

Wirral Council Property Accreditation Scheme

Property Code of Standards

This Code of Standards is accepted by all landlords as the minimum property standards. It does not replace a landlords legal obligation but will help promote high standards of property in Wirral by ensuring the physical condition of dwellings and the provision of basic amenities are not liable to be prejudicial to the health, safety and welfare of tenants or the surrounding neighbourhood. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) must be provided with fire safety regulations in accordance with current legislation including national and local authority standards and regulations. Before a property is suitable to be submitted to this scheme, it must be free from Category 1 Hazards as defined in the Housing Act 2004.

In order to gain accreditation status, properties must meet **ALL** of the following standards. If all criteria cannot be met at the time of application, the Housing Standards Team will work with you to help you meet the standards. The accreditation requirements are split into 5 areas which are assessed during the visit. These areas are:

1. Electrical Safety

- The electrical installation including wiring, switches and sockets must be in a safe condition. This is supported by providing an Electrical Installation Condition Report as required by The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- In the event of defects or danger signs, an electrician must be called immediately and any defects rectified.

2. Fire & Carbon Monoxide Safety

- Properties to be fitted with a functional form of fire detection incorporating an audible alarm. A minimum of one battery operated smoke detector, suitably sited, on each floor.
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors are to be fitted in every room used as living accommodation where there is a solid fuel appliance present.
- Detectors and their installation must comply with the appropriate British Standards and be tested on a regular basis. For tenancies starting on or after 1st

October 2015, evidence should be provided that detectors were functional at the tenancy start date.

- All exit routes in a property including hallways, landings and staircases, so far as they are under the control of the landlord, should remain free of obstruction to enable safe evacuation in a fire.

3. Thermal Comfort

- Suitable Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) demonstrating a minimum rating of E
- Where appropriate, external doors, windows and letterboxes to be draft proofed.
- Where there is no central heating provision, the property must have an adequate fireplace or safe provision for using a fixed gas or electric appliance or acceptable fixed heating source to the main living area.

4. Security

- External doors must be of strong, solid, safe construction. The door, and associated architrave and frame must be of sufficient strength to resist forced entry and fitted with a five-lever mortise deadlock conforming to BS3621 or of an equivalent standard (HMOs and flats require a higher standard of mortice lock with thumb release mechanism so they can be readily opened without the use of a key, where applicable).

5. Repair and Maintenance

- Properties **MUST** comply with all current, relevant housing legislation. All parts of the house must be in a reasonable state of repair, be clean and safe, and any appliances provided by the landlord must be in good working order prior to the occupation.
- Internal and external inspections of the property must take place at appropriate intervals (depending on whether complaints have been received). Regular inspections help resolve tenancy problems at an early stage and make the landlord aware of any unreported repairs.
- Adequate and suitable provision for the disposal of household refuse.
- Advise tenants that gardens are kept reasonably tidy and damaged fencing renewed or repaired asap.

Star Rating:

Wirral's Private Rented Property Accreditation Scheme recognises that all properties are different and some offer a higher standard of accommodation. To reward those properties a Star Rating System is in place. A star-rating will be given for each of the categories assessed at a higher standard meaning a property can achieve up to a 5 star Plus rating.

The star rating criteria is as follows:

1. Electrical Safety:

- All circuits at the consumer unit are protected by residual current device (RCD) by either single/twin RCD isolator(s) or individual RCBO circuit breakers.
- Provision of an Electrical Installation Condition report from an approved electrician.

2. Fire Safety:

- One mains wired smoke detector with battery back up to be provided on each floor.
Or
- A wall-mounted fire blanket in a suitable container with the open end at a convenient height so the blanket is easily and safely accessible and a 2kg. Dry powder fire extinguisher suitably sited within the kitchen area.

3. Thermal Comfort:

- Provision of a whole house programmable and working central heating system.

4. Security:

- Ground floor windows and upper storey windows accessible from the ground are of a sound construction and fitted with window locks.

5. Excellent Internal & External Appearance:

- The property is maintained to a high level, both internally and externally, e.g.
 - Front and rear gardens well maintained and free from rubbish
 - External & Internal decoration is in good order (inc paintwork)

+ Plus Rating:

- The Landlord has provided suitable cold storage and cooking facilities at property (including certification if required). A suitable 'fixed' cooking appliance with oven and hob facility is acceptable (*microwave or table top ring burners not acceptable*). A fridge freezer separate or combined is acceptable for cold storage.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

In cases where a tenancy agreement was signed on or after the 1st June 2020, the landlord must have had a satisfactory electrical safety report in place before the 1st July 2020. All new tenancies granted after the 1st July 2020 will also need to ensure a satisfactory electrical safety report is in place prior to tenants moving in. Existing tenancies (granted prior to the 1st June 2020) will need to comply with the Regulations before the 1st April 2021.

Agreement:

I agree to abide by this Code of Standards. Any other properties subsequently submitted by myself via letter or email are covered by this agreement. I understand that the accreditation status of a property will be revoked if it fails to meet the standards of the Scheme. An appeal process is in place.

Name and address of landlord:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Signature:

Date:

NB: Please note the contents of the Privacy Notice included with required Application Form for Property Accreditation Scheme which explains how Wirral Council will use any personal information you provide to Housing Services and any contact you have with the Council.