hazard 21 – Falls on stairs and Hazard 22 – Falls between levels 'average HHSRS scores' tables) will fail the appropriate element.

7a There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m^2 directly accessible from the home.

Homes with external space should have a level useable area of no less than 10m^2 that is directly accessible. The 10m^2 level area should be provided as a single useable area but where spaces are steeply sloping, two areas not less than 5m^2 is acceptable. An area is to be considered directly accessible if access to it can be gained without leaving the home's plot boundaries. Paths and steps may be considered an acceptable method of access.

7b There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate.

When considering how to deliver this requirement it may not be practicable to remove all HHSRS deficiencies especially in older dwellings. In such cases landlords should, wherever practicable, take action to mitigate any hazards present and as a minimum achieve the average for the dwelling age and type for the HHSRS Hazards (20) Falling on level surfaces, (21) Falls on stairs etc. and (22) Falls between levels.

7c There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present.

When considering how to deliver this requirement it may not be practicable to remove all HHSRS deficiencies especially in older dwellings. In such cases landlords should, wherever practicable, take action to mitigate any hazards present and as a minimum achieve the average for the dwelling age and type for the HHSRS Hazards (20) Falling on level surfaces, (21) Falls on stairs etc. and (22) Falls between levels.

See 4h for provision of a drying line.

7d Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe.

Particular attention should be made to the rear garden space which must be easy to maintain. This should be assessed in relation to the intended occupants and will consider issues such as:

- Poor design;
- Space constraints; and
- Steep topography.

The rear garden space must be safe and suitable for young children to play in. This also includes allowing supervision from the dwelling. Issues that may be considered in relation to this element are:

- Boundaries should be suitable to prevent children leaving the garden and should not encourage climbing;
- If the garden is on an incline, the landlord must ensure that the retaining walls are structurally stable and have an appropriate guard rail/balustrade; and
- Ensure pathways are even and unobstructed.

Outdoor space must be capable of complying with Secured by Design (SbD) although the home to which it is related may not necessarily have a SbD certificate.

SbD is the official police security initiative to encourage the adoption of crime prevention methods in new and existing housing and aims to achieve a good standard of security for both the home and the surrounding environment. www.securedbydesign.com.

SbD changes over time and Landlords should ensure they are **operating to the most recent edition when undertaking works**. When considering whether historical works meet the requirement, reference should be made to the version current at the time.

In summary the SbD standard for new properties and the SbD standard for refurbished properties is highly detailed and should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with this element. Contact details for DOCOs can be found at www.securedbydesign.com.

8. Homes must have an attractive and practical outside space

8a External lockable storage for cycles and equipment must be made available.

Tenants must have access to a robust and lockable external store, which must include sufficient space for secure storage for items such as garden equipment, and bicycles, pushchairs and mobility aids which can encourage sustainable travel.

Provision for individual external storage need not be made if there is readily available and affordable secure communal provision. There are a number of lockable communal bicycle storage solutions now in the UK often provided in what was previously car parking spaces.

Where new provision is made, its design and location should be planned in consultation with tenants to ensure it reflects tenants' needs. This is recommended even where tenancies are typically short.

The Active Travel Act guidance provides detailed advice on design and location of cycle storage, primarily in section 14.8.

8b There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s).

Consideration should be given to the provision of informal areas for members of the community, particularly children and young people. Including the use of areas by residents for outdoor exercise, benches to enjoy fresh air etc. Tenants should be consulted in the design and maintenance of such areas.

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

8c Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly.

Biodiversity is important to help tackle nature and climate emergencies. Areas of biodiversity (flora and/or fauna) can also provide opportunities for residents, community groups, volunteers and schools to become involved, which can contribute to their health and wellbeing.

- Landlords should, where appropriate, adopt a range of measures to achieve this element, for example:
- Identify, and manage sensitively, areas that already provide a very good habitats for pollinators, for example; flowering hedgerows, patches of wildflowers on waste ground, areas of bramble or ivy and flowering meadows
- plant pollinator friendly plants

- encourage wildflowers and pollinator friendly plants by reducing mowing and collecting grass clippings.
- plant and/or restore hedgerows where possible and manage them in rotation to benefit wildlife.
- locally source trees, plants and flowers from native stock
- take action to remove or manage invasive non-native species where possible.
- reduce dependence on chemical pesticides, only use them if absolutely necessary.
- ensure that exterior lighting is not detrimental to biodiversity.
- create hedgehog highways where fences are erected or renewed by cutting a 13cm2 hole in them
- Use peat free compost
- Install bat and bird boxes
- Seek advice from a professional ecologist before developing plans for large areas of the estate.

Link to good practice

Assessment: This element is not being formally measured. A detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the Landlord's Compliance Policy to provide an understanding of how this element is being achieved.

Chapter 3 – What social landlords need to do to achieve the Standard

Social landlords are expected to conduct an assessment of their stock, analyse the information, and plan the management of their property assets as part of their normal business and financial planning. It is expected that this assessment should initially take the form of detailed property surveys, including line by line reporting of their property assets. With robust data collection and management it should be possible to keep these detailed assessments up to date as works are carried out on or in properties.

Landlords need to be aware of the work required to meet the Standard, their future liabilities, know when properties and their components are forecast to be replaced and when funds need to be available to meet these liabilities. All of this should assist landlords to develop of a programme to achieve the Standard, taking into account views of their tenants.

The programme must be dynamic and responsive to changes. It should set out the priorities for the various items of work with a forecast of the finance required and sources of funding available. A clear plan of how this is to be implemented is also required. The programme should be reviewed annually or following an up-date of stock information or stock condition data. Any programmes should be the product of tenant engagement and their views should form part of the development of the programme.

The programme itself and the steps taken to develop it should be published and show the stages the landlord has gone through, highlighting the choices that have been made along the way and the rationale behind them. The programme must be part of a viable business plan.

Making good

It is generally accepted that when repairs are carried out in a tenant's home, there will be a certain amount of damage caused. Landlords must try to avoid damaging internal decorations and tenant's personal belongings. Landlords will be responsible for repairing any damage caused by the disrepair or by the work to fix it. For example, landlords should repair any damaged plaster or wall coverings, repaint if needed and replace any damaged items such as carpets.

Affordable warmth and minimal environmental impact

When the option of demolition for redevelopment is being considered landlords should decide whether this is the best way to reduce carbon emissions and in particular whether it would be more effective to refurbish than to rebuild when embodied carbon is accounted for.

Landlords need to pay particular attention to the requirements of affordable warmth and environmental impact. Landlords are expected to undertake planned and phased improvements to homes informed by their Target Energy Pathways. These will be based on an understanding of their stock, before the Standard is achieved in

its entirety. Acknowledging the changes made to the Standard, target / compliance dates for each element are set out in Appendix 5 and fall into these three groups:

- **Elements which are unchanged** from the previous Standard (or where changes are very minor) **or new elements introduced to reflect activity already undertaken by Social Landlords** (either as common practice or regulatory obligation). For such elements compliance is expected to continue to be maintained or be achieved immediately in new or acquired dwellings. These comprise the majority of the elements in the Standard.
- **New elements or elements where there has been substantial change** and compliance may take a number of years. Compliance dates have been set for each element depending on the challenge expected.
- **Affordable warmth and minimal environmental impact elements** - a planned and phased program of achievement is expected with a first step of fabric improvement. More information on affordable warmth and minimal environmental impacts is provided in Part 3 of the Standard.

Timeline for achievement of the Standard

By 31 March 2025, landlords must:

- Assess the condition of their stock and the work necessary to meet the Standard;
- Estimate the investment needed to achieve the Standard;
- Complete **tenant engagement** on the programme;
- Prepare and submit a Compliance Policy to the Welsh Government; and
- Update the Business Plan to reflect the programme.

By 31 March 2027, landlords must:

- Produce Target Energy Pathways, informed by their Whole Stock Assessment;

By 31 March 2034, landlords should have:

- Confirmed that all their housing stock meets the Standard.

Tenant engagement on the programme

It is recognised that to foster pride and belonging, tenants should be encouraged to be involved in making any decisions that affect their community and environment. It is expected that tenants are shown how the programme was developed, and how tenant and/or tenant groups views and priorities have influenced the programme. The precise process for tenant engagement is a matter for the individual landlord.

Chapter 4 – Assessment and Data Collection

All social housing in Wales must meet and maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. A home will meet the Standard when all relevant elements are achieved. It is recognised that some elements of the Standard are not applicable to all homes. It is also recognised that not all homes will be able to achieve some elements for various reasons. As such the following assessment hierarchy should be used:

- There are certain circumstances where an element may not be applicable e.g. elements concerning common parts of buildings in a single residence. In such circumstances these elements should be recorded as 'Not Applicable'.
- In general, each element should be assessed for every home as either 'Pass' or 'Fail'.
- 'Temporary Fail' can be used as directed (see Appendix 6) in situations where social landlords are unable to make necessary changes to a home due to circumstances beyond their control, such as tenant refusal, or the changes are part of a wider programme of works planned within the next few years. Temporary Fails are to be recorded with specific reason codes and only where directed as acceptable to do so. Please note there are different reason codes provided for use with specific affordable warmth and environmental impact elements (section 3 of the Standard).
- A 'Conditional Pass' is acceptable for certain elements. It is only to be used in situations where work to enable compliance cannot be undertaken e.g. physical constraints or heritage considerations and this is unlikely to change. Conditional Passes are to be recorded with specific reason codes and only where directed as acceptable to do so (see Appendix 6). Conditional passes should be reviewed periodically to ensure they are still accurate.

Where multiple reason codes could be appropriate, the main reason should be used.

Elements containing statutory or regulatory requirements, such as the presence of carbon monoxide detectors, should technically only be assessed as Pass or Fail. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances tenants may refuse to allow works to be carried out, as such reasons codes for this have been included. **Not applicable and Conditional Pass will not be accepted for such elements.**

In developing the Standard both practitioners and technical experts have considered the appropriate assessment criteria for each element. However, it is accepted there will be instances where additional reason codes will be required. In such instances social landlords should bring this to the attention of the Welsh Government for agreement prior to use. Any additional codes agreed will be shared with all social landlords.

Additional points:

- Disrepair claims – for the purposes of WHQS 2023 social landlords should use their professional assessment of the home against the Standard and not the status of any live, or settled Disrepair Claims

- Social landlords should assess elements of the Standard on **actual condition/ status** not life cycle.
- All homes in the social landlords' portfolio are to be assessed against the Standard and reported upon, including those that are vacant.

Any elements assessed as 'Temporary Fail' due to tenant choice (delay or refusal) or tenant behaviour should be remedied prior to re-letting the property.

Examples of using 'Not Applicable' relating to individual elements within the Standard

'Not Applicable' is only suitable for individual elements and not for the home as a whole. It is important to remember that it will not be appropriate for every home to be assessed on all elements within the Standard. For example:

- an external fire escape is not needed for a single storey property; and
- a water butt is unlikely suitable for a second storey flat.

The above examples highlight differences in the nature and purpose of homes. Particular distinctions may be relevant between single household dwellings and dwellings of multiple occupation such as sheltered housing schemes, as well as flats and houses. Thus where appropriate it may be necessary for some elements to be reported as 'Not Applicable.'

Examples of using 'Conditional Pass' relating to individual elements within the Standard

A 'Conditional Pass' is only suitable for individual elements and not for the home as a whole. It may only be used in one or a combination of the following situations:

- Physical constraint;
- Heritage/ conservation constraint;
- Cost prohibitive; or
- Other Metrics / Offsetting - for the elements of section 3, 'Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact', only.

As stated above, practitioners and technical experts have been involved in establishing which elements are appropriate to have a Conditional Pass assessment and in developing the associated reason codes. However, it is recognised there will inevitably be other instances where a Conditional Pass is appropriate or additional reason codes will be needed. In such instances landlords should bring this to the attention of the Welsh Government to agree prior to use. Any such agreements will be shared with all social landlords

Some practical examples (not exhaustive) of how 'Conditional Pass' of an element might occur:

- The garden is on a steep incline. It is *possible* to excavate the garden to provide 10m^2 of level garden but the risk of landslides etc. is deemed too great. This would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Physical constraint. If it was deemed to be safe, but the cost to do so is too great this would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Cost prohibitive.
- The home is a bedsit and only has a shower in the bathroom with no space for a bath. It is suitable for the tenant. This would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Physical constraint.
- The installation of PV panels, UPVC windows with trickle vents and or mechanical ventilation is deemed necessary to meet various elements but heritage restrictions do not allow these. Such elements would be recorded as Conditional Pass – Heritage/conservation constraint.

For element 3c: Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92), an additional reason code is available for use; Other Metrics/ Offsetting.This should be used when all that can be done to minimise the environmental impact of a home has been done, but it still falls short of the minimum EIR of 92. As such the social landlord has established some form of Carbon Balancing to counteract this (sometimes referred to as carbon off-setting). See Appendix 2 for details on Balancing Carbon Emissions.

It is worth noting that heritage/conservation constraints are not limited to external features of homes and as such this Conditional Pass reason code is available for use when assessing many of the elements in the Standard.

- Conditional Pass – Physical Constraints

Element 6a: Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living.

Situation: A landlord may deem it necessary to consider undertaking structural changes to the property in order to enlarge bedrooms that fail to meet the standard set out in Appendix 4. If a bedroom is below the standard, because of a bulkhead to accommodate a staircase. It may be deemed that the room has a conditional pass – physical constraint if the bedroom would meet the standard without the bulkhead being present.

Correct assessment: Condition Pass – Physical Constraints

Examples of using 'Temporary Fail' relating to individual elements within the Standard

- Programmed works

Element 6a: Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living.

Situation: A landlord may deem it necessary to consider the cost effectiveness of some works such as undertaking structural changes to the property in order to

enlarge living spaces. It may be appropriate for the landlord to postpone the achievement of this element until major investment, already planned, is required for that home.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Programmed works within 5 years

- Tenant refusal

Element 5b: Bathrooms and WC facilities must have suitable flooring.

Situation: A new bathroom has been installed. The floor was not replaced as the tenant had previously installed their own flooring and did not want it to be changed. The flooring installed by the tenant is deemed to be less slip resistant than required by the Standard. Providing the flooring does not give rise to a significant risk under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the flooring can remain. The landlord must issue the tenant with written advice on the hazard they have created.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal.

Element 4a: Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition.

Situation: The social landlord determines that the kitchen should be replaced. The tenant really likes their kitchen, is happy with it and does not want it changed. Providing the kitchen does not give rise to a significant risk under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the kitchen can remain. The landlord must issue the tenant with written advice on this action.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Element 2g: Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less.

Situation: The tenant is refusing to allow any work to be undertaken in their home including letting anyone in to carry out electricity certification. The landlord has set in motion processes to gain access.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Element 4f: Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets.

Situation: A tenant has installed their own kitchen but there are insufficient power sockets. They do not want 'their nice new kitchen messed up' and are happy with the number of sockets they have.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal

Any outstanding work required to convert a 'Temporary Fail – Tenant refusal' to a Pass must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

- Tenant delay

Element 4a: Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition.

Situation: The kitchen has been identified as needing replacement due to poor condition. One of the household is undergoing end of life care at home. The tenant is content to have the works done, but it is not appropriate at this time.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant delay

Any outstanding work required to convert a 'Temporary Fail – Tenant delay' to a Pass should be undertaken as soon as is acceptable to the tenant and must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

- Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions

Element 1b: Homes must be free from damp

Situation A: The landlord has carried out all necessary works to a home in terms of remedy and damp prevention, but the tenant is simply unable to afford to heat the home sufficiently to prevent damp.

Situation B: The landlord has carried out all necessary works to a home in terms of remedy and damp prevention and has advised the tenant how best to dry clothes and 'live in their home' but they have not changed their behaviour and damp has developed again.

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions.

Any outstanding work required to convert a 'Temporary Fail – Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions' to a Pass must be undertaken prior to re-let of the property.

Examples of using 'Temporary Fail' relating to specific affordable warmth and minimal environmental impact elements (section 3 of the Standard).

Whilst most of the 'usual' Temporary Fail reason codes are available for affordable warmth and minimal environmental impact elements (section 3) of the Standard, some of them have additional codes.

- Element 3a: Homes must have heating systems which are reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92).

The option of 'Temporary Fail - Currently cost prohibitive' is available to use for this element where all has been done to the home to meet this element and the only remaining actions are **currently** too expensive. Market developments should allow this situation to be rectified over time.

Situation: The windows, doors and loft insulation have been upgraded but the home is still heated by a gas boiler. Other options available to meet the element in full are still overly expensive per unit, not supported by the energy network (hydrogen) or installation of them would force the tenant into fuel poverty (heat pump).

Correct assessment: Temporary Fail – Currently cost prohibitive.

- Element 3c: Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92).

Along with 'Temporary Fail - Currently cost prohibitive', 'Conditional Pass - Physical constraint' and 'Conditional Pass - Heritage/ conservation constraint' are available to use for this element.

Situation: A home in a rural location. The Target Energy Pathway indicates a heat pump is the best option for this home as it is unsuitable for alternative heat sources due to location and orientation. The current limited grid capacity is unable to provide the power required for a heat pump.

Correct assessment: Conditional Pass - Physical constraint.

Situation: External wall insulation or solar panels are required to meet the requirements of this element. The home is in a conservation area and these are not permitted.

Correct assessment: Conditional Pass – Heritage/ conservation constraint.

Vacant homes

All homes in the social landlords' portfolio are to be assessed against the Standard and reported upon, including those that are vacant.

Data Collection

To support this Standard, a new property level data collection is being developed in conjunction with representatives from social landlords. This will enable Welsh Government to fully understand the sector's progress in achieving the Standard. Property level data will allow the sector to understand compliance rates, where it is excelling, identify issues that may require further support/intervention and generally understand more about social homes in Wales. Social landlords will be required to provide basic information on each property in their stock, an assessment of each property against the elements of the Standard and some supporting information. The full specification for this will be published in due course alongside details of how data will need to be submit to the Welsh Government.

The expectation is that most of the information required for property level data will

already be captured by landlords as part of their asset management and allocation systems thus minimising primary data collection needs. Other elements of the data required will likely come from WSA, TEPs work and EPC assessments. The nature of the majority of the data required means it is unlikely to change over time, if ever (e.g. type of property). So whilst there may be an initial increase in effort required to complete/compile the data collection, once done it should just be the assessment of the elements of the Standard and their supporting information that will require updating as works progress.

Examples of the types of information required at the individual property level, include:

- Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN);
- Age of property;
- Type of property;
- Construction type;
- Number of storeys;
- Number of bedrooms;
- Occupancy;
- Household type;
- Assessment of each element of the Standard;
- Current SAP score;
- Calculated or modelled SAP and version used;
- Date property expected to achieve SAP 75 and 92; and
- Hazard rating scores for Hazard referenced in the Standard.

Reporting

The data specified within this data collection will be submitted at a property level at the end of the first full financial year of the Standard (31 March 2025) and annually thereafter. However, it is recognised that this may not be achievable for all social landlords. As a minimum, an assessment of each element of the Standard for all homes within a social landlord's portfolio must be completed by 31 March 2025. This will be reported at a property level to the Welsh Government.

Chapter 5 – Compliance and certification

All social landlords are required to develop and maintain a compliance policy. To allow landlords time to respond to the requirements within the Standard, this must be in place by the end of March 2025. The compliance policy must be:

- signed off by the Board or equivalent for LHAs;
- published to demonstrate open and transparent working; and
- reviewed annually.

The compliance policy has a key role in communicating the social landlord's approach to the WHQS programme, local circumstances and any relevant decision taken. WHQS statistical returns will demonstrate the progress made in meeting the Standard, whilst compliance policies will provide context for how progress is being/ has been achieved. They should also provide assurance to stakeholders of the accuracy of the statistical returns.

The key areas to be included in the compliance policy are provided below:

- Approach to WHQS, reflecting local resources and circumstances;
- Database/asset management software;
- Tenant engagement;
- Independent verification;
- Compliance statements for new tenants;
- Elements not measured, to be covered by detailed explanatory statements;
- Cost prohibitive activity;
- Target Energy Pathways Narrative;
- Redevelopment, demolition and carbon; and
- Community benefits.

Approach to WHQS, reflecting local resources and circumstances

The compliance policy must set out each landlord's decision making in relation to complying with the Standard. The compliance policy must clearly articulate the landlord's approach to meeting and maintaining the Standard for their whole stock and on an element by element basis.

Database/asset management software

The compliance policy needs to state what kind of database or asset management software is being used.

Tenant engagement

Social Landlords should outline how they have engaged with tenants and/or tenant groups in meeting and maintaining the Standard.

Independent Verification

As a result of the Audit Wales review of WHQS in 2012[12] the requirement for independent verification has been introduced. The compliance policy must include information on the social landlord's arrangements for independent verification of their compliance with the Standard. This should include details of the processes to be undertaken and how independence is assured.

The independent verification process should include an initial review two years after the Standard comes into effect. Thereafter independent verification should be undertaken every two years.

Independent verification may take different forms. This is not about spending large sums of money but the process must be undertaken by an independent party. It should be conducted by someone who is not directly involved in the delivery of the Standard. Independent verification could also be conducted by other social landlords or external consultants.

Compliance Statement for new tenants

A Statement should be issued at the point of re-letting. This will support the EPC certificate that the new tenant already receives. Where a property does not meet the Standard at the point of re-letting, the Statement should include clear information about the purpose of the Standard, when it is to be met, what it covers, where the home complies and any areas that are yet to meet the Standard, ideally with a rationale.

The compliance policy should explain how this information is provided to tenants and provide an example of the Statement used.

Elements not measured (as such)

For the Standard, a detailed explanatory statement is to be included in the compliance policy to provide an understanding for all stakeholders of how the elements not formally measured are being progressed. This is to ensure that the approach taken to these valuable aspects of a tenant's home and neighbourhood are being considered.

The explanatory statement should outline how decisions have been made on programmes of work, how need has been assessed and prioritised and how tenants have been allowed a voice in the process.

The following elements require an explanatory statement:

- 3d Landlords must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes.

[12] Audit Wales report on Progress in delivering the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, January 2012

- 6d Homes should suit the specific requirements of the household.
- 6e Disabled and older people's housing requirements
- 8b Attractive Outside Spaces
- 8c Biodiversity
- Broadband (see page 6 WHQS 2023 and digital connectivity)

Cost Prohibitive Activity

For each element using the conditional pass cost prohibitive code, the landlords should provide additional information including estimated costs and number of properties using these assessment code. Please see tabled example below.

Element	Number of Properties	Estimated Cost
8a) External storage for cycles and equipment must be made available.		
3a) Homes must have heating systems which are reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92)		

Target Energy Pathways Narrative

A narrative is required to support the individual Target Energy Pathways produced under Element 3d. The brief narrative should contain;

- The approach to generating Target Energy Pathways;
- The asset and modelling systems used to gather, record and process information;
- A Data improvement plan, if one has been produced;
- Information for each significant archetype of property to outline the rationale behind their approach; and
- Information where homes will not reach the standards set out in 3a) and 3b).

Redevelopment, Demolition and Carbon

Landlords will be expected to explain how carbon considerations have been included in the assessment of options for any proposed redevelopment or demolition.

Landlords should present an assessment, using a recognised methodology such as Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Professional Statement 'Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment'[13] . Landlords should also compare

[13] https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/upholding-professional-standards/sector-standards/building-surveying/whole-life-carbon-assessment-for-the-built-environment-1st-edition-rics.pdf

embodied and operational carbon in the proposal for retrofitting homes, against the carbon cost for the proposal to demolish and redevelop homes.

Welsh Development Quality Requirements (WDQR 2021) 1c) require new development of social homes to adopt best practice in moving to a decarbonised and circular built environment. It requires landlords *'to consider an assessment for reducing upfront and embodied carbon during the design and construction phases, and when undertaking refurbishment.'*[14]

Community benefits

Community benefits are positive outcomes for local people and communities including boosting employment and skills or providing community facilities. Each landlord must set out in their Policy how they plan and measure community benefits generated by the WHQS programme.

[14] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-08/development-quality-requirements-for-housing-associations.pdf

Appendix 1 – Further information and good practice examples

2a External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security.

Information on door security can be found below:

Door frames must be securely fixed to the building fabric in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and specifications.

New doorsets to be certified to one of the following standards

- PAS 24:2016 (Note 21.3b); or
- STS 201 Issue 7:2015 (Note 21.3c); or
- LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 Security Rating 2+ (Note 21.3d); or
- LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 Security Rating A3+; or
- STS 202 Issue 6:2015 Burglary Rating 2 (Note 21.3d); or
- LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating B (Notes 21.3d and 21.3e)

And to the appropriate material specific standard:

- BS 7412:2007 (PVC-U)
- BS 4873: 2016 (Aluminium)
- BS 6510: 2010 (Steel)
- BS 644: 2012 (Timber)
- BS 8529: 2017 (Composite)

Europrofile cylinders should be replaced with products certificated to Door Hardware Federation Technical Standard 007 (DHF TS 007) – 3-Star rating, or a DHF TS 007 1-star cylinder may be utilised if accompanied by DHF TS 007 2-star external hardware (handle set or secure escutcheon) or cylinder protection, or Sold Secure SS312 (Diamond) standard cylinders.

Locking systems – clear operating instructions must be attached to the inner face of the door but should be easily removable by the tenant. Glazing panels in and adjacent to doors must be laminated and meet or exceed the requirements of BS EN 356:2000 class P1A.

A door chain or opening limiter meeting the requirements of the Door and Hardware Federation Technical Specification 003 (TS 003) must be installed on the doorset to which a caller can be expected, normally the front door.

A door viewer meeting the requirements with the Door & Hardware Federation Technical Specification 002 (TS 002) standard must be fitted between 1200mm and 1500mm (in addition to 1050mm for wheelchair accessible homes) from the bottom of the door, this is not required if the doorset is installed with clear glazing or if there is a side panel with clear glazing.

Letter plates to should not be retrofitted to any SBD compliant doorset as this will invalidate the certification.

Letter plates should have a maximum aperture size of 260mm x 400mm, not be removable from the exterior side of the doorset and be 400mm from the internal locking point or provided with a suitable internal deflector plate.

SECURED BY DESIGN HOMES 2019 Version 2, March 2019
https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides

Information on Communal Entrance Doors

- Communal entrance doors, should in addition, have an automatic closing and be fitted with an automatic deadlocking lock, with an internal thumb turn, knob or handle. External entry must be by latch withdrawal by use of the key, not by lever. On outward opening doors hinges should be protected by hinge bolts or similar.
- Where there are less than 5 flats but they are spread over more than 2 floors and are served by a common entrance the doors must be fitted visitor door entry system and access control system, with an electronic lock release and entry phone linked to the flats.
- Where 5 or more flats but less than 10 flats are served by a common entrance the doors must be fitted visitor door entry system and access control system to enable management oversight of the security of the building and , with an electronic lock release and entry phone linked to the flats. Doorsets within this category shall meet the following:
  - PAS 24:2016;
  - STS 201;
  - LPS 2081 Security Rating B+.
- Where 10 or more flats are served by a common entrance consideration must be given to the use of CCTV, for facial identification, to be used in conjunction with the unit access control release or concierge system. Doorsets may be required to meet higher standards to cope with greater use as agreed with the DOCO.

Information on Windows

- Easily accessible windows certified to:
  - PAS 24:2016 (Note 22.2b);
  - STS 204 Issue 6:2016 (Note 22.2c);
  - LPS 1175 Issue 7.2:2014 Security Rating 1 (Note 22.2d);
  - LPS 1175 Issue 8:2018 Security Rating 1/A1;
  - STS 202 Issue 7:2016 Burglary Rating 1; or
  - LPS 2081 Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating A.
- Easily accessible windows must have key operated locks unless designated as emergency egress routes within the Building Regulations. Where necessary, opening restrictors or similar built-in mechanisms will be required. Where windows are required under the building regulations to act as a fire escape route, the opening window must not have key operated locks. In these circumstances glazing must be laminated glass to BS EN 356:2000 class P1A will be required.
- Windows that are not easily accessible will require either lockable hardware or an opening restrictor in the interests of child safety.

- Windows must also be fit for purpose and shall be certificated to the relevant material standard i.e.:
  - BS 7412:2007 (PVC-U)
  - BS 4873: 2016 (Aluminium)
  - BS 6510: 2010 (Steel)
  - BS 644: 2012 (Timber)
  - BS 8529: 2017 (Composite)
- The following performance requirements are also required: BS 6375 parts 1 & 2 (appropriate performance levels, relating to air permeability, water tightness and wind resistance)

Information on External Lighting

- Lighting should be designed to cover all external doorsets.
- The use of LED light sources is recommended with a colour temperature of no more than 4000 Kelvin and ideally below. This reduces blue light content and therefore the effects on human and ecology receptors.
- 24-hour lighting (switched using a photoelectric cell) to communal parts of blocks of flats will be required. It is acceptable if this is dimmed during hours of low occupation to save energy.
- Secured by Design encourages, wherever possible, the use of the most environmentally friendly light sources, encourages the use of good quality LED lighting and other energy effective light sources and advises against the use of fluorescent lighting which is environmentally unsustainable for a variety of reasons

Intruder Alarms

- Where an intruder alarm system is installed then it shall meet the requirements of BS EN 50131 (wired and wire free systems). All installations shall be in accordance with the current electrical regulations.

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2b Staircases & balustrades must be safe.

There are in excess of two million injuries in the UK from accidents in the home each year, many due to trips and falls. Homes should be designed and maintained to reduce the risk of accidents and all opportunities should be taken by landlords to improve building related safety.

The Building Research Establishment Centre for Safety Health and Environment publish a Digest (458) ‘Safe as Houses’ that provides a useful checklist: www.bre.co.uk

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3d Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes.

Energy Performance and Insulation

1. For emerging research and tools on climate resilience and mitigation in Wales please see - 'Climate Vulnerability Modelling: How resilient is Welsh housing stock to a changing climate?'
2. Emerging best practice information on heating, thermal insulation and ventilation is available at: Energy Saving Trust: Measures to help reduce home heat loss - Measures to help reduce home heat loss - Energy Saving Trust

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3g Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances.

There are many ways that properties can be made more water efficient and therefore use less water every time they are used whilst achieving the desired outcome (i.e. washing hands, showering, etc.). There are different types of consumption in the household which are predominately; flow use and frequency use. Flow use is seen from taps and showers and is controlled by the user and frequency use is for fittings that have a fixed volume such as a toilet or washing machine. Both types can be made more water efficient through either flow restriction/aeration or by purchasing fittings/appliances that consume less water per use.

For flow use, a simple and cost effective way of reducing the flow rate of existing and new fittings is through 'aeration'. Aeration is where air is passively mixed to the water and creates a 'bubble effect' with even flow distribution (this even distribution also reduces the risks of splashing and risks associated with water on hard surfaces). Fittings that create aeration can be retrofitted to the majority of fittings (predominately bathroom sinks and showers) and also restrict flows whilst still providing enough flow.

The provision of aerating showerheads have been shown to be a readily acceptable low cost method of reducing water consumption see Water and Energy Efficient Showers: Project Report, Richard Critchley, United Utilities and Dr David Phipps, Liverpool John Moores University May 2007, www.waterwise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/United-Utilities_Water-and-Energy-Efficient-Showers_Project-Report.pdf.

The EST report 'At Home with Water' presents analysis from the Energy Saving Trust's Water Energy Calculator and is a useful guide to reducing water consumption in the home. At Home with Water,
EST 2013, www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/reports/AtHomewithWater%287%29.pdf

For volume use, options to make existing fittings/appliances more water efficient is more challenging with the main one being a displacement device for a syphon flush toilet cistern (these usually have a 9 litre flush which can be reduced to 6/7 litres). Other appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers would need to be

replaced by more water efficient models to achieve savings for the occupier in both water and energy.

There are many resources available with further detail on how landlords can make properties more water efficient and how occupiers can reduce water consumption through behaviour changes. Waterwise (an independent, not-for-profit NGO focussed on reducing water consumption in the UK) covers many areas of water use and gives both practical and behavioural advice - www.waterwise.org.uk/save-water

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4f Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets.

Minimum provision of electrical socket-outlets

The charity Electrical Safety First provide a document 'Guidance on: Minimum provision of electrical Socket-outlets in the home' https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/1204/guidance-on-minimum-provision-socketsv2.pdf

Not having sufficient socket-outlets may lead to risks such as:

- DIY extensions to circuits undertaken unsafely if the work is carried out by unskilled persons
- DIY extension to equipment flexes
- Cascading (daisy chaining) of extension leads
- Stacking of adaptor plugs

All of the above will create potential hazards, such as risk of tripping over leads, electric shock or injury and damage to property through fire.

Where a home is being rewired it is recommended that the minimum requirements set out of their guidance document are complied with. The table below is an extract from Table 1 of the guidance describing the minimum requirement for twin socket provision.

Minimum number of twin socket-outlets to be provided in homes:

Location Type	Smaller rooms (Up to 12m²)	Medium rooms (12-25 m²)
Main living area	4	6
Dining area	3	4
Single bedroom	2	3
Double bedroom	3	4
Kitchen area	6	8
Hallways and landings	1	2

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4g Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring.

The Health and Safety Executive provides a technical information sheet on assessing the slip resistance of flooring which although intended for use in a commercial and industrial setting may be of use in assessing appropriate flooring coverings in these areas. 'Assessing the slip resistance of flooring A technical information sheet' HSE. Available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis2.pdf

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5b Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring.

Due to the close proximity of water, heat and electricity there are a number of safety hazards that need to be considered.

Bathrooms are quite often small rooms with confined space; careful planning and the installation of helpful safety features can help to diminish the risk of accidents occurring, for example:

- Water and condensation cause slippery surfaces. The installation of non-slip mats or surfaces inside the bath, together with the fitting of grab rails at suitable positions could reduce the risk of nasty falls.
- Hot water can cause burns and the temperature of the water should be considered carefully. Consider whether there will be any dramatic change in temperature should other water appliances be used around the house.
- All light fittings operated from within the bathroom should be fitted with a pull cord. If a light switch is used, it should be situated outside the bathroom.
- Any electric heaters should be fitted with fixed and permanent wiring. Electric heaters should be situated out of reach of the bath.

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6b At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings.

In May 2020, the Bevan Foundation published a report *Solving Poverty: Reforming help with housing costs.* This referenced specifically the provision of flooring.

www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Solving-Poverty-Support-with-housing-costs-pdf.pdf

The following standards may also be helpful:

- BS EN 1307:2014 - TEXTILE FLOOR COVERINGS. CLASSIFICATION
- BS EN 1307 specifies the requirements for classification, domestic or commercial, of all carpets and carpet tiles, excluding rugs and runners into use classes.
- BS EN 1307 is linked to BS EN ISO 10874:2012, which is a classification system for resilient, textile and laminate floor coverings. The classification is based on practical requirements for areas of use and intensity of use.

End use classification for domestic use is:

- Class 21 - Moderate Domestic Use
- Class 22 - General Domestic Use
- Class 23 - Heavy Domestic Use

6d As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household.

Please see the two links below, that whilst refer to new housing do contain ideas that could be incorporated and considered for existing homes.

Case study from Canada:
www.housingresearchcollaborative.scarp.ubc.ca/files/2019/06/Culturally-Appropriate-Housing-2019PLAN530-CMHC.pdf

Case study from Ireland (pages 39-41):
www.housingagency.ie/sites/default/files/55.%2011_04_13-Good-Practice-Guidelines-in-Housing-Management_Housing-Minority-Ethnic-Communities_2011.pdf *Back to text*

6e Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments.

Visibly Better is RNIB's accreditation scheme for social landlords, who have older people independent living schemes or care homes within their housing portfolio – see link below for further information.

Visibly Better: Visibly better - accessible housing and buildings | RNIB | RNIB

8c Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly.

Case study with Tai Tarian:

40090_BFS_Tai Tarian_E.pdf (biodiversitywales.org.uk)

Case study with the Gwent Green Grid Partnership:

Nature Isn't Neat

Further guidance can be found at:

- Wales Biodiversity Partnership**:** website for general information about biodiversity and what we can do to help Wales Biodiversity Partnership - Home (biodiversitywales.org.uk)

Links to Planting for Pollinators:

- www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/809/en-GB

A longer list of suggested plants for pollinators can be found on:

- www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Content/Upload/Bee-friendly-plant-list-ENG.pdf
- Healthy for Bees: Healthy for People: Managing the grounds of public buildings for pollinators' www.naturalresources.wales/media/681901/managing-the-grounds-of-public-buildings-for-pollinators.pdf
- Plantlife road verges management guide: www.plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/management-guidelines
- Pesticides: code of practice | GOV.WALES

Information on grass verges can be found here :

It's for Them campaign: stakeholder toolkit | GOV.WALES

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Appendix 2 – Balancing Carbon Emissions across a Housing Portfolio

Introduction: why the guidance is necessary, and the problem being addressed

The primary objective of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is for all homes to meet the Affordable Warmth and Decarbonisation targets as set out in Part 3 of the standard. To this end establishing a practical and funded 'Target Energy Pathway' for each dwelling is the priority.

Element 3(b) requires that 'Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)'. The EIR (Environmental Impact Rating) is to be estimated using the latest version of the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings.

It is recognised that in some cases:

- measures required to achieve this standard may not be physically practicable due to heritage/conservation issues and/or other practical considerations may prevent them.
- measures may be currently cost prohibitive, in which case measures must be planned and included as part of a future programme of works.

Either of these situations presents a challenge to the landlord's goal of reducing carbon emissions for their housing stock as a whole.

The provisional outline solution to this challenge, as stated in the draft standard, is that 'homes with a low EIR (high CO_2 emissions) could be balanced by more efficient homes or other defined Carbon Balancing Measures to meet carbon emissions targets for the housing stock'. The use of these mechanisms will need to be explained in the social landlord's Whole Stock Assessment documentation and updated as required by WHQS.

This guidance fulfils the commitment in Appendix 2 of the draft standard to provide a description of the proposal to balance EIRs between homes, examples of acceptable schemes and a narrative to limit the use of offsetting.

These guidance notes are subject to change and development. They will be updated periodically.

EIR and Annual CO_2 emissions

The EIR is derived from the Annual SAP based CO_2 emissions from a dwelling associated with space heating, water heating, ventilation and lighting, less the emissions saved by energy generation technologies. It is adjusted for floor area so that it is essentially independent of dwelling size for a given built form. The EIR is expressed on a scale of 1 to 100, the higher the number the better the standard.

As a useful, readily available, familiar and understandable metric this has been selected as an appropriate measure for setting the Target for carbon emissions.

Additional metrics are, however, necessary to monitor progress towards the targets. The first of these is Annual SAP based CO_2 emissions on which EIR is based. This is provided in CO_2 kg/year or CO_2 metric tonnes per year on EPCs, or from SAP software packages, and should be available for all dwellings where an EIR or Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) are available.

Landlords will need to report EER, EIR and Annual SAP based CO2 emissions at dwelling level as part of their annual WHQS reporting process. At a stock level they will need to report annual real carbon emissions produced and any balancing claimed.

Permitted approaches for balancing emissions

There are two permitted approaches for Carbon Balancing Measures against poorly performing dwellings.

It should be emphasised that these only address regulated energy i.e. energy use arising from heating and lighting. No account is taken of unregulated energy use e.g. TVs, cooking, etc.

Non permitted approaches for balancing emissions

The Balancing Carbon Emissions paper follows the Oxford Offsetting Principles - *'**Ensure environmental integrity** – Use offsets that are verifiable and can be properly accounted for and have a low risk of non-additionality, reversal, and creating negative impacts on people and the environment'* [15]

In particular WG currently wishes to avoid landlords receiving WG funding to undertake works to reduce carbon emissions and then 'sell' those reductions on as carbon credits.

1 Balancing dwellings with an EIR below 92 against negative carbon emitting dwellings (EIR of 101 or more)

Critical to achieving compliance with Element 3(b) are those dwellings owned by landlords that have negative annual carbon emissions, i.e. the amount of renewable energy they produce is more than the carbon impact of any energy they use. These are readily identifiable from the landlord's energy database from their negative Annual CO2 emissions and their EIR which will be greater than 100.

When aggregated for the whole stock the total negative Annual CO2 emissions can be balanced against those dwellings where an EIR of 92 cannot be achieved either because it is not physically practicable, or heritage considerations prevent this, or because it is currently cost prohibitive.

[15] Oxford Offsetting Principles – Oncra

2 Balancing dwellings with an EIR below 92 against generation of renewable energy by the landlord

Alongside increasing its number of dwellings with negative annual carbon emissions, a landlord may choose to provide renewable energy to a dwelling to balance annual CO2 emissions. An example might be where a Landlord owns land or buildings adjacent to dwellings and chooses to supply them with renewable energy generated from them. This category could include blocks of flats with solar installed, but where the PV supply heads back to the grid and only serves communal areas.

Another example might be where a Landlord owns land and chooses to install a ground pipe array on the land to which ground source heat pumps can connect, which may include some serving dwellings outside their ownership. The landlord will be supplying them with renewable energy that would not otherwise necessarily have produced. It is therefore reasonable that the CO2 emissions this renewable energy displaces from fossil fuel sourced energy sources (i.e. the grid) can be balanced against the Annual CO2 Emissions of poorly performing dwellings in its stock.

The amount of Annual CO2 emissions balanced would be equivalent to the Annual CO2 emissions displaced by the energy produced by the renewable generation system.

Challenges of the balancing approach

Dwellings with an EIR of 92 will still emit CO2. This CO2 is not included in the balancing mechanisms. Some see this as a challenge to the approach taken here to balancing carbon emissions. The argument in favour of this approach is that it is likely that these dwellings will ultimately use low/zero carbon electricity from the grid and so will become carbon neutral when the grid is decarbonised. This is less likely for older, traditionally constructed homes which may have to persist in using fossil fuel sources for a longer period and therefore require the balancing approach to be adopted.

Examples

1 Balancing dwellings with an EIR (below 92) against negative carbon emitting dwellings (EIR of 101 or more)

A landlord has a total of 100 dwellings with negative carbon emissions ranging from -0.2 to -1.5 metric tonnes per annum, beyond EIR of 92, and amounting to a total of -40 metric tonnes per annum. The landlord also owns 10 small solid walled dwellings averaging 4 tonnes per annum in CO2 emissions beyond EIR of 92. These are located in a conservation area where external insulation is not permitted and internal insulation is not practical due to the reduction in room sizes. If these were the only stock owned by the landlord then the negative carbon emissions from the 100 dwellings would balance the positive emissions of the 10 and the landlord would have achieved a net zero housing stock.

2 Balancing dwellings with an EIR (below 92) against generation of renewable energy by the landlord

A landlord has a yard/depot where it has minimal electricity requirements but has land and buildings suitable for PV installation which is not sufficient to supply its tenants direct. The landlord installs PV and sells it to the grid. The landlord can claim as Carbon Balancing Measures the equivalent in negative carbon that it displaces from the grid. This should be calculated based on the actual output of the PV array and notional CO2 emissions for fossil fuel generated electricity for the reporting year.

Questions and draft answers

1 Question: Is there to be an overall limit on the amount of balancing permitted by landlords (e.g. 25%, 30%, 50%, etc.)?

Answer: There should not be a limit (as this may deter innovation), and none is needed while the SAP targets are maintained to provide a trajectory for cost related improvements.

2 Question: Are there any negative unintended consequences to limiting the extent of balancing?

Answer: Setting a limit may lead to innovation being stifled and therefore there should be no limits as suggested immediately above.

3 Question: Would we wish to allow renting of land or buildings for renewable energy generation or does this just encourage the landlord to become an energy generation company? More generally could this undermine the main goal of providing housing that meets the standard.

Answer: The SAP target should prevent this from occurring and such innovations are not discouraged.

4 Question: What are the limits of where balancing can come from. Should they be as set out above or more restricted e.g. property related directly, landlord owned? Or should they be less restricted (rented, borrowed, etc.), in region, country, etc.?

Answer: Any unusual or innovative schemes would need to be agreed with WG.

Appendix 3 – Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathway

1 Introduction

This guidance is to support landlords to achieve the targets as set out in Part 3 of the standard 'Affordable to heat and minimise Environmental Impact.'

This guidance sets out an approach that landlords may wish to follow to carry out a Whole Stock Assessment (WSA) and produce Target Energy Pathways (TEPs).

This guidance note will be reviewed regularly and updated if required.

This guidance notes covers the following:

1. A **Whole Stock Assessment** which is a review of a landlord's stock condition and energy efficiency data, software and data analytical skills with the purpose of gaining and demonstrating a sufficient understanding of their current housing stock. This section describes considerations around data, proprietary software and analytical skills that a landlord requires.

2. A **Target Energy Pathway** identifies measures that can lead to the decarbonisation of an individual dwelling such that it can be heated by a low carbon heating system at affordable cost. The section outlines a process landlords may use to develop a TEP for all their homes, introduces Housing Stock Energy Modelling software and discusses the role of both Energy Performance Certificates and SAP models.

3. **Sequencing** housing stock improvements. Landlords should segment their housing stock into manageable categories of risk and difficulty. This section introduces a process to categorise homes prior to co-ordinating with existing capital programmes and sets a definition for cost prohibitive measures and practicability.

4. **Reporting** to Welsh Government. This section outlines the reporting required for TEPs aligned with the information in Chapter 5 'Compliance' of the standard.

2 Whole Stock Assessment

A Whole Stock Assessment is a review of a landlord's stock condition, energy efficiency data, software and data analytical skills with the purpose of understanding their current housing stock. Landlords should undertake an assessment of SAP and EIR ratings for every dwelling. Delivering this will also identify data which summarises the current energy efficiency and other stock characteristics, for example the age and type of dwellings.

2.1 Assets required to form a Whole Stock Assessment

The Whole Stock Assessment is a pre-requisite to the development of Target Energy Pathways. To effectively plan their TEPs landlords will need to consider data, software and analytical skills.

2.1.1 Data

Landlords require a high-quality picture of their stock, provided by the data they hold. An assessment of data quality should be undertaken as part of the WSA process and a **Data Quality Improvement Plan** should be developed to address any shortcomings identified.

An initial dataset can include the Open EPC dataset[16] and data held on building components (e.g. roofs, walls, windows) in asset management systems. The first stage of a Data Quality Improvement Plan may require some data acquisition, for example Open EPC data. Once acquired, landlords should be able to undertake a WSA and begin the process of developing TEPs.

Assessing data quality should include consideration of the following dimensions[17]:

- **Relevance:** The data should meet the requirements for the intended use: this is to model properties to determine energy and carbon metrics in relation to decarbonisation of homes. For energy efficiency data the relevance of the data required may be dictated by the Housing Stock Energy Modelling (see section 3.5) software used by the landlord.

- **Accuracy:** For whatever data described, it needs to be reviewed for accuracy and should reflect reality. It is recommended to review and reassess housing energy efficiency data for a random sample of cases to determine the likely level of data accuracy in all cases.

- **Completeness:** The local housing and energy related data should not have missing values or missing data records. Where data is incomplete then data can either be gathered by a targeted survey for the specific purpose of data collection or inferred from another source. Where the latter approach is taken this should be a temporary measure and an assessment of the data quality made.

- **Uniqueness:** Uniqueness measures the number of duplicates. Data is unique if it appears only once in a data set. Duplication is a particular risk when combining data sets.

  Consistency: Consistency is achieved when data values do not conflict with other values within a record or across different data sets. For example, main heating fuel should be consistent with the heating system type. Consistent data improves the ability to link data from multiple sources.

[16] Energy Performance of Buildings Data: England and Wales, DLUHC https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/
[17] The Government Data Quality Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- **Timeliness:** The data should be up to date. EPC and other energy efficiency housing assessments are likely to be out of date and not necessarily represent the up-to-date position on energy efficiency. It is important that any changes in the stock, particularly improvements, are included in Housing Stock Energy Modelling software databases or databases linked to Housing Stock Energy Modelling software and the SAP/EIRs they produce reflect the most up to date data.

- **Validity:** Validity is defined as the extent to which the data conforms to the expected format, type, and range. Having valid data means that it can be used with other sources. It also helps to promote the smooth running of automated data processes. The expected data format for energy data may be dictated by the requirements of the proprietary Housing Stock Energy Modelling software. These require, for example, specific description of building typologies; detached, semi-detached, terraced etc. These may not correspond to typologies used in asset management systems. Such data would require translation into the appropriate format before it could be used in Housing Stock Energy Modelling Software.

The data quality assessment should lead to the development and implementation of a **Data Quality Improvement Plan**.

It is important to emphasise that assessing and improving data quality is an iterative process. This work should not prevent landlords from starting their work on developing TEPs using currently available data.

2.1.2 Software

It is recommended that Housing Stock Energy Modelling software products, with the capability to model impact of improvements, will be required to develop TEPs. (see Section 3 and 3.5)

2.1.3 Analytical skills

Landlords will need to undertake complex modelling of both the impact of potential measures on SAP and EIR ratings and the cost of these measures. In addition, asset management skills, experience and housing stock knowledge will be essential.

3 Target Energy Pathways

The targets needed to be achieved for the Target Energy Pathways are set out in Part 3a, 3b and 3c of the standard.

A Target Energy Pathway identifies measures that can lead to the decarbonisation of an individual dwelling such that it can be heated by a low carbon heating system at affordable cost.

Landlords must develop TEPs which identify measures and the sequence in which they should be undertaken in every dwelling, based on their data, capital programmes and understanding of their stock. This will involve assessing, prioritising and sequencing all identified energy efficiency improvements to all properties in the context of the time and resources available.

3.1 Initial Target Energy Pathways and the iterative process

It is up to individual landlords to decide how they produce their TEPs. An example of a process for producing a TEP is described below:

1. Identify all conventional[18] applicable energy efficiency improvement measures that could be applied to each dwelling in the stock. This will define an initial TEP. Housing Stock Energy Modelling software will enable this process. This will define an initial TEP.

Please note: TEP's are likely to be modified when new technologies, sources of finance and resources make pathways possible that were previously considered unworkable. The development and refinement of TEPs is an iterative process.

2. Remove any measures where there are operational barriers to delivering them. These might include planning or building regulations restrictions or known PAS 2035 restrictions. A PAS 2035 retrofit assessment is not required in advance of developing a TEP. At this stage, the cost of the measure, including all enabling works, should not be considered as a barrier.
3. Scheduling of installation of energy efficiency measures should be aligned with existing capital programmes to maximise operational efficiency to avoid energy efficiency measures being prevented for long periods[19]. Refer to 4.1 Using categories for further detail.
4. Scheduling should ensure delivery of SAP 75 by 2030.
5. Amend scheduling to reflect landlord's own policies and priorities e.g. 'worst first' approach to scheduling improvement measures.
6. Amend scheduling profile to reflect supply chain and landlord resource capacity, with assumptions made about requirements for scale up.

For some dwellings it may not be possible to identify TEPs without gathering additional data and for others where data is missing or identified as inaccurate the

[18] An example of such measures would include those described in RdSAP2012 Appendix T

[19] For example internal wall insulation installation being operationally inefficient to the landlord and unacceptable to the tenant following recent bathroom or kitchen installation

TEPs will need to be treated with caution. For most dwellings, however, TEPs of reasonable quality should be possible to develop from existing data sources.

3.2 Archetypes and examples of Typical Stock

Some dwellings will have identical TEPs, and many will have similar characteristics. This is known as identifying archetypes in the landlord's stock. These archetypes may be used to identify suites of TEPs which can be used to plan the decarbonisation of the stock.

It is not necessary to undertake a PAS 2035 retrofit assessment to develop a TEP. Familiarity with the PAS 2035 process is essential to ensure TEPs take account of possible barriers or early actions. Experience of PAS 2035 retrofit assessments can be used to improve the quality of TEPs, for instance where they better inform appropriate measures for in similar dwellings. The PAS 2035 process should be undertaken before installing measures in each dwelling, including consultation with each individual tenant at an early stage.

3.3 Use of EPCs and SAP methodology

SAP is the methodology used by the UK government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. The SAP rating is a standardised fuel cost-based indicator (running from 1 to 100). SAP is used by landlords, and in the WHQS 2023, to track the energy efficiency of housing. Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are based on RdSAP and provide a score (the SAP rating and associated EPC banding) for the energy efficiency of homes together with recommendations for which improvements can be applied.

Landlords can develop their own approaches to undertaking WSAs and TEPs , using Housing Stock Energy Modelling software, however;

- the WSA must provide a current SAP and EIR rating for every dwelling,
- the TEP must provide a SAP rating, an EIR rating and an estimate of what the CO2 emissions for every dwelling would be once the measures specified by the TEP had been implemented, and
- These metrics must be reported to WG on an annual basis.

The current version of SAP must be used to produce these assessments for the plan.

3.4 Relationship between SAP and low carbon heating.

Currently, it is possible for SAP scores to decrease when low carbon heat sources, such as heat pumps replace gas boilers, usually where default values are used.

Consequently, the indicator of SAP based CO2 should be monitored in parallel to support the transition to decarbonising the housing stock[20].

Other fabric-based indicators, such as the Heat Loss Parameter (HLP[21]), are useful in understanding the readiness of a home for installation of a low carbon heating system. Landlords should target a building Heat Loss Parameter (HLP) value of between 2.6 and 2.0 W/m2K (or lower).

3.5 Housing Stock Energy Modelling software

It is recommended that Landlords consider acquiring Housing Stock Energy Modelling software to support the development of their WSA and TEPs. Such software may include:

- calculation of the impact of alternative measures to those included in EPCs, notably heat pumps
- calculation of the impact of alternative sequences of measures that may fit in better with current repairs and maintenance programmes
- calculation using alternative assumptions, for example different carbon emissions factors or newer versions of SAP
- inbuilt graphics and reporting
- integration with asset management systems
- data quality assessment tools.

3.6 Alternative Certified Performance Standards

There are Certified Performance Standards that establish low carbon energy usage and efficiency of dwellings. These include, as examples, AECB Carbonlite, Passivhaus and Enerphit. These standards establish outputs in metrics other than 'SAP' and 'EIR' ratings. Landlords may use Certified Performance Standards to model homes, but they also need to report to WHQS the 'SAP' and EIR' rating for the home.

WG recognises that Certified Performance Standards are comparable to SAP 92 and EIR 92, even if these ratings are not achieved, and these homes are accepted and can be reported in WHQS as a 'Conditional Pass – Other Metrics/ Offsetting'.

[20] Alternative CO2 metrics such as actual CO2 emissions based on actual energy use are difficult to access and will vary according to occupancy and socio-economic impacts. The SAP based metric is therefore preferred as it is based on a notional use of the dwelling rather than an actual occupier's use of the dwelling.

[21] The Heat Loss Parameter (**HLP**) is a measure of the rate of heat transfer to or from the building per degree of temperature difference between inside and out, normalised by the total floor area with units of W/m 2 K. The HLP is calculated under the bonnet of all performance assessments, including EPC and SAP assessments.

3.7 Housing and adapting to Climate Change

When considering measures to improve affordable warmth and decarbonise homes, landlords should also consider the impact of future Climate Change on the proposed measures such as increased potential for overheating and increased humidity in homes.

For emerging research and tools on climate resilience and mitigation in Wales please refer to factsheets and reports on the following page:

Climate Vulnerability Modelling: How resilient is Welsh housing stock to a changing climate?

4. Sequencing housing stock improvements

Landlords should segment their housing stock into manageable categories of risk and difficulty, for example in the form of a traffic light system as green, amber and red segments. The determination of these categories will be informed by the Whole Stock Assessment and Target Energy Pathways.

4.1 Using categories to help sequence housing stock

These categories will help to summarise the housing stock so that the most appropriate measures can be applied to houses at optimal points in time, for example;

- Green: Homes in good condition with no structural issues or defects and minimal other identifiable risks from retrofit, including for example:
    - Dwellings which already achieve a high EPC band C or above
    - Dwellings where straightforward measures (such as loft insulation) are capable of taking it to this point with minimal risk.

- Amber: Homes in good condition with no structural issues or defects and manageable retrofit risks, but where measures are cost prohibitive, or impractical. These could include for example:
    - Practicability: Floor insulation identified through tenant survey as unacceptable due to disruption.
    - Cost Prohibitive: External wall insulation and window upgrades that are known to be only cost effective when undertaken as part of a planned programme and are due to reach a dwelling in several years time.
    - Cost Prohibitive: External wall insulation costs are well understood from previous projects and no funding is currently available to undertake a programme of works.

- Red: All remaining homes presenting more significant challenges including for example;
    - Those in poor condition and/or with structural issues,

- Non-standard construction,
- Dwellings in exposed locations with severe moisture risk,
- All remaining dwellings which will require significantly modified solutions or even an alternative solution (e.g. partial retrofit or redevelopment).

Further segmentation of the housing stock, beyond these three groups, will be required to improve prioritisation and sequencing as programmes of work develop. This process will be iterative and continuous and will be informed by emerging data analysis of the housing stock, advances in technology, budget availability and risk management.

4.2 Cost prohibitive and practicality of measures.

Cost prohibitive can be defined as including:

- Those measures that do not create a sufficient improvement in quality or cost of energy for the resident.
- Those measures that are not cost effective unless undertaken as part of a planned programme and no programme has been identified or
- Where funding is limited to undertake work

Practicality of measures can be defined as

- Those measures that cannot be put into practice safely or successfully
- Needing to address defects such as damp and roof repairs ahead of energy efficient measures
- Intrusive to tenants compared to the benefits for example internal wall or floor insulation.

5 Reporting on WHQS

The TEP for each dwelling will need to be reported to Welsh Government. The proposed format is a property led reporting noting current and proposed SAP/EIR scores and SAP modelled CO_2 emissions, together with an indication of the planned implementation date for each home.

Landlords should produce a brief narrative to support the individual TEPs produced. The narrative should contain:

- The approach to generating TEPs;
- The asset and modelling systems used to gather, record and process information;
- A Data Quality Improvement Plan, if one has been produced;
- Information on proposed measures for each significant archetype of property and outline the rationale behind their approach; and
- Information where homes will not reach the targets set out in the standard.

Appendix 4 – Nominal occupancy and spaces for everyday living

Social landlords should note that the nominal occupancy designation of properties held before 31 March 2024 may remain unless it is practical and cost effective to achieve the requirements below.

The requirements set out below are to apply to acquisitions (new build) and refurbished acquisitions (existing homes) from 1 April 2024 onwards. New builds space standards must comply with WDQR 2021.

Bedroom sizes required

The **minimum floor area applicable for bedrooms** are as follows:

- 6.5m^2 for a single bedroom
- 10.2m^2 for a double/ twin bedroom

The **ceiling height** of any habitable room should be at least 2.3m and, in any habitable room with a sloping ceiling, at least one-half of the floor area should have a ceiling height of at least 2.3m. Any part of the floor area of a room in relation to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.8m is not to be considered in determining the floor area of that room.

The **narrowest point** of any bedroom should be no less than 2.1m in width and measuring the minimum distance to a point in an alcove is not acceptable. The bedroom floor area is measured to the internal finished surfaces of the walls excluding chimney recesses, space taken up by mechanical/electrical installations or general storage e.g. an airing cupboard.

Ideal furniture requirements

All bedrooms should be able to accommodate beds in more than one position and allow circulation space, including sufficient bed-making space (400mm x length of bed(s)).

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Furniture item and size (mm)</th><th colspan="3">Number of items per bedroom type</th></tr>
<tr><th>Single</th><th>Double</th><th>Twin</th></tr>
<tr><td>Single bed (2,000 x 900)</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Double bed (2,000 x 1,500)</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bedside table 400 x 400</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chest of drawers – 450 x 750</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Single wardrobe (600 x 600)</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td rowspan="2">2 singles or 1 double</td></tr>
<tr><td>Double wardrobe (1,200 x 600)</td><td>-</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Table (1,050 x 500) with seat</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table>

Nominal occupancy

Nominal occupancy is the maximum number of people that should be living in a specific home based on its size. The nominal occupancy for a home is established by the size of the bedrooms, which in turn places a requirement on the amount of living space required. A home with three bedrooms, two doubles (over 10.2m^2 floor area and ideally able to accommodate minimum furniture recommendations) and one single (between 6.5m^2 and 10.2m^2 and ideally able to accommodate minimum furniture recommendations), would be classified as being suitable for five people. It would require a dining room of at least 7m^2 and a lounge of at least 14m^2. These can be combined as indicated in the table below alongside how much floor space is required for households.

Number of Bedrooms		Nominal Occupancy	Living space minimums (m^2)	
Double or Twin Bedroom (Min 10.2m^2)	Single Bedroom (Min 6.5m^2)		Dining*	Lounge
0	2	2	6	10
1	0			
0	3	3		
1	1			
0	4	4	7	12
1	2			
2	0			
0	5	5		14
1	3			
2	1			
0	6	6	8	16
1	4			
2	2			
3	0			
0	7	7	9	
1	5			
2	3			
3	1			

*The notional room size for dining (m^2) may be combined with the kitchen.

Note: The lounge and dining sizes may be combined.

Note: Where a property has additional rooms (e.g. rooms in a converted loft) that are <u>not</u> being used as bedrooms, then the lounge and dining room sizes need only be sufficient for the actual occupancy of the dwelling.

Example from the table above if a dwelling has:

1. Dining room = 7.5m^2 Lounge = 11.5m^2 Single bedrooms = 0 Double bedroom = 1 **Nominal Occupancy = 2**	2. Dining room = 8m^2 Lounge = 16m^2 Single bedrooms = 1 Double bedroom = 2 **Nominal Occupancy = 5**	2. Lounge dinner = 21m^2 Single bedrooms = 2 Double bedroom = 1 **Nominal Occupancy = 4**

Factors to consider

At the allocations stage, landlords should also take into consideration the gender composition and relationship of occupants when considering the sufficiency of space within a home as laid out in the Bedroom Standard. The Bedroom Standard states that a separate bedroom is required for:

- an adult couple who are married, in a civil partnership or cohabiting as if they were married or in a civil partnership (double bedroom)
- any person aged 21 years or more (single or double bedroom)
- any two persons aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom)
- one child under 10 years of age and one person aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom), and
- 1 or 2 children under 10 years of age, not necessarily of the same sex (single or twin bedroom).

Any unpaired person aged 10-20 years is paired, if possible, with a child under 10 years of the same sex or, if that is not possible, they require a separate bedroom. The same applies to any unpaired child aged under 10 years.

Appendix 5 – Compliance dates for elements of the Standard

As laid out in Chapter 4 each element had one of three expected compliance dates depending on the degree of change from the previous version of the Standard.

Element	Compliance date
1a) Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair	continuation
1b) Homes must be free from damp	continuation
2a) External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security	continuation
2b) Staircases & balustrades must be safe	continuation
2c) Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard	continuation
2d) Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements	continuation
2e) Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person	continuation
2f) A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue	continuation
2g) Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less	continuation
2h) All electrical equipment supplied and owned by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually	continuation
2i) Common parts of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate means of warning and escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements	continuation
2j) All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment	continuation
3a) Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92 – EPC A)	set by the Target Energy Pathways

Element	Compliance date
3b) In the interim, all homes must meet a minimum of SAP 75 – EPC C	31 March 2030
3c) Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)	set by the Target Energy Pathways
3d) Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes	31 March 2027
3e) Homes, and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation	continuation
3f) Landlords must make arrangements for a smart meter to be installed in each home	1 April 2024 onwards
3g) Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances	1 April 2024 onwards
3h) Water butts to be installed	1 April 2024 onwards
4a) Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition	continuation
4b) Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances	continuation
4c) Kitchens must be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces	continuation
4d) Homes must have sufficient general storage	continuation
4e) Homes must have adequate space for local recycling requirements	1 April 2024 onwards
4f) Kitchens must have sufficient conveniently located power sockets	continuation
4g) Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring	continuation
4h) Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes	1 April 2024 onwards
5a) Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition	continuation
5b) Bathrooms and WC facilities should have suitable flooring	continuation
5c) Bathrooms must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)	continuation
6a) Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living	continuation

Element	Compliance date
6b) At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings	1 April 2024 onwards
6c) Exposure to noise should be minimised	1 April 2024 onwards
6d) As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household	continuation
6e) Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments	continuation
6f) Homes should be clearly identifiable and have definable boundaries	continuation
7a) There should be an external level space no smaller than $10m^2$ directly accessible from the home	continuation
7b) There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate	continuation
7c) There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present	continuation
7d) Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe	continuation
8a) External lockable storage for cycles and equipment must be made available	1 April 2024 onwards
8b) There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)	continuation
8c) Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly	1 April 2024 onwards

Appendix 6 – Assessment reason codes

Element	Not Applicable		Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail
	NA	No new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/ conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Other Metrics / Offsetting	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Currently cost prohibitive decarb only	Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions	
Homes must be in a good state of repair													
1a) Homes must be structurally stable and free from disrepair			X						X	X			X
1b) Homes must be free from damp			X						X	X		X	X
Homes must be safe and secure													
2a) External doors and windows must provide a reasonable level of physical security			X		X				X	X			X
2b) Staircases & balustrades must be safe	X		X		X				X	X			X
2c) Homes must have an adequate fire detection and alarm system installed and maintained to the appropriate British Standard			X						X	X			X
2d)Homes must have appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building, in accordance with building regulation requirements			X										X
2e) Gas, oil-fired or solid fuel burning combustion appliances and installations must be annually certified as safe by an appropriately qualified person	X		X						X	X			X

Element	Not Applicable		Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail
	NA	No new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/ conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Other Metrics / Offsetting	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Currently cost prohibitive decarb only	Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions	
2f) A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in each room containing a fixed gas appliance, an oil-fired combustion appliance, a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or an associated flue	X		X						X	X			X
2g) Homes must have an electrical safety inspection undertaken by a qualified person at intervals of 5 years or less			X						X	X			X
2h) All electrical equipment supplied and owned by landlords in homes must be safe, comply with the current safety requirements for domestic electrical products and be tested annually	X		X						X	X			X
2i) Common part of flats and other multi-occupied residential buildings must have adequate fire detection, alarm systems and means of escape from fire in accordance with building regulations requirements	X		X										X
2j) All buildings containing more than one dwelling (regardless of whether they also contain common parts) must have a current and up-to-date fire risk assessment	X		X										X
Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact													
3a) Homes must have heating systems which are reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92)			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
3b) In the interim, all homes must meet a minimum of SAP 75 - EPC C			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
3c) Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92)			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
3d) Landlord's must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes	X		X										X

Element	Not Applicable		Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail
	NA	No new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/ conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Other Metrics / Offsetting	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Currently cost prohibitive decarb only	Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions	
3e) Homes and in particular kitchens and bathrooms, must have an adequate amount of ventilation			X					X	X	X			X
3f) Landlords must make arrangements for a smart meter to be installed in each home		X	X	X									X
3g) Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances	X		X					X	X	X			X
3h) Water butts to be installed	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X			X
Homes must have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area													
4a) Kitchens must be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition			X					X	X	X			X
4b) Kitchens must have adequate space for kitchen appliances			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
4c) Kitchens should be well organised and contain sufficient work surfaces			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
4d) Homes should have be sufficient general storage to meet the needs of the nominal occupancy			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
4e) Homes should have adequate space for local recycling requirements			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
4f) Kitchens should have sufficient conveniently located power sockets			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
4g) Kitchens and utility areas must have suitable flooring			X		X			X	X	X			X
4h) Homes must have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
Homes must have an up-to-date bathroom													
5a) Bathrooms and WC facilities must be less than 26 years old, unless in good condition			X					X	X	X			X
5b) Bathrooms and WC facilities must have suitable flooring			X		X			X	X	X			X
5c) Homes must have a shower and a bath (or shower and sufficient space for the provision of a bath)			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
Home must be comfortable and promotes wellbeing													
6a) Homes should have sufficient space for everyday living			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X

Element	Not Applicable		Pass	Conditional Pass				Temporary Fail					Fail
	NA	No new tenancy		Physical constraint	Heritage/ conservation constraint	Cost prohibitive	Other Metrics / Offsetting	Programmed works within 5 years	Tenant refusal	Tenant delay (timing)	Currently cost prohibitive decarb only	Tenant behaviour/ financial restrictions	
6b) At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the dwelling should have suitable floor coverings		X	X		X								X
6c) Exposure to noise should be minimised			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
6d) As far as possible, homes should suit the specific requirements of the household													
6e) Disabled and older people's housing requirements must be planned for and met in accordance with the duty for reasonable adjustments													
6f) Homes should be clearly identifiable with definable boundaries			X	X	X				X	X			X
Homes must have a suitable garden													
7a) There should be an external level space no smaller than 10m^2 directly accessible from the home	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
7b) There should be paved access from the home to any garden gate	X		X	X	X			X	X	X			X
7c) There should be paved access from the home to the drying line if one is present	X		X	X	X			X	X	X			X
7d) Outdoor space must be easy to maintain, and safe	X		X	X	X			X	X	X			X
Homes must have an attractive outside space													
8a) External lockable storage for cycles and equipment must be made available			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
8b) There should be adequate, practical, maintainable and safe community space(s)													
8c) Biodiversity opportunities should be introduced by landlords who own or manage verges, parks, grounds and open green spaces by changing their management of these areas to make them more wildlife friendly													

Glossary

Carbon emissions

Carbon emissions is used to refer to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Carbon dioxide (CO2) is the most common GHG and other gases can be measured in relation to it. CO2 is a colourless, odourless and non-poisonous gas formed by combustion of carbon and in the respiration of living organisms and is considered a greenhouse gas. CO2 emissions stem from the burning of fossil fuels and the manufacture of cement; they include carbon dioxide produced during consumption of solid, liquid, and gas fuels as well as gas flaring.

Decarbonisation

To largely eliminate the release of CO2 emissions produced as a result of a process or activity.

Dwelling, Home and Property

These terms are used interchangeably in some places of the document depending on the context and influence of other documents and policy statements. The meanings of the word dwelling, home, and property for the purposes of this guidance are the same.

A building structure, such as a house, flat or apartment, that is intended to be, or is used for human habitation.

Fitness for human habitation (FFHH) requirements

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, landlords (private and social sectors) must ensure that the dwelling is FFHH on the date of occupation by tenant/s, and throughout the term of the occupation contract (tenancy agreement). Landlords are also required to keep the dwelling in good repair, including the structure and exterior of the dwelling as well as the service installations. The FFHH requirements under the 2016 Act and associated regulations include reference to the 29 prescribed hazards (matters and circumstances) set out in Schedule 1 of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006. The FFHH obligation provides a remedy for contract holders to address concerns regarding the quality of their accommodation that fall outside the landlord's repairing obligations. It is for the courts to determine whether a dwelling is FFHH. The Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2021 may result in case law that modifies the application of the HHSRS. Landlords should ensure their interpretation of the application of the HHSRS is up to date with any such case law.

Hazards

Hazards arise from faults or deficiencies in the dwelling which could cause harm.

Tenants, Residents and Occupants

These terms are used interchangeably in some places of the document depending on the context and influence of other documents and policy statements. The meanings of the word tenant and resident for the purposes of this guidance are the same. In addition, the term Occupants is used specifically in reference to the Housing Health and Safety Rating Operating Guidance.

SAP

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the UK Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. SAP quantifies a dwelling's performance in terms of: energy use per unit floor area, a fuel-cost-based energy efficiency rating (the SAP Rating) and emissions of CO2 (the Environmental Impact Rating). Further information can be found at SAP Standard Assessment Procedure - GOV.UK