

Railway Housing Association

Policy Statement

Decent Homes Plus Standard

1. Introduction

The Decent Homes Standard is the minimum standard set by the government that the Association's properties must meet by 31 December 2010. This means that all of our rented homes must: -

- Be free from Category 1 Housing Health & Safety Rating risks i.e. a dwelling (including the structure, any outbuildings, garden, yard or amenity space) and means of access should provide a safe and healthy environment for the occupants and any visitors
- Be in a reasonable state of repair – including the external wall structure, any pointing or render, chimney stack, roof structure and covering, external doors, windows, central heating boiler and system, electrical supply system. An example of unreasonableness is that more than 10% of a roof structure or more than 50% of the roof covering requires replacement. A home will fail to meet the standard if one or more of these components is old and needs replacing or major repair or if two or more other building components are old and need replacing or major repair. Other building components include kitchen and bathroom fittings.
- Have acceptable and modern facilities and services – a dwelling will not meet this standard if it lacks 3 or more of the following –
 - Kitchen units more than 20 years old
 - Adequate space and layout in kitchen
 - Bathroom fittings more than 30 years old
 - Appropriately located bathroom and WC
 - Adequate noise insulation (where external noise is a problem)
 - Adequate size and layout of common areas to blocks of flats
- Provide an acceptable level of thermal comfort by having efficient heating and effective insulation. Homes with gas heating systems should have a minimum of 50mm loft insulation or effective cavity wall insulation. Homes with electric heating must have both cavity wall insulation (where possible) and minimum 200mm loft insulation.

The decent homes standard does not apply to leasehold properties.

2. Decent Homes Plus Standard

In addition to the Decent Homes Standard specified by the Government, the Association has agreed a Decent Homes Plus Standard in consultation with residents. This standard includes the following: -

- Asbestos register for all properties with communal areas such as staircases, hallways and corridors
- Asbestos surveys of individual dwelling prior to major planned maintenance works
- Kitchens replaced after 20 years with choices of kitchen units, wall tiles and flooring
- Ventilation fan in kitchen and bathrooms
- Slip resistant floor coverings in kitchens and bathrooms
- Bathroom fittings replaced after 30 years
- Minimum of two rows of tiles as splash-back to wash hand basin and bath
- Wall tiling or panelling around a shower if it was installed by the Association
- Full central heating with gas central heating boilers replaced after 15 years and electric storage heaters replaced after 25 years
- Thermostatic radiator valves fitted when central heating boilers replaced
- Loft insulation top ups when new central heating systems are fitted
- Annual safety check of gas heating appliances installed by the Association
- External windows and doors replaced after 25 years
- Minimum number of electrical sockets per room
- Communal digital TV aerial on sheltered blocks of apartments
- Gutters and down pipes maintained to reasonable standard of repair
- Re-painting of the external woodwork every 7 years
- Redecorating of communal areas approximately every 7 years
- Non sheltered dwellings – over bath shower fitted when bathroom fittings replaced
- Sheltered dwellings – choice of walk in shower or bath offered (where the building structure allows) when bathroom fittings replaced
- Mains powered smoke alarms installed by the Association will be checked annually
- Communal fire alarm systems will be regularly checked and serviced
- Minor adaptations
- Central warden call equipment in working order

The replacement of components will always be subject to a condition report.

3. Responsibility

The Director of Asset Management is responsible for ensuring that the Association's properties are maintained to this standard.

4. Review

The Decent Homes Plus standard will be reviewed every three years, in consultation with residents.

This standard applies to the beneficiaries of Joseph Hornby Stockdale Almshouses.

October 2010

This document can be made available on request in other languages, large type, Braille or in audio format.