Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Empty Homes Lettable Standard

Preparing your new home

We aim to make moving into your new home as smooth as possible, and for you to enjoy turning our property into your home.

When an SCH property becomes vacant, it is important that we re-let it as quickly as possible. As a new tenant, it will be important that your new home is clean, safe and comfortable, with all the necessary fixtures and fittings in place and in working order.

You'll be given the opportunity to view your new home before you move in. During this viewing, we'll discuss the standard in this guide with you. We want you to take a good look around your new home, using this standard as your checklist.

First impressions

Before you move in, we will:

Clean your new home to the following standard:

- All walls and ceilings will be free of graffiti, mould growth and polystyrene tiles, and plaster will be repaired ready for decoration.
- All walls and woodwork will be free from any fixings left by the previous tenant (unless specifically requested to leave by the new tenant).
- All doors and skirting boards will be clean.
- All floors will be left in a dust free condition.
- The bath, wash hand basin and toilet will be clean, major staining removed and water in toilet will be clean.
- All kitchen cupboards, worktops, sink and draining boards will be cleaned.
- All grout and sealant will be clean and intact – bathroom and kitchen.
- All inside window ledges will be clean.
- Gardens will be clear of rubbish, grass cut to a manageable level, and overgrown hedges and shrubs cut back (although this work may be completed after you have moved in, as it is weather dependant).
- Any items left by the outgoing tenant will be removed, including in the loft, garden(s), shed and bin store.
- The property will be clear of all building waste inside and out.

We will make sure your new home is comfortable and:

- Sinks, toilets and pipework are in working order.
- Missing plugs and chains to baths, sink and wash hand basin will be replaced.
- There is a supply of hot and cold water to the kitchen and bathroom.
- Toilets have a new secure seat and flush handle or chain.
- A new shower curtain will be provided (if the property has a shower area) and the shower will be fully tiled. (It will be your responsibility to replace the shower curtain in future).
- Any fixtures and fittings left by the previous tenant that you want left for you, will become your responsibility to repair or replace in the future.
- A visual inspection of the roof, rainwater goods, manhole covers and gutters will be carried out to ensure there are no defects.

We will make sure that your new home is safe by ensuring:

- All windows are secure, open and close properly, are fully glazed, and have an emergency opening facility (keys to window locks where these are fitted will be available at letting).
- Child restrictors are fitted to windows at first floor level or above.
- External doors are secure, serviceable, weatherproof and safe.
- The staircase and handrail is securely fixed and safe.
- There is a hard-wired smoke detector and a carbon monoxide alarm.
- We carry out a safety check of every gas appliance, leaving the system in a safe working order and meeting safety regulations.
- We inspect the electrical supply and carry out works in accordance with national standards.
- All floors are safe from trip hazards.
- Paths, steps and driveways are stable and free from hazards.

We will supply useful information for your new home, for example we will:

- Provide a copy of the asbestos report for your new home at tenancy sign up.
- Leave a certificate of the gas safety inspection at the property.
- Provide a copy of the electrical test certificate.
- Leaflet on how to prevent and combat condensation.
- Any appliance and equipment manuals and instruction leaflets where available.
- Guidance of gas safety, energy saving, fire safety in the home.
- Location of services e.g. Stop tap, fuse board, electric and gas meters.

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Decorating

You are responsible for the internal decoration of your new home. A 'decorating pack' for the property will be offered if:

- Rooms have bare walls or to brighten up discoloured decorations.
- Consideration will be given where walls and surfaces have been stained through the smoking of previous tenants
- You qualify following an affordability assessment. If you are unable to decorate yourself or arrange a decorator, we may be able to assist. We'll discuss your individual needs during the viewing.

Minor Repairs after moving in

To avoid causing you any unnecessary delays in moving into your new home, we may need to carry out some repairs after you move in. This may include decorations, gardening work or minor repairs.

We will agree this with you before you sign your tenancy agreement and confirm in writing giving timescales for completing the work.

After you have moved in, we will:

- Visit you after 7 days to check that things are running smoothly, making sure any minor repairs we agreed are being done, and to help with any other queries about your home.
- Send you a text message to ask if you're satisfied with the condition of your new home.
- Use your feedback to help us improve the moving into a new home experience for our customers.

You can help us to achieve our Service Standards and ask that you:

- Look after your new home, and return it to us in good condition, removing your belongings and any rubbish.
- Allow us access to your home so that we can complete any agreed work on moving in.
- Being respectful and polite to our staff, we will always do our best to help.
- Provide feedback about your experience with us to help us learn and improve our services.

How will we keep a check on our Service Standards?

We will:

- Ask you if you are satisfied with the work we've completed and address any concerns you may have as they arise.
- Use feedback from surveys, compliments, complaints and general comments to improve our service.
- Ensure we listen to and learn from our customers.

How we will update you on how we are doing

We will provide up-to-date information

- about our services through our quarterly newsletter.
- on our website at **www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk**
- on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for you to see what we are up to.