

Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Regulatory Services



County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

17 February 2020

For further information please contact

Stephen Boyd
steve.boyd@powys.gov.uk
01597 826374

NOTICE OF INTENDED PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

The Portfolio Holder has received the following report for a decision to be taken under delegated authority. The decision will be taken on **21 February 2020** (i.e. 3 clear days after the date of this note). The decision will be published on the Council's website but will not be implemented until 5 clear days after the date of publication of the decision) to comply with the call-in process set out in Rule 7.36 of the Constitution.

1.	WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD (WHQS) COMPLIANCE POLICY REVIEW
----	---

(Pages 3 - 60)

This page is intentionally left blank

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL
PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION
by
COUNTY COUNCILLOR JAMES EVANS
(PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, HOUSING
AND PUBLIC PROTECTION)
February 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: Dafydd Evans - Service Manager – Housing Solutions
 Andy Thompson – Service manager – Tenancy Services

SUBJECT: Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Compliance
 Policy review

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the reviewed WHQS Compliance Policy for Council Housing, 2019/2020. The review relates to a previous policy approved in 2016, which has been reviewed annually.
- 1.2 The Welsh Government requires that an annual review is carried out.
- 1.3 The proposed reviewed WHQS compliance policy meets Welsh Government requirements. The policy has been updated and now includes reference to the damp and thermal and fuel poverty strategies, as well as evaluation of level access works. The Council will now verify itself if properties meet WHQS by aiming to visit every property at least once every five years.
- 1.4 The report is supported by the following appendices:
 - A The 2019/20 WHQS Compliance policy
 - B Impact Assessment

2. Proposal

Welsh Government requires that the Council as social housing landlord has a Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Compliance Policy which is reviewed annually. The policy commenced on 1 April 2016. This impact assessment only looks at the changes as part of the current annual review.

The review has resulted in updating figures, reflecting changes in practice and making the policy clearer, where this has been suggested. The review has not resulted in change of objective or budget saving.

After achieving the WHQS, the focus will now change to addressing acceptable fails, especially where tenants have opted out of improvements. There will also be focus on addressing damp and cold properties. Cyclical maintenance / replacement programmes remain in place to ensure elements are checked towards the end of their life and monitored or replaced.

There is now reference to the audit carried out by the Wales Audit Office. Subsequently a damp strategy and a thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy have been approved.

The Council will train staff to verify properties. The verification ensures any shortcomings are addressed.

3. Options Considered / Available

No other options are considered.

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 4.1. The preferred choice is to approve the policy to ensure consistency across the County and compliance with Welsh Housing Quality Standards.
- 4.2. The second choice is not to approve the policy. This would mean that the current policy remains in force. If the policy is not reviewed annually, the Welsh Government will not process financial claims relating to WHQS.

5. Impact Assessment

- 5.1 Is an impact assessment required? Yes
- 5.2 If yes is it attached? Yes.

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

- 6.1 This policy supports the priority: "We will develop a vibrant economy."
- 6.2 There are no risks for the Council identified.

7. Local Member(s)

This policy applies to all Council Housing accommodation in Powys.

8. Other Front Line Services

Does the recommendation impact on other services run by the Council or on behalf of the Council? No

9. Communications

Have Communications seen a copy of this report? No

10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

10.1 Legal

The Professional Lead-Legal states: The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 allows the Welsh Ministers to ensure that the Welsh Housing Quality Standard is placed on a statutory footing for all local authorities.

The receipt of the Council's Major Repair Allowance (MRA) is conditional upon meeting WHQS within timescales agreed with the Welsh Government.

Whilst the Welsh Housing Quality Standard has been reached in Powys, the additional works that are being carried out will maintain and improve the housing stock further.

10.2 Finance

The Capital & Financial Planning Accountant states that the works for the WHQS are included in the Capital Programme for 2019/20. The subsequent years needs to be updated when the Capital Programme is reviewed.

The Finance Business Partner also confirms that there is revenue budget for these works in 2019/20.

10.3 Corporate Property (if appropriate) N/A

10.4 HR (if appropriate) N/A

10.5 ICT (if appropriate) N/A

11. Scrutiny

Has this report been scrutinised? No

12. Data Protection

No personal data is processed.

13. Statutory Officers

13.1 The Head of Finance (S151 Officer) notes the comments from Finance.

13.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) commented as follows: "I note the legal comments and have nothing to add to the report."

14. **Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If the Portfolio Holder has an interest, he/she should declare it, complete the relevant notification for and refer the matter to Cabinet for decision.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
To approve the reviewed Welsh Housing Quality Standard compliance policy as set out in Appendix A to the report	To meet Welsh Government requirements

Relevant Policy (ies):	
Within Policy:	Y
Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All
----------------------------------	------------

Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Andy Thompson (Service Manager – Tenancy Services) and Dafydd Evans (Service Manager – Housing Solutions)
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	

Is a review of the impact of the decision required?	N

Contact Officer:	Henk Jan Kuipers
Tel:	079171 72854
Email:	henk.jan.kuipers@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:

- The Welsh Housing Quality Standard Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard; Welsh Government and HouseMark Cymru; July 2008.
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard: Verification of progress in achieving the Standard; Welsh Government Social Research; Number: 49/2014; 13 May 2014.
- Welsh Government letter dated 20 March 2015; The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) - Verification in achieving and maintaining the Standard: next steps.

- Evaluation Level Access project works Report; Powys County Council; July 2018
- The Service User Perspective – the Welsh Housing Quality Standard – Powys County Council; Wales Audit Office; September 2018.
- Strategy to address damp issues in Powys owned housing stock; Powys County Council; January 2019.
- Strategy to address thermal comfort and fuel poverty; Powys County Council; January 2019.

This page is intentionally left blank

Powys County Council Housing Services

Welsh Housing Quality Standard
(WHQS) Compliance Policy 2019-
2020

Cyngor Sir Powys Gwasanaethau Tai

01597 827464
housing@powys.gov.uk
www.powys.gov.uk/tai

Post

Sganio Tai
Cyngor Sir Powys
Spa Road East
Llandrindod
LD1 5LG

Swyddfa dai ardal

Aberhonddu

Neuadd Brycheiniog
Ffordd Cambrian
LD3 7HR

Y Drenewydd

Yr Hen Goleg
Station Road
SY16 1BE

Llandrindod

Y Gwalia
Ffordd Ieithon
LD1 6AA

Y Trallwng

Neuadd Maldwyn
Ffordd Hafren
SY21 7AS

Ystradgynlais

Hendre Ladus
SA9 1SE

Powys County Council Housing Services

01597 827464
housing@powys.gov.uk
www.powys.gov.uk/housing

Post

Housing Scanning
Powys County Council
Spa Road East
Llandrindod Wells
LD1 5LG

Housing area office

Brecon

Neuadd Brycheiniog
Cambrian Way
LD3 7HR

Newtown

The Old College
Station Road
SY16 1BE

Llandrindod Wells

The Gwalia
Ithon Road
LD1 6AA

Welshpool

Neuadd Maldwyn
Severn Road
SY21 7AS

Ystradgynlais

Hendre Ladus
SA9 1SE

This publication is available in Welsh.

This document is available on request in alternative formats (e.g. large print type / Braille / on tape).

Powys County Council Housing Services Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Compliance Policy

Contents

Policy background and coverage	1
1 Interpretation of welsh housing quality standard (whqs)	2
2 Assessing elements and acceptable fails	5
3 Data collection, storage, software and updating	7
4 WHQS+ standard	8
5 Community benefits	10
6 Financial investment	11
7 Monitoring and reporting	12
8 Verification	14
9 Equalities	15
10 Reviewing decisions, complaints and compliments	16
11 Review of whqs compliance policy	17
Appendix A Standards	18

Policy background and coverage

- a. Powys County Council's Housing Service (the Council) has achieved the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) in 2018. The Council aims to maintain its housing stock to at least WHQS.
- b. The council will target acceptable fails over the next five years by
 - I. reviewing support and working methods for residents concerned about disruption
 - II. tackling damp properties in line with its new damp strategy
 - III. targeting improvements to meet its recent thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy
- c. This policy contains a specification of the Council's interpretation of WHQS Guidance published by the Welsh Government.
- d. The Council will ensure that it acts in accordance with best practice and relevant policy, legislation and Council housing service standards.
- e. The Council will ensure that, where it has discretion, this is exercised in a reasonable, fair and equitable manner.

1 Interpretation of Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

1.1 Introduction

The Council has achieved the WHQS for its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) housing stock occupied under a secure or introductory tenancy. It will now focus on targeting acceptable fails.

1.2 Interpretation of WHQS Guidance

- a. The Council ensures its housing stock complies with the minimum requirements to achieve WHQS as described in *The Welsh Housing Quality Standard, Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard*, July 2008.
- b. The Standard will ensure that dwellings are of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents.
- c. Each element of the Standard has been categorised as either a primary or secondary element.
 - I. A primary element is one that impacts on the safety of the residents.
 - II. A secondary element is more focussed around the comfort of the residents.
- d. A detailed description of the WHQS that the Council has adopted can be found in the appendix.

1.3 Approach

- a. The Council runs a cyclical maintenance programme accompanied by a 30-year business and investment plan.
- b. The basis for the programme is a comprehensive stock condition survey assessing the condition of the ten WHQS components carried out in 2012/2013 & 2015 of all 5400 homes in Powys Council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) ownership. The survey established the condition of the components inside 92% of the homes. All properties were surveyed externally. In addition, there has been validation of Savills recommendations, through desktop exercises for energy ratings, and site visits for building components.
- c. The Council responds to requests from tenants to repair defects, and referrals from its maintenance partner Heart of Wales Property Services.
- d. When a property becomes void, an assessment will take place and the QL housing management system will be updated. If the property does not meet WHQS, the Council will program the works necessary to achieve WHQS, apart from acceptable fails.
- e. The Council has adopted the “*Strategy to address damp issues in Powys owned housing stock*” and “*Strategy to address thermal comfort and fuel*

poverty” to ensure that all homes are warm, affordable to heat and remain free of damp. This will address the issue raised by the Wales Audit Office.

- f. The damp strategy includes the following key elements:
 - Install a working group of professionals to oversee implementation
 - Assessment of risk to health when a damp issue is reported
 - Surveyors are trained to investigate damp issues
 - A checklist approach to assess damp issues
 - A step-by-step approach to eradicate damp from the property
 - Prioritising stock condition surveys where there is an increased likelihood of damp.
- g. The thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy includes the following key elements:
 - A clear process how the Council deals with:
 - Requests for heating (not breakdowns)
 - Heating breakdowns
 - Requests for insulation
 - Complaints about high energy bills
 - Establish a pro-active programme of energy efficiency improvement works as part of Powys’ future ‘WHQS plus’ programme. This targets improvements of E, F or G EPC rated properties

1.4 Life expectancy of components

The Council applies the standards and life expectancies as set out in the guidance.

Life expectancy of WHQS components

Component	Life expectancy
1. Roofs and associated components	60 years
2. Windows	25 years
3. External doors	25 years
4. Kitchens	15 years
5. Bathrooms	25 years
6. Energy rating (SAP ≥ 65)	N/A
7. Central heating system	15 years
8. Electrical systems	30 years
9. Mains powered smoke detectors	10 years
10. Gardens and external storage up to and including the boundary of the property	30 years

1.5 Staff resources

- a. Within the Housing Service, two dedicated teams are responsible for managing maintenance and improvement works.

Planned Maintenance and Improvements Team, 1 April 2019

Role description	FTE
Planned Maintenance and Improvements Team Leader	1

Contracts Officers	7
Project Officers Planned Maintenance and Improvements	2
Affordable Warmth and Renewable Energy Officer	1
	1
Resident Liaison Co-ordinator	
Assistant Resident Liaison Officer	2
Asset Management Officer	1
Total FTE	15

Housing Maintenance Team, 1 April 2019

Role description	FTE
Client Services Team Leader	1
Housing Surveyors	7
Heating Services and Renewable Energy Officer	1
Responsive Maintenance Assurance Officer	1
Total FTE	8

- b. The Council has transferred the responsive maintenance service to the joint venture company "Heart of Wales Property Services" (HOWPS) in 2017.
- c. In addition, the teams are supported by Commercial Services during the tendering and procurement stages of selecting contractors.
- d. Selected contractors are part of the Council's WHQS Framework, "Dynamic Purchasing Framework", or Voids Contractors list.

2 Assessing elements and acceptable fails

2.1 Introduction

- a. The Council will assess elements as “*pass*”, “*fail*”, “*not applicable*” or “*acceptable fail*”.
- b. An acceptable fail is only possible on individual elements and not the dwelling as a whole.

2.2 Categories

- a. “Pass” indicates that the element meets the WHQS.
- b. “Fail” indicates that the element does not meet the WHQS. This element should be included in future planned works.
- c. “Not applicable” applies to elements that are not present in the accommodation. For example, the element “the staircase and balustrade are safe” does not apply to bungalows.
- d. “Acceptable fail” indicates the element does not meet the WHQS, but this is acceptable.
- e. The Council records on of four reasons for an acceptable fail and follows Welsh Government guidance:
 - I. residents’ choice or refusal
 - II. physical constraint
 - III. timing of remedy
 - IV. cost of remedy
- f. Every property is treated on its merits. The responsible Contracts Officer in conjunction with the Team Leader decides if there is an acceptable fail.
- g. All acceptable fails on individual elements are recorded in the QL housing management IT system, including the reason for the acceptable fail.

2.3 Acceptable fail: Residents’ choice or refusal

- a. Where a resident refuses works that prevent achieving WHQS this is recorded as an acceptable fail. The tenant will be asked to sign a disclaimer.
- b. The component will be brought to WHQS when:
 - I. the tenant moves out of the property, before letting to a new tenant
 - II. the tenant moves out and the works are programmed after a new tenants moved in
 - III. the component fails and needs replacing
 - IV. the component fails and this represents a risk to health and safety to people
 - V. the component fails and this may lead to damage to property

2.4 Acceptable fail: Physical constraint

Physical constraint of the property and its surrounding can make it impossible to meet WHQS on certain elements. An example of this is where there is limited space within or outside the property, the property is listed or situated in a conservation area. Another example is where property characteristics do not lend themselves to improvement.

2.5 Acceptable fail: Timing of remedy

The timing of remedy applies to situations where works that should be carried out to are postponed in the case of:

- I. Combining works to achieve efficiency in the same property and reduce disruption for tenants
- II. Combining works on an estate as part of the lifecycle of elements to achieve efficiency and reduce disruption to tenants
- III. Works are subject to funding bids with set timetables, for example Arbed funding
- IV. Infrastructure works are required by Statutory Authorities

2.6 Acceptable fail: Cost of remedy

- a. Where the cost of achieving WHQS on elements outweighs the benefit for current and future tenants, this leads to an acceptable fail.
- b. The Council has not set an upper limit upon where achieving WHQS is considered too expensive. Every situation is treated on its merits.
- c. The Council does not consider it cost effective to build extensions to properties to increase floor space.
- d. In off gas areas it may not be possible to achieve the minimum SAP rating of 65, despite adequate insulation and heating. This is considered to be an acceptable fail.

3 Data collection, storage, software and updating

3.1 Introduction

The Council will collect, store and update data as part of monitoring WHQS for each home.

3.2 Asset management data

- a. The WHQS elements are included in the QL Asset Management Module.
- b. The Asset Management Officer is responsible for maintaining the data that inform the planning of future maintenance and improvements.
- c. The elements are continuously updated, when new data become available through:
 - I. Stock condition surveys
 - II. Independent verification of WHQS elements
 - III. Works carried out, including responsive maintenance, planned maintenance, improvements, works in void accommodation, adaptations
 - IV. Reported defects
 - V. Property inspections and home visits

4 WHQS+ standard

4.1 Introduction

The Council will carry out certain improvements above the minimum WHQS requirements.

4.2 All homes

In addition to the minimum WHQS requirements the Council will:

- I. give tenants a choice between Air Source Heat Pump or oil heating in homes situated in areas that have no access to mains gas
- II. provide full redecoration of kitchens and bathrooms after the installation is completed
- III. consider installing photovoltaic, or solar panels, on properties where low energy ratings or fuel poverty, cannot otherwise be addressed. The orientation of the property needs to be suitable before considering photovoltaics or solar panels
- IV. investigate hybrid heating systems
- V. when new kitchens are fitted or rewiring takes place, heat detectors will be installed in kitchens

4.3 Homes designated for people over the age of 60

- a. The Council manages around 1,800 properties (bungalows and flats) which are allocated to people over the age of 60 as part of the Common Housing Allocation Scheme “Homes in Powys”.
- b. Welsh Government population projections indicate that the age group 65 and older in Powys will increase from 33,600 in 2014 to 47,400 in 2039. In 2039 it is projected that 39% of all residents in Powys belongs to this age group.
- c. The Council has adopted a level access approach for these 1,800 properties. This includes
 - I. Level paths and hand rails along paths on an estate and to the front door
 - II. Removing of steep, unsafe ramps
 - III. Automatic opening doors for entrances to blocks of flats
 - IV. Scooter stores for blocks of flats
 - V. External and internal lighting in communal areas meets the recommended standards used in the RNIB guidance ‘*Homes for People with Sight loss*’.
- d. This improvement standard will be above the required standard, where feasible. This will enable tenants to live independent lives for longer and be more inclusive for all visitors. Pilot projects have been completed and have been evaluated.
- e. The evaluation has informed the future programme of works and has improved the process to deliver the outcomes that benefit the tenants.

4.4 Homes occupied without a secure or introductory contract

- a. The Council will apply the WHQS to all its occupied accommodation, regardless of the type of agreement between the occupier and the Council. This includes accommodation temporary let to homeless households.
- b. The standard does not apply to demised premises under leasehold agreements.

5 Community Benefits

5.1 Introduction

- a. Community benefits are economic, social and environmental objectives, achieved as part of the delivery of public procurement contracts.
- b. The Council applies a community benefit approach to deliver positive outcomes from all contracts where such benefits can be realised. Community benefits include additional job creation, apprenticeships, physical improvements of community facilities, additional spending in local shops and at local suppliers.

5.2 Powys community benefits

- a. The Council requires that contractors carrying out programmes of work, to record any delivered community benefits. The Value Wales Community Benefit Toolkit will be used to record these benefits. Benefits will be reported annually to Welsh Government.
- b. The targets regarding community benefits are based on the submissions from contractors as part of the tendering process.
- c. Communities and their needs are wide ranging; therefore, the Council will support a flexible approach.
- d. The responsibility lies with the contractor to identify the community benefit and to ensure the benefits are achieved in line with their tender response and contract responsibilities.
- e. The “Tenants’ Scrutiny Panel has a subgroup called “*Investing in Your Home*” The subgroup will monitor the community benefits realisation.
- f. Tenants and housing staff are encouraged to contact the resident liaison officers if they are aware of a local charity, good cause or school that could benefit from some assistance.

5.3 Publishing community benefits

- a. All community benefits are reported and discussed at least once a year with the Tenants’ Scrutiny Panel (TSP) and is included on the agenda of every TSP Investing in your Home subgroup meeting.
- b. Updates on community benefits delivery are published in the Powys Investing in your Home newsletter, which is send twice a year to all tenants, housing staff and county councillors.

6 Financial investment

6.1 Introduction

The Council has a 30-year investment plan in place based on the collected data.

6.2 Financial investment

- a. The stock condition surveys and QL housing management system inform the necessary investments in the housing stock.
- b. The total planned expenditure on programmed renewal and improvement works during the 30-year period starting 1 April 2019 amounts to £418 million. This is £77,800 per home during the 30-year period. This is an average investment of £2,600 per home annually.
- c. Future works are necessary to maintain WHQS by replacing components at the end of their life or when failing.

Summary financial investment plan, estimates, 1 April 2019 – 1 April 2023, all HRA properties

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Responsive, void and cyclical repairs	£7,136,020	£7,136,020	£7,136,020	£7,136,020
WHQS works	£9,511,336	£5,474,378	£3,947,920	£3,947,920
Other capital works	£3,776,340	£3,676,340	£3,676,340	£3,676,340
Total	£20,423,696	£16,286,738	£14,760,280	£14,760,280

Summary financial investment plan, estimates, 1 April 2019 – 1 April 2023, average investment per property based on 5377 properties

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Responsive, void and cyclical repairs	£1,327	£1,327	£1,327	£1,327
WHQS works	£1,769	£1,018	£734	£734
Other capital works	£702	£684	£684	£684
Total	£3,798	£3,029	£2,745	£2,745

- d. The Tenants' Scrutiny Panel has two representatives on the HRA Business Plan Project Board, alongside the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Housing & Public Protection, and council officers. The project board's role is to shape the direction of travel in respect of the HRA Business Plan.

7 Monitoring and reporting

7.1 Introduction

The Council ensures robust monitoring and reporting processes are in place.

7.2 Reporting internally

- a. The WHQS consolidation programme is an integral part of the HRA business plan. This is reviewed annually.
- b. Reporting takes place through progress reports, including results from tenant satisfaction surveys and monthly completed element updates.
- c. The Housing Service provides financial progress reports on a monthly basis.
- d. The HRA Business Plan Project Board reviews progress in respect of works to achieve and maintain the WHQS, the Council's plans to acquire and/or develop new homes and agrees the contents of the annual revision to the HRA Business Plan. The project board meets quarterly and reports into the "*Stronger Communities Programme Board*" to deliver the Council's corporate improvement plan "*Vision 2025*".

7.3 Reporting externally

- a. Progress is reported quarterly to the Tenants' Scrutiny Panel (TSP) and monthly to the Investing in your Home subgroup. During the meeting progress and performance is reported, including priorities and acceptable fails. The subgroup reports to the quarterly TSP meetings.
- b. An Investing in your Home Newsletter is published in the spring and autumn including progress and planned works, news features, community benefits, explanation of improvements, introduction of staff and contractors. The newsletter is sent to all tenants, housing staff and county councillors.
- c. Open House Magazine is used for updates between newsletters.
- d. Both publications are published on the Council's website and Tenant Engagement Facebook page.

7.4 Wales Audit Office

- a. The Wales Audit Office published its report into achieving the WHQS in September 2018.
- b. The report found "*that the Council is making progress towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard for many components and most Council tenants are satisfied with the quality of the service and their homes, but it needs to accelerate its approach to ensuring tenants' homes are warm.*"

- c. The Council has now adopted two strategies to address cold and damp homes as well as fuel poverty. This means staff has received training in investigating damp issues, budgets have been allocated to carry out works to reduce damp and improve thermal performance.

8 Verification

- a. The Housing Service awarded a contract to Savills to independently verify WHQS elements of 2,000 properties in 2015.
- b. In 2018 South West Audit Partnership audited the process and records for updating the QL database following contract works. Their report gave substantial assurance as to the process used, and accuracy of the records reviewed.
- c. Officers within the Housing Service, not involved in delivering the WHQS programme, will be trained to carry out surveys to verify meeting WHQS standards. A proportion of stock will be surveyed each year, with priority given to:
 - I. properties where trends of damp have been identified in the street or archetype
 - II. properties with low energy ratings
 - III. properties with anomalies in QL data
 - IV. when accommodation becomes void; around 450 properties annuallyThe aim is to survey all properties at least once in every five years.
- d. Once all WHQS elements are verified and acceptable fails recorded in the QL system, a sample of 50 – 100 properties will be inspected annually to validate the accuracy of the data, and compliance with WHQS standards.
- e. Tenants will receive on request, or when moving into accommodation, a WHQS certificate. This enables tenants to verify if their home meets the WHQS.

9 Equalities

9.1 Introduction

The Council is committed to giving an equal service to all.

9.2 Procedures and Practices

- a. The Council's staff and contractors will operate in such a way to ensure that their procedures and practices are sensitive to the needs of individual residents. They will ensure that they do not discriminate in any way.
- b. Enforcement and application of this policy will from time to time need to be tailored to meet the needs of individuals. All cases will be considered on an individual basis.

9.3 Information

- a. The Council will in all reasonable circumstances make information available in a variety of information formats, including for example:
 - I. Braille
 - II. large print
 - III. audio tape
- b. Where specialist services are required to ensure that information is accessible to the tenant or member of their family, the Council will provide these specialist services where reasonable.

10 Reviewing decisions, complaints and compliments

10.1 Introduction

The Council is committed to improve service delivery and put right any mistakes.

10.2 Review

Anyone that is affected by a decision of the Council's Housing Service is entitled to ask an independent review from a manager or team leader that was not involved in making the decision.

10.3 Complaints and compliments

- a. The Council welcomes all feedback from customers, because it helps to improve services.
- b. When the Council receives a complaint, the Corporate Complaints Procedure will be followed.
- c. The Council will aim to clarify any issues that are deemed unclear.
- d. Where possible, the Council will put right any mistakes it may have made.
- e. Where the Council gets something wrong, it will apologise and where appropriate try to put things right.
- f. The Council will aim to learn from good practice and mistakes, and use the information gained to improve services.

11 Review of WHQS Compliance Policy

- a. This policy will be reviewed by the Council every year unless there are circumstances that require a review, for example a change in legislation or regulation.
- b. Where there has been a change in legislation which has an impact on the policy, the policy will be reviewed within three months of the legislation or regulation coming into effect.

Appendix A Standards

The elements and standards are based on “*The Welsh Housing Quality Standard Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard*”, July 2008, and “*Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance*”, February 2006.

A primary element is one that impacts on the safety of the residents.

A secondary element is more focussed around the comfort of the residents.

The Council will assess elements as “*pass*”, “*fail*” or “*not applicable*”. In cases where this is not possible, it may be appropriate to employ the “*acceptable fail*” category.

An acceptable fail is only possible on individual elements and not the dwelling as a whole.

The Council accepts four main reasons for an acceptable fail and follows Welsh Government guidance. For more details, please see chapter 2.

- residents’ choice or refusal
- physical constraint
- timing of remedy
- cost of remedy

1(a) structurally stable and free from disrepair
primary
HHSRS Hazard 29: Structural Collapse and Falling Elements
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>A. The foundations and load bearing external walls should be designed, constructed and maintained to be of sufficient strength to support the weight of the building, fittings, furnishings and its users. Any disrepair should not interfere with structural integrity. Any external cladding, rendering or similar finishing and any coping should be securely fixed and in repair.</p> <p>B. All openings to external walls should be properly constructed and maintained to provide for proper distribution of the load above. Lintels should be of sufficient strength and be maintained in repair. Frames to openings and doors and windows should be securely fixed and maintained in repair.</p> <p>C. All external balconies and walkways should be designed, constructed and maintained so as to be capable of supporting their own weight and the imposed loads (such as plant pots) and persons.</p> <p>D. The roof structure should be designed, constructed and maintained so as to be strong enough to support the weight of the covering, be securely fixed and to cope with wind and weather imposed loads. Roof coverings should be securely fixed and maintained in repair. Chimney stacks should be properly constructed and maintained and pots securely fixed.</p>

E.	All external pipework and eaves gutters should be securely fixed and properly maintained. Eaves gutters should be capable of coping with the weight imposed by typical snowfalls.
F.	Floors should be designed, constructed and maintained to be of sufficient strength to support their own weight and that of imposed loads including furniture, fixtures, fittings (including facilities such as baths and wc basins) and occupants. Staircases should be designed, constructed and maintained to be of sufficient strength to support their own weight and that of imposed loads including occupants and furniture likely to be carried up and down.
G.	Ceilings should be designed, constructed, fixed and maintained to be strong enough to remain intact.
H.	Internal walls should be designed, constructed and maintained to be strong enough to support their own weight and any loads reasonably expected. Such loads could include upper floors and ceilings, shelves, pictures, light fittings, equipment, facilities and fixtures. Door frames and openings should be properly fixed and maintained and capable of supporting the doors.
I.	Fittings and fixtures (such as electric lights, kitchen wall-cupboards and showers) should be properly and securely fixed.

1(b) free from damp
primary
HHSRS Hazard 1: Damp and mould growth
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>A. Dwellings should be warm, dry and well-ventilated. Indoor relative humidity should be between 40% and 60%, except for short periods of fluctuation. This range is the optimum to limit the growth of house dust mite populations and mould growth. It is also the recognized comfort zone.</p> <p>B. The structure and finishes of a dwelling should be maintained free from rising, penetrating and traumatic dampness, or persistent condensation.</p> <p>C. Rising and penetrating dampness should be prevented by proper and adequate damp-proofing including damp proof courses and membranes and detailing around door and window openings. The external fabric should be kept in repair to prevent rain penetration. Preventative measures including frost protection, will help avoid traumatic problems such as burst pipes and tanks.</p> <p>D. All facilities which involve the use of water (for example, baths, wash hand basins, sinks, showers, and wc basins) should be properly installed to prevent or at least minimise the risk of dampness from splashing during normal use. Such facilities should be properly connected to a waste pipe</p>

capable of safely carrying waste water to a drainage inlet outside the dwelling.

- E. There should be properly installed rain water goods, including eaves gutters and rainwater fall pipes, capable of safely collecting rainwater discharged from the roof and carrying it safely away from the dwelling either into a drainage inlet or other proper means of disposal.
- F. Roof and underfloor spaces should be properly ventilated to ensure timber remains air dry to minimize the chance of fungal infection.
- G. The dwelling should be able to cope with normal occupant moisture producing activities without persistently high relative humidities. There should be provision for the safe removal of moisture-laden air during peak production. This should include extraction during cooking or bathing, either by mechanical means, or passive stack ventilation and direct venting of clothes drying facilities (whether tumble driers or drying cabinets) to the exterior.
- H. There should be sufficient and appropriate means of ventilation to deal with moisture generated by normal domestic activities without the need to open windows. Opening windows can result in heat loss, noise, and may be a security risk. There may be no need for additional background ventilation where windows are ill-fitting, no draught-stripping, and/or where there are open chimney flues. Where there is draught-stripping, or tight fitting windows, provision for background ventilation may be necessary via trickle vents in replacement windows, insertion of high-level airbricks, or by a passive stack or a mechanical heat recovery ventilation (MHRV) system.
- I. If moisture levels are controlled, through adequate ventilation, dust mite populations can be significantly reduced by raising indoor temperatures. To achieve this, there should be adequate structural thermal insulation, and appropriate means of space heating.

2(a) Stairs must have at least one handrail and not be considered hazardous

primary

HHS Hazard 21: Falling on Stairs etc.

Powys standard

- A. The likelihood of missteps is reduced where tread and rise dimensions are 280-360mm and 100-180mm respectively. It is estimated that the risk of an accident is decreased by 10% for every 10mm increase in going between 180mm and 280mm.
- B. Correctly fitted and maintained carpets generally reduce the severity of injury should a fall occur, both on stairs and at the foot of stairs.

- C. To prevent small children falling (or becoming trapped), there should not be any openings on stairs, either to the stairs themselves or to the guarding, which allow a 100mm diameter sphere to pass through.
- D. Narrow stairs may cause problems in emergencies. Ideally, stair width should be a minimum of 900mm clear width to allow the stairs to be negotiated by a child and adult side-by-side.
- E. Handrails provide assistance in ascent and descent, and offer a hand-hold if there is a misstep and so can help prevent a fall. Handrails to both sides of the stairs provide the safest arrangement. Handrails should be sited between 900mm and 1,000mm measured from the top of the handrail to the pitch line or floor. They should be shaped so that they are easy to grasp and extend the full length of the flight.
- F. Where there is no wall to one or both sides of the stairs, guarding (e.g. balustrade) should be provided to prevent falls off the sides of stairs. It should be designed and constructed so as to discourage children climbing.
- G. The headroom to stairs themselves should be a minimum of 2,000mm. In some situations, such as loft conversions, where this is not possible the headroom should be 1,900mm at the centre reducing to a minimum of 1,800mm at the side.
- H. Good lighting at the top and bottom of stairs will enable users to identify the first step and the dimensions of the stairs, reducing the possibility of a misstep or slip. Artificial lights and windows should be sited to avoid shadows and dark corners where users cannot clearly see where they are going. There should be switches or controls for artificial lighting at both the top and foot of stairs. Glare from windows should be avoided.
- I. There should be reasonable space at the top and bottom of any stairs to enable users to appraise the start and dimensions of the steps and stairs. Architectural features (e.g. doors) which create an obstruction on stairs or at the head of stairs can increase the likelihood of a fall. Projections and sharp edges on stairs and glass or radiators at the foot of stairs will increase the seriousness of the health outcome of a fall.
- J. Cold impairs movement and sensation, and a lowered body temperature affects mental functioning, such that falls are more likely in the cold. The thermal efficiency of the dwelling is therefore relevant. It may also be more hazardous using external steps in cold weather, irrespective of whether they are wet or icy.
- K. In multi-occupied buildings, the owner or manager is also responsible for the stair covering (e.g. carpet) and for ensuring that stairs are kept free from obstructions.

2(b) The kitchen should have adequate space for appliances
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>A. Kitchens should have 620mm wide spaces for a cooker and a refrigerator and enough clear space in front of the cooker and other units and appliances to operate safely (1200mm in front of the cooker, otherwise 1000mm).</p> <p>B. Kitchens should be sensibly and logically laid out with a minimum walking distance between major working areas. To plan a practical kitchen, employ the 'Work Triangle'. The 'Work Triangle' is formed by putting units and appliances, with appropriate work surfaces, in such a position as to allow the user to work in a logical sequence through the major work areas (food storage, preparation, washing/cleaning, cooking and serving). Ideally the length of the three sides of the triangle, when added together ought to be between 3600mm and 6600mm.</p> <p>C. The space for a refrigerator can be located in a utility area.</p>

2(c) The kitchen should be a well organised working area with adequate work surfaces for resting pans and food preparation
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Kitchens should have an adequate work surface for safe and convenient food preparation. Additionally, the work surface should be permanent, nonporous and a minimum of 500mm deep, 800mm along the front edge if straight or 1000mm if 'L' shaped.</p>

2(d) The kitchen should have sufficient storage to meet the needs of the residents
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Kitchens should have convenient and adequate storage cupboards for food, crockery and pots and pans. This should be 1.1m³ in a two person dwelling, increasing by 0.2m³ for each additional person as determined by Nominal Occupancy referred to in Part 7 of this section.</p>

2(e) The kitchen should have sufficient and conveniently located power sockets
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Kitchens should have at least one convenient power socket close to the main food preparation worktop in addition to that used for the refrigerator.</p>

2(f) The dwelling should have flooring suitably designed for kitchens and bathrooms, and, where necessary, flooring suitable for use in wet areas
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Kitchens and bathrooms should have flooring that is safe and suitable for use in these rooms. Where necessary flooring should be safe and suitable for use in wet areas. Untextured linoleum or vinyl is not suitable.</p>

2(g) The dwelling should have an external fire escape
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>The dwelling should have an external fire escape where there is habitable space more than 7.5m above ground level and there is only one protected stairway or route, or comply with a Fire Officer's alternative recommendations for an additional fire escape route.</p>

2(h) The dwelling must have adequate fire alarms and equipment
primary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Common areas of flats must have adequate fire alarms and equipment as defined in current Building Regulations Part B.</p>

2(i) The dwelling should have an escape route from the rooms used for sleeping to an external door which does not pass through another room
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Dwellings should be easy to escape from by having an escape route from the rooms used for sleeping to an external door which may be via a landing and staircase to a front door, back door or fire escape. Rooms used for sleeping which cannot be normally exited except by passing through another room should be capable of providing an alternative means of escape as agreed with the Fire Officer.</p>

2(j) The dwelling must have a suitably located, mains powered, smoke alarm (with a backup secondary power source such as a sealed lithium battery) on each floor
primary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Dwellings must have a suitably located, mains powered (with a backup secondary power source such as a sealed lithium battery) smoke alarm on each floor.</p>

2(k) The dwelling should not have windows fitted with locks with an automatic locking action in rooms used for sleeping
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Dwellings should not have windows fitted with window locks with an automatic locking action in rooms used for sleeping. This could pose an obstacle to escape.</p>

2(l) The gas, solid fuel or oil service and safety inspection certificate must be current. All heating installations and appliances must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least annually and as required by law
primary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>Gas, solid fuel, oil heating installations and appliances must have a current safety certificate which has been issued by an appropriately qualified person.</p>

Additionally current regulations require landlords to ensure landlord supplied electric appliances are certified safe. The regulations impose the obligation on the supplier of such goods to ensure that they are 'safe' so that there is no risk of injury or death to humans or pets, or risk of damage to property. The regulations cover all mains voltage household electric goods including cookers, kettles, toasters, electric blankets, washing machines, immersion heaters, etc. It is generally accepted good practice that landlords will inspect appliances:

- I. when first supplied;
- II. annually;
- III. at the beginning of each new tenancy.

2(m) Electrical lighting and power installations must be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person at least every 10 years as a minimum

primary

Powys standard

Electrical lighting, wiring and power installations should be checked and certified safe by an appropriately qualified person as required by law.

2(n) The dwelling must have a reasonable level of physical security

primary

Powys standard

- A. External doors and windows must have a reasonable level of physical security. A “reasonable level of security” is defined as being capable of complying with Secured by Design (SBD), although may not necessarily have an SBD certificate.
- B. Where it is necessary to replace doors, windows or fencing, the replacements must comply with the Police Force’s SBD specification and be certified as such.
- C. On replacement landlords should consider a ‘door set’ which complies with SBD.

2(o) All opportunities must be taken to make gardens safe and suitable for young children to play in, easy to maintain and reasonably private

primary

Powys standard

- A. The rear garden must be easy to maintain. This should be assessed in relation to the intended occupants and will consider issues such as:
 - I. poor design
 - II. space constraints
 - III. steep topography.
- B. The rear garden must be reasonably private. For example: landlords must ensure gardens have proper/secure boundaries. Secured by Design guidance advises that easy access to the back and sides of the dwelling can be prevented by the provision of locked gates. The use of post and wire fences, low level shrubs or walls is not considered suitable. Trellis topping also makes climbing difficult and will add security. In standard situations boundaries will be no lower than 1.8 metre high and any gates lockable from both sides.
- C. The rear garden must be safe and suitable for young children to play in. This also includes allowing supervision from the dwelling. Issues that may be considered in relation to this element are:
 - I. boundaries should be suitable to prevent children leaving the garden and should not encourage climbing
 - II. if the garden is on an incline, the landlord must ensure that the retaining walls are structurally stable and have an appropriate guard rail/balustrade
 - III. ensure pathways are even and unobstructed.
- D. Landlords will have to assess each garden individually and where practicable undertake improvement works despite constraints.

3(a) Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the dwelling to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions

primary

Powys standard

- A. Existing heating systems must be reasonably economic to run. A "reasonably economic to run" heating system would be one that is programmable (i.e. residents can control the temperature and timing), and of a size recommended for the dwelling it serves.
- B. The annual energy consumption for space and water heating must be estimated using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings 2012 (SAP 2012) method. A minimum rating of 65 out of 100 must be achieved.

C.	Lack of adequate ventilation and poor thermal performance of external walls and windows, in addition to inadequate background heating levels, are significant contributors to condensation in older dwellings. Of particular concern are kitchens and bathrooms in which large amounts of moisture are generated. All cost effective opportunities to upgrade the thermal and ventilation performance of the dwelling must be taken.
D.	Other factors that will impact on the overall SAP for the energy rating of a dwelling are as follows.
I.	Loft insulation: It is recommended that at least 200 mm of glass wool insulation, or the thermal equivalent, is provided in the loft. Whenever replacing or topping up existing insulation this thickness could be reduced when using materials with greater insulation, such as thermal quilting.
II.	Ensuring that all the pipes and tanks in the roof space are lagged. All pipes and tanks in the roof space should be lagged. 20 - 25mm is the minimum thickness of pipe insulation that should be used. There are two types of insulation. The preferred industry type is preformed foam cylinders that are split along their length so that they can be easily slipped onto the pipe. Insulating tape is used to seal the splits and join the sections. If using the preformed cylinders is not practical, then felt can be used. This should be double thickness and closely wrapped to the pipe.
III.	Ensuring that the thermal performance of the external walls is adequate to avoid the likelihood of condensation: All necessary steps should be taken to ensure the thermal performance of external walls is adequate to avoid the likelihood of condensation.

3(b) External doors and windows must be sufficiently well fitting so that they do not cause severe draughts
primary
Powys standard External doors and windows must be sufficiently well fitting so that they do not cause severe draughts without reducing background ventilation. Additional draught stripping may be considered adequate.

3(c) The main entrance door should not open directly into the living room
secondary
Powys standard

The main entrance door should not open directly into the living room. The provision of a lobby area in a living room entered directly by the front door will cut down on unnecessary heat loss.

3(d) The hot water tank must be effectively insulated (Primary)

primary

Powys standard

The hot water tank must be effectively insulated. A factory foam jacket would be considered adequate. Existing unlagged hot water tanks should have a jacket fitted. This should cut heat loss by around 75%. If there is already a jacket fitted to the hot water tank, it should be at least 75mm (3") thick. If not, it should be replaced with a new heat saving one.

3(e) Kitchens and bathrooms should have an adequate amount of mechanical ventilation

secondary

Powys standard

There should be adequate mechanical extract ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom to minimise condensation.

4(a) The dwelling must have a kitchen 15 years old or less unless it is in good condition

primary

HHSR Hazard 16: Food Safety

Powys standard

- A. All dwellings must have a reasonably modern kitchen which is free from deficiencies. Ideally the kitchen should be 15 years old or less. However, it is accepted that a kitchen may not need replacing if it is older than 15 years and it is in good condition.
- B. Kitchen facilities should be in a properly designed room or area, laid out so as to make safe and hygienic preparation and cooking of food easy, so reducing the risk of food poisoning and promoting safe practice.

- C. Damp affected surfaces may degrade and become friable, and may also support growth of micro-organisms, presenting a risk of contamination of food. Humid conditions can cause food to decay more quickly. The surface of the floor to the kitchen area should be reasonably smooth and impervious and capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition. Corners and junctions should be sealed and covered to avoid uncleanable junctions. Wall surfaces should be smooth and capable of being readily cleansed. Surfaces immediately adjacent to cookers, sinks, drainers and worktops should be of an impervious finish and the joint between any sink, drainer or worktop and the adjacent wall should be sealed and watertight.
- D. The layout and relationship of facilities should ease the stages of preparation, cooking and serving. There should be adequate and appropriate lighting to the kitchen area and particularly over the facilities, and there should be appropriate means of ventilation of the whole of the kitchen area and in particular the cooking area.
- E. The food storage facilities should enable cooked and uncooked food to be kept separate to prevent cross contamination. These facilities should be of adequate size for the size of dwelling and should be finished internally and externally with smooth impervious surfaces capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition.
- F. The sink should be of an adequate size, and have a drainer which drains into the sink, or, as an alternative, a dual sink. It should be strong enough to safely take the weight of the water and equipment and utensils. The surface of the drainer and the internal surface of the sink should be smooth, impervious and capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition.
- G. A supply of cold water is necessary for food washing and preparation. For washing-up of equipment and utensils, and for cleaning worktops and cookers, there should be a supply of hot water. The sink should be properly connected to pipes which safely carry away waste water to discharge it into a drainage system.
- H. Worktops should be of adequate size for all the equipment and other food preparation activities and securely fixed. The surface of a worktop should be smooth, impervious and capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition. There should be sufficient appropriate power sockets associated with the worktop(s) (as well as those provided for equipment such as refrigerators and washing machines).
- I. There should be space for the installation of cooking facilities sufficient to take facilities of adequate size for the household, with appropriate connections for fuel.
- J. In multi-occupied premises where facilities are shared, a degree of lack of communication between individuals from different households is likely. This can lead to conditions where there is an increased risk of food poisoning, particularly where there is confusion over responsibility for cleaning.

Separate food storage, preparation and cooking facilities for different households can help reduce the risk of food poisoning and also reduce stress and anxiety associated with shared use.

- K. The areas for consideration in assessing whether or not a kitchen is free from deficiencies are also referred to as under HHSRS as potential Hazard 16 (Food safety). Guidance is given here to highlight key points for consideration and to illustrate the relationship between size, layout, design and cleanability. Landlords should read the HHSRS guidance in full. Landlords need to consider whether the kitchen meets the following criteria.

Storage

- I. Properly designed food storage facilities in a good state of repair and of adequate size for the household.
- II. Space for fridge and freezer.
- III. Sufficient power sockets.

Preparation

- I. A kitchen sink, with a separate supply of cold drinking and hot water for each household and a drainer to the sink.
- II. A sufficient amount of impervious worktops with adjacent power sockets.
- III. The sinks, drainers and worktops in a good state of repair.

Cooking

- I. Provision for cooking including an oven and hob (where appropriate).
- II. Where appropriate, adequately sized oven and/or hob having regard to the number and size of the (potential) household(s) and no disrepair to the oven and/or hob if provided.
- III. Sufficient space for cooking facilities an oven and/ or hob.

Design, layout and state of repair

- I. Kitchen facilities should be in a properly designed room or area, laid out so as to make safe and hygienic preparation and cooking of food easy, so reducing the risk of food poisoning and promoting safe practice.
- II. Kitchens should be laid out so that they are easy to use, provide space for the equipment and provide storage.
- III. In the interest of safety they should be designed in a u-shape with no through route between doors. This will not always be possible in existing dwellings but to be safe and easy to work in, the aim should be to provide an unbroken sequence of worktop cooker worktop sink worktop.
- IV. Kitchen floors should be even and easily cleanable and worktops should have cleanable impervious surfaces. There should be seals between a sink, a drainer, or a worktop and the adjacent wall surface.
- V. Kitchen lighting should be adequate and ventilation should be appropriate.
- VI. HHSRS recognizes that deficiencies with space and crowding can increase the risks associated with a number of other hazards. Small kitchens also increase the risk of accidents.

4(b) The dwelling should have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes
secondary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>A. There should be adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. space, power and plumbing for a washing machine II. provision for an external drying line III. an airing cupboard (see under D) <p>B. These may be provided in communal laundry facilities e.g. in some sheltered housing schemes and multi-storey flats.</p> <p>C. In the absence of provision for an external drying line, and no communal drying facilities, there should be provision for space, power and external venting for a 600mm wide tumble dryer. It should be positioned so that it can be vented directly to the outside air. These spaces will normally be in the kitchen, but may be in a utility area.</p> <p>D. In dwellings where a hot water tank is present, there should be a heated airing cupboard with at least 1m² of internal slatted shelving provided. Where hot water tanks are removed, a small radiator and slatted shelving will be installed. Where a boiler is located in the cupboard, no shelving will be provided for safety reasons.</p>

4(c) The bathroom and WC facilities must be 25 years old or less, unless it is in good condition
primary
<p>Powys standard</p> <p>The dwelling must have a bathroom and WC which are free from deficiencies. Ideally these should be reasonably modern i.e. 25 years old or less. However, it is accepted that a bathroom may not need replacing if it is older than 25 years and free from deficiencies.</p> <p>The minimum requirements set out for existing bathrooms are the same for replacement and new bathrooms and should be designed in accordance with the guidance set out below.</p> <p>This element is dealt with by HHSRS hazard 17 (personal hygiene, sanitation & drainage). Guidance here is given to highlight key points for consideration and to illustrate the relationship between size, layout, design and cleanability. Landlords should read the HHSRS guidance in full. In terms of layout, the following factors should be considered when assess the condition of existing bathrooms.</p>

Space and layout

- I. There should be a sufficient number of baths or showers and wash hand basins for the residents or potential residents.
- II. Houses for six or more people should have a second WC with a wash hand basin.
- III. Houses for eight or more people should have a second bathroom or shower room.
- IV. Bathrooms should not be more than one storey away from the bedrooms.
- V. In dwellings with more than one bedroom it should be possible to reach the bathroom without passing through a bedroom.
- VI. To provide for adequate privacy for the user, each bath or shower should be sited in a bathroom and each WC should be sited in a bathroom or separate compartment provided with a lockable door.
- VII. The WC should be provided in a naturally or artificially ventilated and lit bathroom or separate WC compartment and should not be open directly and immediately onto a space intended for the storage or preparation of food.
- VIII. The washbasin should normally be located in or near the room containing the WC. The WC, washbasin and bath should be readily accessible at all times without unduly compromising the privacy of the occupants.

Cleanability

Where there are deficiencies with the facilities themselves, this clearly can increase the risk from this hazard. In terms of cleanability:

- I. water closet basins should have a smooth and impervious surface (such as vitreous china) and be self-cleansing
- II. the internal surfaces of the sink should be smooth, impervious, and capable of being readily cleansed and maintained in a hygienic condition. Cracks, chips or other damage to the internal surface may prevent thorough cleansing
- III. wall, ceiling and floor surfaces must be cleanable.

4(d) The dwelling must have a bathroom with a bath and shower which may be an over bath shower

primary

Powys standard

The dwelling must have a bath and shower, which may be an over bath shower.

5(a) Is the dwelling fairly, efficiently and well managed

This element of the Standard is not relevant to the assessment process and future financial planning at this stage.

Powys standard

There should be service standards agreed between the landlord and Tenant Liaison Forum. The service standards include agreed measures to monitor performance on service delivery.

6(a) All roads and footpaths should be accessible and provide safety

secondary

Powys standard

All landlord owned roads and footpaths should be accessible and provide safety for residents, pedestrians and children. This includes ensuring that:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">I. main roads through residential areas are clear and well maintainedII. where it is desirable to limit access / use to residents and their legitimate visitors, features such as rumble strips, change of road surface (by colour or texture), pillars or narrowing of the carriageway may be appropriateIII. footpaths are wide enough to allow the passage of emergency vehicles, where vehicular access for emergency services vehicles is further away than 45m from an access point of a dwellingIV. footpaths which give access to the rear of dwellings should have gates placed as near to the building line as possible, to the same height as the adjacent boundary fencing and be opened via a key operated robust lock but should not be easy to climb or remove from hingesV. only grass or low ground cover is used as landscaping around footpathsVI. planting that limits open view should not be used within two metres either side of the footpath |
|--|

6(b) There should be soft and hard landscaping

secondary

Powys standard

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. All landlord owned areas should have hard and soft landscaping in protected areas.B. Landscaping should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and must avoid the creation of potential hiding places. |
|---|

6(c) Street lighting should be adequate
--

secondary

Powys standard

All landlord owned street lighting should be adequate and comply with BS 5489 unless prohibited by statute e.g. in conservation areas, in which case individual requirements should be discussed with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer and Local Authority lighting engineer.

6(d) There should be safe play areas for young children

secondary

Powys standard

- A. All landlord owned play spaces for young children should be adequate and safe.
- B. "Toddler" areas should be designed so that it can be secured and to allow supervision from nearby dwellings with a safe route for users to come and go.

6(e) Communal areas should be practical and maintainable

secondary

Powys standard

- A. All landlord owned communal areas should be adequate, practical and maintainable.
- B. Boundaries between public and private space should be clearly defined and open spaces should have features that prevent unauthorised vehicular access.
- C. Consideration should be given to the provision of informal association areas for members of the community, particularly youths.

6(f) The dwelling should have a clearly defined boundary

secondary

Powys standard

- A. The dwelling should be clearly identifiable and with definable boundaries and there should be clear naming and numbering of dwellings to assist residents and the attendance of Emergency Services.

B.	Where it is possible, defensible space should be created to front gardens by clearly defining the boundaries between private and public space.
C.	The front boundary should be clearly defined, by hedge, wall or fence of no more than 1 metre in height unless planning regulations specify a lower level.
D.	Adequate rear boundaries such as hedge, wall or fencing should also be provided between adjacent rear gardens. This includes a privacy screen of 2 metre deep and at least 1.8 metre high. Further boundary no less than 1.2 metre high.
E.	Where risk is increased by boundaries being adjacent to open land, footpaths or areas such as railway property or canal tow paths additional features such as a trellis top or thorny shrubs should also be considered.
F.	Boundary walls, bin and fuel stores, low flat roofs or balconies should be designed so as not to provide climbing aids to gain access into the property.
G.	The estate layout should provide each block (of flats or maisonettes etc) with a clearly defined defensible space and fencing where appropriate.

6(g) Utilities should be clearly identified	
secondary	
Powys standard	
A.	The dwelling should have utility services, which are practically located and well identified.
B.	To reduce opportunities for theft by bogus officials, utility meters should, where possible, be brought to the outside and front of the dwelling where they can be overlooked.
C.	Where possible utility meters in multi occupancy developments should be located on the ground floor between access controlled doors so that access can be restricted to the meters.

6(h) Car parking should also be practically located and should be clearly visible to residents	
secondary	
Powys standard	

- A. The dwelling should have adequate and practically located car parking clearly visible to residents.
- B. In-curtilage car parking should be provided where possible. However, where communal car parking areas are necessary, they should be in small groups, close and adjacent to the residents' dwellings, preferably within the residents' view and well lit.
- C. Where garages are provided the entrances should be orientated towards the front of dwellings where they can be easily observed.
- D. Where parking is designed to be adjacent to or between dwellings, a gable end window should be considered to allow residents an unrestricted view of their vehicles.

7(a) The dwelling should provide sufficient space for everyday living

secondary

Powys standard

- A. The dwelling should provide sufficient space for Nominal Occupancy and everyday living. Nominal Occupancy is determined by bedroom and living space floor area. Space for everyday living is determined by the furniture requirements to suit this Nominal Occupancy.
- B. Appendix 1 of the WHQS guidance provides landlords with an indication of how much nominal floor space is required for households in terms of bedrooms and living spaces. As shown, larger households require more living space.
- C. Whether a dwelling has sufficient space for its Nominal Occupancy is driven by its bedroom sizes e.g. a dwelling with three bedrooms, two doubles (over 10m² floor area) and one single (between 6m² and 10m²), would be classified as a five person dwelling and would be expected to have a dining room of at least 7m² and a lounge of at least 16m² (see table on Nominal Occupancy).
- D. Where a dwelling has additional rooms (e.g. rooms in a converted loft) that are not being used as bedrooms, then the lounge and dining room sizes need only be sufficient for the actual occupancy of the dwelling.
- E. Landlords are advised to use the guidance relating to furniture layout for bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms in conjunction with the table below to assess the appropriate occupancy level for each dwelling.
- F. It is recognised that sometimes individual rooms in an otherwise acceptable dwelling may fall just short of the standard required, and that to enlarge the room in question is not possible or cost-effective.

- G. In such cases some tolerance on the minimum circulation space requirements shown in Appendix 1 of the WHQS guidance is acceptable (up to 100mm would normally be regarded as reasonable). Worked examples using this table can be found in Appendix 2 of the WHQS guidance.
- H. Landlords should also take into consideration the gender composition and relationship of residents when considering the sufficiency of space within a dwelling as laid out in the Bedroom Standard. The Bedroom Standard states that a separate bedroom is required for:
 - I. a married or cohabiting couple
 - II. an adult aged 21 years or more
 - III. a pair of adolescents aged 10-20 years of the same sex
 - IV. a pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of sex.
- I. Any unpaired person aged 10-20 years is paired, if possible, with a child under 10 years of the same sex or, if that is not possible, they require a separate bedroom. The same applies to any unpaired child aged under 10 years.
- J. This is then compared with the number of bedrooms available for the sole use of the household. Bedrooms converted to other uses are not included; bedrooms not in use are included unless they are unusable as a bedroom.
- K. Furniture sizes and circulation space requirements for living and dining rooms are shown in Appendix 1 of the WHQS guidance. These, together with the detail given below, can be used to test the suitability of existing rooms.
- L. Minimum furniture requirements are as follows.

Living rooms

- I. Adequate number of chairs/settees to seat the maximum nominal number of occupants.
- II. Three small or two large storage units, one of which may be in the dining area (in single person dwellings, requirements reduces to two small or one large unit).
- III. A television.

Dining areas

A dining table and chairs to seat the maximum nominal number of occupants.

It is emphasised, however, that these circulation space requirements are already modest, as is the amount of furniture allowed for. Circulation space should not be reduced to the point where rooms are cramped and inconvenient.

Bedrooms

One-person bedrooms (bedroom size more than 6m² and less than 10m²):

- I. a single bed and bedside table
- II. a medium chest of drawers (this may be in an adjacent box room or on the landing if it does not impede circulation space)
- III. a single wardrobe (freestanding or built in).

Two-person bedrooms (Bedroom size more than 10m²):

- I. a double bed or two single beds or a double bed and a bedside table
- II. a large chest of drawers (this may be in an adjacent box room or on the landing if it does not impede circulation space)
- III. a dressing table
- IV. one double or two single wardrobes (freestanding or built in).

7(b)The dwelling should have enough storage both internally and externally

secondary

Powys standard

The dwelling should provide adequate internal and external general storage space. All dwellings should have adequate and convenient internal and external storage which should include:

- I. a tall cupboard suitable for storage of brooms etc.
- II. high level shelving for storage of cleaning materials out of reach of small children
- III. an airing cupboard (where applicable)
- IV. a robust and lockable external store, where appropriate.

7(c) The dwelling layout should meet the specific cultural needs of the tenants

secondary

Powys standard

The dwelling should meet the special cultural needs of the residents, where practicable.

7(d) All necessary physical aids required by the residents should be provided

secondary

Powys standard

The dwelling should have the necessary physical adaptations to suit the professionally assessed requirements of the residents. Landlords should, therefore, consider the particular requirements of individuals and/or groups and where the existing dwelling falls short of their needs, look at possible remedies.

Similarly, accessibility issues should be addressed when considering dwellings to be occupied by those with a mobility impairment.

7(e) Dwellings with a garden should have a directly accessible, reasonably sized level area

secondary

Powys standard

- A. All dwellings with either a front or rear garden should have a level area of no less than 10m² that is directly accessible.
- B. An area is to be considered directly accessible if access to it can be gained without leaving the dwelling's plot boundaries. Paths and steps may be considered an acceptable method of access.

7(f) The dwelling should have paved access to any garden gate and drying line

secondary

Powys standard

Where a dwelling has a garden that requires access from the front or rear boundary to an entrance door the access to them should be fully paved. Where a dwelling has a garden with an area with provision for a drying line, the access to this should be fully paved.

This page is intentionally left blank

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit, incorporates a range of legislative requirements that support effective decision making and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. **Draft versions of the assessment should be watermarked as "Draft" and retained for completeness. However, only the final version will be made publicly available. Draft versions may be provided to regulators if appropriate. In line with Council policy IAs should be retained for 7 years.**

Service Area	Housing and Community Development	Head of Service	Nina Davies	Director	Nigel Brinn	Portfolio Holder	Cllr James Evans
Proposal		Annual review Welsh Housing Quality Standard Compliance Policy					
Outline Summary / Description of Proposal							
<p>Welsh Government requires that the Council as social housing landlord has a Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Compliance Policy which is reviewed annually. The policy commenced on 1 April 2016 and this impact assessment only looks at the changes as part of the current annual review.</p> <p>The review has resulted in updating figures, reflecting changes in practice and making the policy clearer, where this has been suggested.</p> <p>The review has not resulted in change of objective or budget saving.</p> <p>After achieving the WHQS, the focus will change to addressing acceptable fails, especially where tenants have opted out of improvements. There will also be focus on addressing damp and cold properties. Cyclical maintenance / replacement programmes remain in place to ensure elements are replaced at the end of their life.</p> <p>There is now reference to the audit carried out by the Wales Audit Office. Subsequently a damp strategy and a thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy have been approved.</p> <p>The Council will train staff to verify properties. The verification ensures any shortcomings are addressed.</p> <p>Impact assessments have been published when the policy was adopted and for previous reviews.</p>							

1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Henk Jan Kuipers	Service Improvement Officer	30-04-2019
2	Henk Jan Kuipers	Service Improvement Officer	06-06-2019
3	Henk Jan Kuipers	Service Improvement Officer	12-06-2019

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
£N/A	£	£	£	£	£

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
--------------------------	--

Public and Staff consultation required

Team Leaders of the Planned Maintenance and Improvements Team have been consulted, as well as the Service Managers.

The Investing In your Home subgroup of the Tenants' Scrutiny Panel has been consulted.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



4. Impact on Other Service Areas

<p>Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety, Corporate Parenting and Data Protection?)</p> <p>PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY</p>
<p>No</p>

5. How does your proposal impact on the council's strategic vision?

Council Priority	How does the proposal impact on this priority?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Reviewing and adopting the policy will enable to access funding from Welsh Government.	Very Good		Choose an item.
Health and Care We will lead the way in effective, integrated rural health and care	Implementing the recommendations from the evaluation of the level access projects will improve the outcome for individuals.	Good		Choose an item.
Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

--

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017: Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being. Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.				
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Welsh Language impact on staff</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).				
<i>Age</i>	The thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy is now included in the policy.	Good		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy is now included in the policy.	Good		Choose an item.
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Race</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	No changes proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	The thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy is now included in the policy.	Good		Choose an item.

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Prevention: Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Integration: Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Preventing Poverty: Prevention, including helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty.	The thermal comfort and fuel poverty strategy is now included in the policy.	Good		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Unpaid Carers: Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Safeguarding: Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.	No change proposed.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Impact on Powys County Council Workforce	Capacity will be created to carry out the 1,000 verification visits annually	Good		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

Severity of Impact on Communities	Scale of impact	Overall Impact
Low	Low	Low
Mitigation		
None		

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



9. How likely are you to successfully implement the proposed change?

Impact on Service / Council	Risk to delivery of the proposal	Inherent Risk
Low	Low	Low
Mitigation		
None		

Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating
none	Low		Low
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.
Overall judgement (to be included in project risk register)			
Very High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
			Low risk

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
The proposed reviewed WHQS compliance policy meets Welsh Government requirements. The policy has been updated and now includes reference to the damp and thermal and fuel poverty strategies, as well as evaluation of level access works. The Council will now verify itself if properties meet WHQS by visiting properties at least once in every five years.	

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
Tenant satisfaction with WHQS works was 86% in 2018/19. During the financial year 2018/19 2,900 components were installed.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
The Tenants' Scrutiny Panel "Investing in Your Home subgroup" meets monthly to discuss maintaining WHQS. After carrying out works, tenant satisfaction surveys are carried out.
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
When the policy will be reviewed a new assessment will be carried out for any changes in policy.

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Henk Jan Kuipers		
Head of Service:	Nina Davies		
Director:	Nigel Brinn		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr James Evans		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Portfolio Holder	Date required	31-07-2019
------------------------	------------------	---------------	------------

FORM ENDS