

Landlord property standards



Genesis



Introduction

This booklet sets out the minimum property standards for the leasing schemes operated by Genesis Housing Association. It is a summary and should be used by you as a guide when considering the works needed to bring your property up to the required minimum standard.

These standards are not comprehensive and are subject to alterations which depend on the contract, building regulations, planning and housing and public health legislation. Where necessary, Genesis will interpret such legislation to protect your property and the health and safety of the occupiers.

The Schedule of Works which is drawn up by a Genesis negotiator is the definitive list of what you need to do to your property. Any doubts or differences need to be addressed by the negotiator whose decision on the works required will be final.

Space requirements

Bedroom sizes

The bedroom should have space for the bed(s), a wardrobe, chest of drawers and allow for circulation.

Single bedrooms should be a minimum of 6 sq. m and double bedrooms 10.5 sq. m.

All bedrooms must have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.15m across not less than 3/4 of the room area. Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.53m will be disregarded.

Living room with separate dining area

The size of the living and dining room will depend upon the number of the occupants of the property.

Up to 4 people	9.5 sq. m
Up to 6 people	12 sq. m
Up to 8 people	15 sq. m
8 people and over	18.5 sq. m

Dining room areas should be large enough to fit all the occupiers sitting on chairs around the dining table.

Combined living and dining room

A combined living and dining room should be large enough to accommodate the dining table and chairs and a 3 piece suite suitable for the number of occupants.

Up to 4 people	11 sq. m
Up to 6 people	14 sq. m
For over 6 people a separate living room is required.	

Combined kitchen/diners should have sufficient space around the dining table and be separated from the food preparation area.

Internals

Stairs

Stairs, banisters against open strung stairs and handrails must be strong and well fixed. Handrails must be provided to all internal stairs and landings. Balustrades should have a maximum 100mm space between them and any open risers should be infilled.

Plastic or glazed stair panels, or ranch style banisters will need to be replaced with conventional balustrades or boarded over on both sides with plywood.

Wall and ceiling finishes

Any areas of live plaster, damp penetration, cracks, excessive condensation, mould growth or structural movement must be attended to. Polystyrene tiles must be removed from all the rooms and the surface underneath repaired and redecorated. A rough artex finish to walls where it may be a danger to the occupants should be plastered over to a level and even finish. Artex to ceilings is acceptable. PVC or plastic suspended ceilings need to be replaced with mineral fibre tiles or the suspended ceiling removed entirely and original ceiling repaired to an even finish.

Furniture requirements

Furniture requirements will vary depending on the borough your property is located in. Please discuss with your negotiator to determine what is required. The requirements for furniture and contents are listed overleaf. These items will need to be supplied by you before the property can be let. The furnishings will be expected to last the full term of the lease agreement. Second hand furniture is acceptable, providing it meets all approved safety standards. Owners are advised that under the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) Safety Regulations 1993, all soft furnishings such as mattresses and three piece suites etc, must be clearly labelled and conform to the current fire safety regulations.

We do not require furniture on all schemes. Your negotiator will be able to give you guidance regarding furniture requirements for your property.



Kitchen

Electric or gas four ring cooker
Refrigerator with suitable freezer compartment
Freezers (required in larger properties)
Blind(s)
Adequate cupboards and work surfaces

Lounge/diner

Three piece suite (must not be boat style or Chatsworth)
Dining table (not glass) and the appropriate number of chairs
Nets and heavy curtains

Bedroom 1 (double)

1 x double bed with a new mattress (quilted)
1 x double wardrobe – suitable for purpose
1 x five drawer chest of drawers
Nets and heavy curtains

Bedroom 2 (double)

2 x single beds with new mattresses (quilted)
1 x double wardrobe
1 x five drawer chest of drawers
Nets and heavy curtains

Bedroom 3 (single)

1 x single bed with a new mattress
1 x single wardrobe
1 x three draw chest of drawers
Nets and heavy curtains

Bathroom/W.C.

Sanitary fittings should be clean and in good working order
Bath and sink plugs, W.C. seat and toilet roll holder
Blind(s)

General

All properties must include all white goods, carpets (including underlay and grippers), curtains and nets.

Please note we may conduct a photo inventory.

Internal decoration

All walls, woodwork and ceilings should be clean and in good decorative order with no scuffs, marks or abrasions. Wallpaper should have no tears, marks or gaps and the wallpaper should match.

Walls and ceilings should be finished with vinyl, silk or emulsion paint and joinery and metalwork finished with a gloss finish or stained.

Mirrors

Any large or potentially dangerous mirrors should be removed or covered with clear plastic safety film. Small bathroom mirrors can be retained but they must be well fixed and secure.

Floors

The preferred floor finishes are; sheet vinyl in the kitchen, bathroom and WC and carpets in the remainder of the property, including any stairs.

All floors should be level and even and free from trip hazards and dampness. Floor coverings should be of good quality and condition and they must be able to last the length of the lease. Floor coverings must be properly fitted and secure without rucks or gaps. There should be threshold strips by doorways, when there are changes in floor coverings and where levels change.

Carpets must have underlay or 4mm plywood under the carpet. Vinyl floor coverings in bathrooms and kitchens must be laid on 4mm plywood boarding and the floor must be well sealed with waterproof silicone sealant around all edges.

We will accept ceramic tiles on solid floors in halls, bathrooms, kitchens and WCs. Parquet, wood laminate and varnished floors are acceptable in all rooms apart from the bathroom, the kitchen and the WC (in houses and ground floor accommodation).

Blocks of flats will need an appropriate quality underlay to stop moisture moving from one flat to another.

Cork, carpet tiles or anything similar are not acceptable floor finishes.

Fireplaces

Gas fires with back boilers behind them must be capped off and all other gas fires or wall heaters capped off below floor level and removed.

Unused fireplaces should be properly blocked up and provided with a non-closing vent and fly screen.

Back Boilers

Back boilers are not accepted, even with the gas fires capped off.

Properties up for renewal will not be accepted if are back boilers fitted unless there is a commitment to an immediate upgrade to a combi or indirect sealed system.

Kitchens

In all kitchens there must be at least 2m of worktop space, adequate for food preparation.

Kitchen units

The following list sets out the minimum number of units (or equivalent kitchen storage areas) you should provide in the property.

Property size	Double base unit including sink	Double wall unit
1 bed, 1/2 person	2	1
2 bed, 3/4 person	2	1
3 bed, 5/6 person	3	2
4 bed, 7/8 person	4	3
5 bed, 9/10 person	5	3
6 bed, 10 person	5	4

Kitchen units should be in a good, serviceable condition and worktops must cover all base units.

Tiling

Tiled splash backs (minimum height of 300mm) must be fitted to all walls adjoining worktops and sinks. All tiling should be well fitted and have no cracks, chips or mould. All joints between the worktop and tiles must be sealed with a waterproof silicone sealant.

Flooring

All kitchens must be fitted with waterproof flooring, ideally sheet vinyl, and the flooring must be well sealed around all the edges.

Ceramic floor tiles should be securely fitted on a solid base with all the mortar joints in good condition.

Vinyl floor tiles must be in good condition and professionally laid.

Wood laminate flooring will only be accepted on the understanding that any water or other damage will be your responsibility.

Electrics

At least three unengaged double electric socket outlets with switches should be provided, in addition to sockets for the cooker, toaster and kettle. Sockets should be 100mm above worktop height and no closer than 1m to any water. A double socket or two single sockets at low level for the fridge and a washing machine are also required.

Fridges

In homes of one or two person accommodation there must be a fridge and ice box. In homes of three or more persons there must be a PAT tested fridge freezer or alternatively a new fridge freezer.

Cookers

Cookers should be PAT tested (unless new and in a good condition), securely fitted, at least 900mm in height and with a safety chain or anti-tilt bracket installed. Cookers at the end of units or next to doors are not acceptable. There must be at least 300mm of workspace on one side of the cooker.

All gas appliances including cookers and ovens should be fitted with a flame safety device. Should an appliance not be fitted with one we may replace it at your expense.

Ventilation

The kitchen should be well ventilated with a window that opens.

Kitchens with no windows must be fitted with a mechanical extractor fan that is linked to the light switch and that provides a minimum of four air changes per hour and stays on for 15 minutes after the light has been turned off.

Mechanical waste disposal units

Mechanical waste disposal units must be removed.

Washing machines

You may or may not be required to provide a washing machine but space for a washing machine (ideally in the kitchen) is required where the property has two or more bedrooms. Hot and cold feeds, a low level socket and the waste pipe should be provided in the space and capped off. All machines must be brand new or PAT tested and less than two years old.

Dishwashers

We do not require dishwashers.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms and toilets

A bath is required in properties with two or more bedrooms. Basins and baths must be in a good condition and well sealed to the tiled splash back with waterproof silicone sealant. Tiled splash backs must be in good condition and be a minimum height of 300mm. Baths should be free of chips, rust or staining and adequately supported. Bath panels must be replaceable and securely fixed with cups and screws or concealed fixings.

Toilet pans and seats must be clean, free from cracks or chips and should be well secured to the floor. Mechanical waste disposal systems (Saniflow or equivalent) will not be accepted.

Waste pipes to the toilet, bath and sink should be free flowing, watertight and fitted with overflow pipes. It is preferable to fit an emergency release vanity bolt or indicator bolt with a lock to all bathroom and toilet doors.

Bathrooms should have a window, which is easily opened. Where additional ventilation is required you should fit either a permanent vent through the external wall or provide an airflow ventilator in the window.

Bathrooms with no windows must have a mechanical extractor fan which provides a minimum of four air changes per hour (see kitchen ventilation section for the details).

Any glass in bathroom doors and windows should be opaque. If the toilet and or bathroom are directly off the kitchen you need to provide a wash hand basin in the bathroom.

Showers

Shower cubicles and trays must be of good quality, with full height tiles well sealed to the tray and raised off the ground level on a plinth to allow access to the u trap.

We cannot accept properties with showers or shower fittings over baths. All showers over baths must be removed.

One-bed properties can be fitted with showers only; larger properties must have a bath.

If your property has a fitted shower head it must be flushed through for 20 minutes at a hot temperature and disinfected in a chlorine based solution.

Water supply and Legionella

If your property does not have a fully contained water supply you must provide details of who is responsible for maintaining the water system in the block/converted house. You must also provide any information in regards to contracts and schemes for testing of Legionella and the general upkeep/cleaning and flushing through of systems. If you are a leaseholder you should be able to obtain a copy from your freeholder.

Thermostatic mixer valves

In the event of any thermostatic mixer valves been fitted into the property these should be fixed to each outlet in line with good practice and building regulations.

Fire safety

Fire risk assessment

You may be required to provide a fire risk assessment for communal areas of your property in line with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. If you are a leaseholder you should be able to obtain a copy from your freeholder.

Kitchen doors

Half hour fire check doors with a self-closing device must be fitted to all kitchens to prevent the spread of fire. Where the kitchen is part of the dining room a fire door must be fitted to the living room doorway to provide a protected means of escape from the bedrooms.

Means of escape

No bedrooms should lead directly off the kitchen or kitchen/diner. Open plan ground floors in houses must have a protected means of escape for bedrooms. Bedrooms must open onto a landing or hallway i.e. they cannot be accessed by going through another room.

If the only exit from the property is directly through the kitchen an alternative means of escape must be provided.

If the property is a flat or a maisonette in a block where a communal staircase serves more than one property, the entrance door to the flat must be a half hour fire resistant door and be self closing.

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

In a house with two floors, two smoke detectors must be fitted, one to the ceiling in the hallway outside the kitchen and the second on the landing. Houses with more floors require a minimum of one smoke detector on each landing. Flats need one smoke detector in the hall or common area of each unit.

Smoke detectors must be hard wired mains supplied with battery back up, linked together where there is more than one. They must be E1 151 Professional Range smoke detectors.

A carbon monoxide detector should be provided and must be located close to the boiler.

Doors and windows

Doors

Front doors must be a UVPC or solid core door at least 40mm thick. Main entrance doors to flats need a letterbox with the street and flat numbers on the door (or in a prominent position by the main entrance) and the flat number on the flat entrance door.

Properties above the ground floor must be fitted with a door bell.

Properties above the third floor must be fitted with an intercom or entry phone system and the power supply to it provided by the landlord.

Flats in large blocks need secure letterboxes for tenant's post.

Front entrance doors must be fitted with a night latch and a five-lever mortise deadlock with a thumb turn release to enable people to escape easily if there is a fire.

Back doors must be fitted with a mortise lock and should have tower bolts fitted to both the top and bottom of the door.

Door frames should be in good condition and must operate freely and easily.

Single glazed doors must either be re-glazed with 6mm Georgian wired glass, panelled both sides of the glass with 4mm plywood or the glass sandwiched between clear plastic adhesive sheets.

Bedrooms with patio or French doors must have an additional window that can be opened for ventilation. French doors must have integral security deadbolts to the top and bottom of each door. No patio doors should open.

If there are communal doors to the property then an additional two keys for that door are required.

Windows

Windows should provide adequate light and ventilation to the room.

They should be easy to open, undamaged, free from decay and decorated well enough to last the term of the lease. Glazing should be securely fixed and putty sound and waterproof. Sash windows should be draught proof and correctly balanced.

All windows on the ground or lower ground floor must be fitted with window locks and in fully working order.

Window openings on the first floor and above must be fitted with restrictors that limit the window opening to a maximum of 100mm.

Horizontal safety rails are required, spaced no more than 100mm apart, to ground floor windows with sills below a height of 1m. Rails are required to windows on the first floor level or above where the sill is 1.2m from the floor level.

We cannot accept louvre windows on the ground floor and louvre windows on first or other floors should not have more than four louvre blades.

Glazing in windows below 1m must either be covered with clear plastic safety film or the glass replaced with safety glass.

Keys

We need three full sets of keys to the front and rear doors, the window locks, garage doors, garden shed and to any communal cupboard containing meters etc. Internal doors (apart from the bathroom and WC) should not have locks, but if locks are fitted you must retain the keys. Any internal locks must have an over-ride facility or incorporate a thumb twist lock.

External

Structure

The building must be structurally sound, completely water tight and in good repair and condition.

External walls and windows

External decoration must be sound and of sufficient quality to last the term of the lease. Any defective joinery needs to be properly repaired and decorated.

Rendered surfaces and parapet walls must be in good condition with copings and flashings secure and complete.

All brickwork must be sound and vertical with continuous pointing. Chimney stacks must be in good repair with chimney pots securely fixed.

Roofs and drainage

Roofs and rainwater goods must be in a good and serviceable condition. Any loose slates, tiles or aerials, which either presents a possible hazard or may cause defects to the property, should be made safe. Gutters and down pipes should be fitted, in good condition, clear of blockages and empty into a gully.

Non traditional roof coverings and gutters, such as felt roofs or bitumen covered slate roofs, are not acceptable.

Balconies and roof terraces

Railings must be provided to external roofs onto which the occupiers may have access.

The railings must be galvanised steel (or equivalent) conforming to BS standards with a minimum height of 1.1m. We cannot take on properties that do

not have railings to protect flat roofs or external decking if there is any danger at all of someone going onto the flat roof. We may insist that access to these areas is sealed off and bars installed on the access routes to such areas.

Outbuildings

Sheds and outbuildings must be structurally sound and empty. They should not have a lock but a bolt should be fitted to keep the door closed. Asbestos in outbuildings must be removed by a specialist contractor.

Sheds, outbuildings, greenhouses, purpose built conservatories or lean-tos which are poorly constructed, present a potential danger to the occupants, or are unsafe, must be removed.

External toilets that are functioning properly can be retained. Those not working should be removed and the services and wastes sealed and capped off.

Any electrical sockets in outbuildings must either comply fully with current NICEIC regulations or be disconnected and made safe.

Garages

If the property has a garage it must form part of the letting. The garage needs to be in a good, safe condition, clear of any belongings or rubbish and three sets of keys provided. The garage cannot be used by you for any personal storage.

Gardens

Gardens must be debris and weed free and anything that presents a hazard must be removed. Patios, paths and other concrete areas should be level and in good repair. Ponds must be filled in and manhole covers should be easily removable for access. Large trees and vegetation should be pruned or lopped annually. Any drops in the garden greater than one metre must be protected by secure fencing.

Boundary walls

All boundaries must be continuous with a minimum height of one metre. They should be sound and free from defects, with any poorly secured panels or posts repaired. They cannot be topped with broken glass, spikes or barbed wire. Side access gates must be in good condition and fitted with a latching device and bolts at the top and bottom.

Boundaries to railway tracks, roads or other potential dangers must have secure fencing a minimum of two metres in height.

Refuse disposal

Dependent upon the borough's waste disposal method you will need to supply a heavy-duty plastic refuse bin, a wheelie bin or as required by the local authority (LA).

Services

Meters and supply

Meters should be out of the reach of children, but the gas and electric meters must be accessible to all occupants so they can use key or card meters. All external cupboards must be kept in proper order. All gas, electricity and water services must be separately metered and supplied individually. Isolation points for stop cocks must be clearly labelled, easy to reach and accessibly located within each property. Any supply to communal stairs, external lights etc. must be separately metered and paid for by the landlord.

At the time we take over the property you will need to provide £15 of credit on all key and card meters or £25 in winter months (October – May.)

Gas

A Gas Safe registered engineer must inspect the gas supply and all appliances at the start of the lease and on an annual basis. At the start of the lease you must give us a copy of the Landlord Gas Safety Inspection Certificate (CP12) and every 12 months after this you must send us a new certificate four weeks before the expiry of the old certificate. We require you to provide a manual to the heating system, with details of where switches are and how to turn the boiler on and off. Heating systems must be no less than three months old.

Gas meters on escape routes, for example fire exits, stairs and communal hallways, that are below 2,100mm in height must be put inside fire protected vented cupboards.

You must provide permanent vents in any room that contains a gas boiler.

Heating systems

All properties must have adequate space heating and hot water systems with an adequate radiator or storage heater in every room (not in circulation spaces). All heating systems must be no more than five years old.

You must provide a gas central heating breakdown cover for gas heating and hot water systems. All works and installations must satisfy the Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998.

All boilers, radiators and radiator pipe work must be in good condition with radiator valves in full working order. Boilers in bedrooms must be completely boxed in. You need to provide a room thermostat in the coldest part of the property if thermostatic radiator valves are not fitted.

Boilers in bathrooms cannot be put over the bath – they must be in an enclosed fire protected cupboard, which has air vents at the top and the bottom. Any electrical connections in boiler cupboards in bathrooms must be protected but preferably programmers, controls and isolator switches are to be located outside the bathroom.

Modern storage heaters must be connected to off-peak electricity with the correct meter installed and the heaters wall mounted with fused spurs.

Cylinder immersions must be provided on all hot water and storage cylinders. Hot water cylinders should be fitted with insulation jackets and hot tanks and pipes located in loft spaces and roof voids should be properly insulated.

Rooms without a radiator must be fitted with modern storage heaters connected to off-peak electricity. Heating and hot water has to be separated by a three port valve and you must be able to control this separately.

Non conventional heating systems will only be accepted at our discretion and we will require a back up heating system.

Panel heaters or hot air blowers are acceptable in bathrooms only. Electrical bar heaters are not acceptable in any rooms.

All heating appliances which are not used must be disconnected and removed.

Flues

Where flues are concealed (the flue goes through the wall or vertically through the roof) you are required to provide evidence as to their integrity and safety as well as how the flues are monitored.

Electrical

An NICEIC approved electrician must inspect the electrical installation in the property prior to the start of the lease. We will require a copy of the NICEIC (16th edition amended 2001) Periodic Inspection Report (or an Installation Certificate for a new or renewed installation) which must last for the term of the agreement.

Rooms should have the following minimum number of socket outlets:

Room	Sockets
Single bedroom	one double
Double bedrooms	two doubles
Lounge	three doubles
Dining room	two doubles
Kitchen	three doubles

If electricity meters and fuse boards are at low level within a property or common hallway they will need to be located in a fireproof cupboard. We also require an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

Lighting

All rooms should have a lighting pendant or batten holder with light shades and bulb points with a simple on off switch. Fluorescent lighting is only acceptable in the kitchen.

If wall lights provide secondary lighting we will ask you to remove them and cover them with a blanking plate. In exceptional cases we may accept recessed lighting, spot lights, or low voltage fittings, but we will not replace the bulbs and if we have problems with the unit we may replace them with a standard pendant fitting. All bulbs must be energy efficient.

You must provide external lights for deck access flats, maisonettes or alleyways from the street level to the door. The lights must be bulkhead vandal resistant and connected to a landlord's supply.

Asbestos

You must inform us if there is asbestos anywhere in the property. If you are unsure, we may require you to get a specialist firm to confirm whether there is asbestos present or not. If asbestos is present, and needs to be removed, it must be removed by a specialist contractor complying with hazardous materials legislation. At random we will do asbestos checks or carry our asbestos surveys. If required we may remove it at your expense.

Flats over shops

Flats over shops must have safe, clear and well lit access.

We cannot take flats situated over pubs, restaurants, fast food outlets, dry cleaners, nail salons or other similar operations where the premises are open later than ten o'clock at night or where fumes or smells from the shop may cause a problem to our occupants.

Lofts and loft conversions

Lofts should be fully insulated with a minimum of 270mm thickness There are many types of insulation available and we accept them all. All recent loft conversions will need Building Regulations approval and planning permission if necessary. The precise requirements for the conversion works will depend upon the date the works were done, the storey height, and the layout.

Key elements for lofts are:

- Half hour fire check doors with closers to all habitable rooms in the loft
- Closers on all other doors of habitable rooms
- Hard wired smoke detectors on all landings
- Means of escape from habitable loft rooms

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