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www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

The standard of your new home

We want to make moving into your new home as easy and stress-free as possible. Together with our residents, we have developed a set of standards that you can expect in the property. After you have moved in, we may contact you to check that we have matched them.

Conditions you can expect in your new home

Cleanliness

We will remove all rubbish from the property before you move in (including in the loft space) and we will have cleaned the property throughout.

A welcome pack will be left for you in your new home. It will contain things like toilet roll, washing-up liquid, energy-saving light bulbs and information leaflets.

Outside of the property

We will make all reasonable effort to make sure any gardens, sheds or outbuildings are tidy and free from rubbish. It will then be your responsibility to maintain your gardens throughout your tenancy.

We will have repaired any boundary fences, gates or pathways if repairs were needed.

- ▶ Boundary fences are the fences that separate your garden from the pavement and we are responsible for repairing them.
- ▶ Dividing fences divide your garden from your neighbours' gardens. You are responsible for repairing these dividing fences.



Doors and windows

Front, back and other doors will all be in good repair with all locks and handles working properly. Windows will be in good repair with catches and fasteners working properly.

Structure

If we find any areas of damp we will investigate them and do any repairs that are needed.

Kitchen

You will have a suitable number and size of kitchen units for the type of property.

- ▶ All the units will be in working order.
- ▶ All the worktops will be in good repair.
- ▶ All the plumbing will be working properly and will be free from blockages.

You will have either a gas or electric point supplied for your cooker.

Bathrooms and toilets

All bathroom fittings will be clean, in good condition, in full working order and free from blockages.

We may have turned off the water supply before you moved in. If you don't seem to have water in your new home, try turning it on at the stop tap. The stop tap could be in one of several places, for example, under the sink, in a store cupboard or behind a panel behind your toilet – it will be clearly marked.



Electrics

Before you move in, we will carry out a full electrical safety inspection.

We will have removed any unsafe wiring or electrical items fitted by the previous tenant, for example we would remove an unsafe ceiling fan or socket.

We will have installed a mains-powered smoke detector.

Heating

All properties will have heating. We will also give you an energy performance certificate, which tells you how energy efficient your new home is.



Fittings and fixtures

When a tenant leaves a property, they may leave certain fixtures and fittings behind (like carpets, curtains or blinds).

We may have accompanied you when you viewed the property. If we accompanied you, you may have asked us to keep certain fittings and fixtures left by the previous tenant. If they were things we would normally remove (because they are items we would not be able to repair or replace) we will have asked you to sign a disclaimer to accept responsibility for these items. If you agreed to this, we will have told you that you can keep the items.

Normally we inspect the property after the previous tenant has moved out. We then decide what items to remove and what to keep in the property. If we decide to keep certain fixtures and fittings it is because:

- ▶ they are in good condition
- ▶ they are safe
- ▶ they are in working order
- ▶ keeping them won't affect our ability to do any work or repairs in the property.



You will have either a gas or electric point supplied for your cooker.

We keep fixtures and fittings if possible, as we know new tenants may find them helpful. However, we have the final decision about which fixtures and fittings stay.

Decorating and home improvements

Before you move in we will check the condition of the decoration. We may give you an allowance to help you buy paint, wallpaper, and so on to redecorate.

It is up to you to decorate. But if we are satisfied that you have a disability or condition that makes it impossible for you to redecorate, we may do it.

If you decide to redecorate you need to be aware of the following:

- ▶ You must not use a steam stripper to remove wallpaper as the heat will damage the plaster on the walls and ceilings.
- ▶ If you damage anything while decorating, you are responsible for repairing it.
- ▶ You must get our permission (in writing) before you do home improvements like fitting laminate flooring. (Laminate flooring cannot be fitted in high rises.)
- ▶ You cannot fit Artex or polystyrene tiles.
- ▶ We will give you information on our repairs service when you get the keys to your new home.



Moving in

Once you have signed your tenancy agreement and received the keys, we expect you to move in. We may visit you to check that you have settled in.

Keys and fobs

We do not keep spare keys for properties. Once we have given you the keys to the property, they are your responsibility.

If you live in a high-rise block of flats you will also receive a fob that lets you into the building through the shared door. If you lose your fob, you must buy a replacement from a Solihull Connect office.

Gas

If there are gas appliances in your property, you will need to arrange for your gas supply to be connected when you move in.

- ▶ Phone National Grid on 0870 608 1524 to find out who supplies the gas to the property and how to contact them.
- ▶ Phone the supplier to arrange to get your supply connected. (If you do want to change, phone your preferred supplier instead and give them your details so they can arrange everything.)



We encourage you to use a fuel supplier called EBICo, a not-for-profit company who do not charge for using prepayment meters. EBICo also supply electricity. Phone them on 0800 458 7689 if you want to become a new customer and let them know you are a tenant or leaseholder of Solihull Community Housing.

Once you have arranged a gas supplier, please contact us.

We will send our contractor to your home to turn the gas on for you, do a safety check and explain how the heating works. They will give you a copy of the certificate from the last gas service that was done in the property. If you have a gas cooker, the engineer will test it and, if it is safe, will reconnect it for you. If your cooker fails the test, the engineer will not reconnect it and they will give you a warning notice. You will then have to get a Gas Safe-registered engineer to repair and reconnect the cooker – you will have to pay for this. You are responsible for your cooker.



Asbestos

Asbestos was a very popular building material and it can be found in many homes.

Asbestos is not a risk to health if it is in good condition and is not disturbed, for example by drilling or sawing. Most materials containing asbestos in our properties are in good repair and do not contain much asbestos.

You can now download a report from our website which tells you where there might be asbestos in your property. You will find this information particularly useful if you are doing DIY. If you do not have access to the internet, call us and we can send you a copy of your report.

We have also produced a separate leaflet that explains all you need to know about asbestos. You can get a copy on our website or by calling us.

If you are planning to do anything (for example, repairs or decorating) and you think this may disturb asbestos, please let us know. We can arrange to have the asbestos inspected, have it analysed and carry out a risk assessment for you. However, you may need to cover the cost of removing any asbestos.

Do not repair or remove any material that you believe may contain asbestos. If you do disturb asbestos or notice that it has been damaged, contact us immediately.

Home contents insurance

You are responsible for insuring your furniture, belongings and decorations against fire, theft, vandalism or water damage such as burst pipes.

We make it easy for you to insure your belongings by providing a special home-contents insurance scheme. You can pay for the insurance each week with your rent. You can get more information from our website or by contacting us.

After you have moved in

After you have moved into your new home we might contact you to check whether you are happy with the service you have received.

Even if we don't contact you to do a satisfaction survey, we would still welcome your feedback – it is important as it helps us to improve our services. Whether you are happy or unhappy with the service you have received, please tell us.



To get in touch:



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Protecting your personal information: We promise only to use your information strictly within the Data Protection Act 1998. If you supply your email address we will use it to contact you in the future.

If you would like this leaflet in another language or format please contact us.

