

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Welsh Language, Housing & Climate Change



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25/02/2022

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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 **3 March 2022** (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.	A NEW 'QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATION STANDARD' FOR COUNCIL HOMES
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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL
PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION**

by

COUNTY COUNCILLOR IAIN MCINTOSH

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC
REGENERATION**

February 2022

REPORT AUTHOR: Interim Service Manager – Tenancy Services

REPORT TITLE: A New ‘Quality of Accommodation Standard’ for Council homes

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report requests approval to introduce a new Quality of Accommodation Standard (QoAs) to apply to homes let by the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council lets circa 500 homes a year, the vast majority of these being properties that have previously been tenanted. The current Empty Homes Standard¹ provides limited detailed information about the standard incoming tenants can expect their new home to meet. This has resulted in tenants regularly querying what they should and should not expect to find in their new homes when they move in. The lack of detailed information has also led to different interpretations of the standard by both officers and void works contractors, including Heart of Wales Property Services (HoWPS) creating an inconsistent approach to works specified for void properties to make them fit to let.
- 2.2 The STAR Survey² in 2019 and the 2020 ‘Moving on Up’ workshops with Housing Services colleagues and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel identified that the standard of properties when let needs to better reflect the needs and aspirations of incoming tenants. There needs to be a particular emphasis on properties being clean, fresh and able to be moved into as soon as possible after the new tenancy agreement has been signed.

¹ The current empty homes standard relates to properties that are re-let through the Council's void process and does not include newly built homes, being let for the first time.

² STAR is the Survey of Tenants and Residents, used by many social landlords in Wales to gain customer feedback on services. From 2021-2022, the STAR survey is a mandatory requirement of the Welsh Government for all social landlords.

- 2.3 A key intended impact of the revised QoAS is to create a ‘wow factor’ for new tenants, so that their first impression of a home rented from the Council is positive. This will make settling in easier and establish a good relationship between tenants and the Council from the start of the tenancy. This will be achieved through a mix of decorating, cleaning and a focus on the quality of bathrooms and kitchens, as these factors are of most importance to incoming tenants. This will be underpinned by an ongoing commitment to ensure that new tenants are actively supported to minimise, wherever possible, the costs of setting up a home.
- 2.4 One of the biggest costs of setting up a new home is that of floor coverings, such as carpets. The current empty homes standard does not include any reference to the provision of flooring or carpets with current practice being to remove existing floor coverings from the property during the voids process. As part of making it easier and more affordable for new tenants to settle in quickly to their homes, the revised QoAS includes the option for ‘gifting’ existing carpet on the understanding that the new tenant wishes to accept both the carpet and all ongoing maintenance liabilities of such.
- 2.5 The QoAS will provide a robust and detailed standard for officers to work from, and give tenants a standard they can expect from the Council with an anticipated subsequent increase in tenant satisfaction³ and tenancy sustainability. The QoAS establishes a sound foundation from which tenants are more aware of the expectations of how they take care of their home, and encouraging properties to be returned to the Council at the end of tenancy in a clean, undamaged state that reduces the costs and time required to let the property to another household. It will also support a more accurate record of property maintenance for the lifetime of the tenancy.

3. Advice

- 3.1 The proposed QoAS is attached to this report as Appendix One. The core elements are summarised below:
- ✓ Professional and thorough clean of the entire property.
 - ✓ Wherever possible, the ‘gifting’ of existing carpet on the understanding that the new tenant wishes to accept it and any ongoing maintenance liability. To facilitate this any carpet to be ‘gifted’ will be thoroughly cleaned. It will also be checked by a member of the Council’s Asset Management Team to make sure it is securely fitted and complies with all current health and safety requirements for residential carpets.
 - ✓ Decoration of all rooms that are not at good standard, normally through the provision of decoration vouchers and packs. In certain circumstances – for example where the redecoration needed to make the home liveable is beyond the capabilities or capacity of the incoming tenant, the décor is unhygienic or work has been undertaken that has

³ In 2019, the Council took part in the STAR survey of tenants. The survey showed: 65% overall satisfaction; 77% satisfied with quality of the home; 71% felt rent provides value for money; 54% satisfied with repairs and maintenance.

damaged existing decoration - the Council will undertake pre-let decoration.

- ✓ Clear indication and timescale of any Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) or improvement works that may be planned for the property.
- ✓ Essential repairs completed during void period and notification of any repairs that can be safely and with minimal disruption undertaken after the property is let, with target times for completion - this will help speed up the time a property can be let, helping tenants move more quickly into their new home.
- ✓ Garden tidy up and cut-back.

3.2 The QoAS will be an integral part of the eight-week 'Settling-in Visit' for new tenants, allowing the visiting officer and the tenant to make sure that the rights and responsibilities and commitments of both tenant and the Council are being fulfilled.

3.3 The introduction of the new QoAS will align with two new initiatives being driven forward by the Council to improve services for its tenants.

3.4 'First Touch' Mobile Working

3.4.1 'First Touch' will allow Housing Services colleagues to work as easily in the field, on estates and in properties as if they were in their office or working from their home-hub. 'First Touch' has been developed and piloted for housing management and maintenance officers over the past year, and as Covid-19 restrictions ease, will be rolled-out during 2021-22. Colleagues will be able to access all management systems for housing no matter where they are in Powys, subject to mobile phone reception. This will speed up the response to tenants' enquiries and mean that officers will be able to spend more time working on site and within local communities. First Touch will allow for rapid ordering of all works necessary to be brought up to the QoAS to allow the property to be re-let quickly and efficiently.

3.4.2 The First Touch system will also allow officers to capture photographic evidence of the condition of the property at the start of the tenancy and the condition when the tenant leaves. This will support a robust approach to the recovery of rechargeable repairs costs and help tenants to be better informed about their rights and responsibilities about the care and maintenance of their home.

3.5 'Keeping in Touch'

3.5.1 Part of the 'Love Where You Live' community sustainability strategy, 'Keeping in Touch' is a new way of developing positive relationships between tenants and the Council. Every tenant will be visited by their area housing officer at least once every three years.

3.5.2 During the visit, housing officers and tenants will be able to discuss:

- ✓ Any current or possible housing needs or aspirations by both the tenant and members of their household, for example grown up children living with their parents or guardians but who want to have their own home.
 - ✓ Their experiences of services provided by the Council, including for example repairs and maintenance and estate maintenance.
 - ✓ An update on future investment plans, for example the WHQS programme or new development plans for the community.
 - ✓ Outstanding repairs and repairs that need to be done, both by the Council and those that are the tenant's responsibility.
 - ✓ The condition of the property and garden, making sure that both the Council and tenants are fulfilling their duties and responsibilities to each other, with reference to the QoAS assessment undertaken at the time the property was let.
 - ✓ Money management and rent payments, including for example making the most of social security support and accessing employment and training opportunities.
- 3.6 Each property over time will gain a QoAS record, which will be contributing to the knowledge the Council has about the condition of its housing assets, and the way its properties are being used and enjoyed.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The costs associated with delivering the QoAS for the re-letting of homes will not result in additional expenditure per void property than that currently provided for in the Thirty-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. The new QoAS will mean that the nature of the works required will change towards those that have a more immediate impact on the quality of life experienced by the incoming tenant.
- 4.2 The revised specification represents a change of emphasis rather than a significant change for the standard of void works. Void works are currently undertaken by Heart of Wales Property Services (HoWPS), as provided for in the Housing Maintenance Specification, which includes: "work to empty properties to enable them to be re-let in accordance with the Authority's [Powys County Council] (set out in Annex Six of this Specification) which may be varied from time to time". HoWPS will be notified of the change through the Change Control procedure, subject to the new standard being approved.
- 4.3 Provision has been made in the current HRA Business Plan for additional decorating expenditure, to be undertaken at the discretion of the Council's officers.
- 4.4 Over time, efficiencies will be gained by cutting down the cost of floor covering removal and disposal and supporting a more robust approach to recharging those few tenants who do cause damage to their home.

4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and that provision has been made within the HRA business Plan to accommodate any additional costs that may arise for the recommendation.

5. Legal implications

5.1 The QoAS helps make sure that the Council's homes are safe and in good condition at the time of letting, reducing the risk of claims against the Council for any breaches of health and safety requirements.

5.2 In researching the experience of other social landlords about the 'gifting' of carpets to incoming tenants, some expressed concerns regarding the legal status of gifting, which may mean that the Council remains liable for any resultant compensation claims or in extreme circumstances, repairs and replacement of the floor covering.

5.3 To mitigate any such future liability on the Council through such 'gifting', an appropriate disclaimer has been prepared. A copy of the disclaimer is attached to this report as Appendix Two. An incoming tenant will be expected to sign the disclaimer, transferring to them full responsibility for any floor covering in the property, at the time of letting and during the tenancy. In addition, to add legal weight to the arrangement, details of the 'gifting' will be included in the tenancy agreement between the tenant and the Council.

5.4 The Principal Solicitor- Housing has commented as follows: The disclaimer the tenant's sign will provide the Council with some protection regarding any claims from the tenant, but claims will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and it is possible, although not likely, that there could be a successful claim. It is not possible to provide a 100% guarantee that the Council will be protected from claims.

5.5 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

6. Data Protection

6.1 The Professional Lead – Data Protection has commented as follows: No changes in the way that we manage personal data will result through the implementation of the QoAS.

7. Comment from local member(s)

7.1 The letting of Council-owned homes take place across Powys which means that the QoAS applies to all constituencies.

8. Integrated Impact Assessment

8.1 An Impact Assessment is attached to this report as Appendix Three.

9. **Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that approval be given to the introduction of a new Quality of Accommodation Standard to be applied to the letting of Council-owned homes as set out in Appendix One to the report.

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Head of Service: Nina Davies (Head of Housing and Community Development)

Corporate Director: Nigel Brinn (Economy and Environment)

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

Housing Services

Quality of Accommodation Service Standard

Version	One
Reference	QoAS v1
Issue date	10.09.21
Review date	09.09.22
Agreed by	

Powys County Council – Housing Services

Quality of Accommodation Service Standard

Guide for Housing Services officers.

We will make sure that the homes that Powys County Council lets are of a good standard and are places where people want to live.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard

- ✓ Every home should meet the Government agreed fitness standards (please see Appendix A) and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).
- ✓ Each WHQS Primary Element's estimated replacement dates will be noted on the Property Inspection Sheet. This means that we can keep tenants better informed about when improvements are planned for their homes.
- ✓ Each Primary Element will need to be maintained in good condition during its life cycle. This is work that will be overseen by Housing Services. Where necessary, any such work can be included within void works if the work is absolutely necessary to make sure the property is habitable.

Specifying Works to Void Properties






Housing Quality Officers will specify works to a void property that will achieve the following outcomes:

Every home is hygienic and in good decorative order.






Cleaning

- 🏠 Kitchen surfaces, cupboard doors, draw fronts and sink units are to be thoroughly cleaned.
- 🏠 All baths, shower trays, toilets and wash-hand basins are to be thoroughly cleaned.
- 🏠 All storage cupboards are to be cleared and cleaned.
- 🏠 Window sills and doors are to be wiped down so that they are clean.
- 🏠 All fixtures, fittings, ledges, radiators, pipes, door frames, door handles, picture rails, skirting boards and fire surrounds are to be free of loose dust.
- 🏠 Cobwebs are to be cleared from walls, ceilings and cupboards.
- 🏠 Graffiti and any Blu-tack, Sellotape, drawing pins, nails, screws, chewing gum and labels are to be removed.
- 🏠 Curtains and blinds are to be removed.
- 🏠 Carpets to remain if a good standard and agreed by new tenant.
- 🏠 Remaining carpets to be thoroughly cleaned and checked that securely fitted.
- 🏠 Laminate floors to be removed.
- 🏠 All hard floors are to be swept and mopped, to remove loose dust and debris.
- 🏠 The loft is to be cleared.
- 🏠 Cleaning should be one of the last jobs undertaken, to make sure that the property is as clean as possible for viewing and letting.





Ceilings and Walls

-  Ceilings and walls are to be in a sound condition.
-  All plasterwork is to be sound. Hairline cracks, minor blemishes and holes and small gaps between wall and ceiling are acceptable.
-  If the ceiling has an Artex coating and it is in a good condition (i.e. not flaking or damaged), it is to be left in place.
-  Polystyrene ceiling tiles, including coving, will be removed from all ceilings with any damage to the plaster made good
-  All walls are to be free from damp and mould.


Garden Areas and External Buildings

-  Front and back gardens, bin stores, and any sheds are to be emptied and swept out.
-  All paved areas around the property, including the drive and path are to be swept. Any moss is to be scraped away. Any trip hazards should be removed.
-  Gardens with lawns and hedges are to be cut and trimmed and, if necessary, cut and trimmed during the period of void works. The garden is not to become at any time wild and overgrown.
-  Boundary fences are to be safe and secure and any substantial damage, for example holes big enough for pets or children to get through, repaired or where necessary, the relevant sections of fencing replaced.
-  Fall protection to be considered for retaining walls if there is an evidenced risk that failure to provide fall protection may result in injury to an incoming household.

Decoration









-  If the property does not meet our acceptable standard¹ for decoration, we will give tenants a decoration allowance. Any such allowance will be in the form of vouchers or decoration packs, the value of which is to be decided by the officer specifying the works to be undertaken prior to letting, based on condition and the allocating officer advised accordingly.
-  In exceptional circumstances where a family is unable to decorate², the property can be decorated. Any such decoration should be on a wall-by-wall basis where decoration is essential to make the property clean and habitable.
-  Decoration will be completed as part of the void works with due allowance made when setting the target return date.
-  All interior decoration will be white or magnolia.

Make sure that every home is safe

-  The staircase is securely fixed and safe and incorporates a handrail for the length of the staircase.

¹ Definition of Acceptable Decoration Standard: Free from nicotine staining, no multiple layers of dark or irregular colours of paint and/or wallpaper, existing painted finishes able to be re-coated without stripping back to bare wood or plaster.

² Unable to Decorate: this will be determined by the allocating HMOO, with reference to evidence that the new tenant for reasons beyond their reasonable control, does not have physical and mental capacity and capability to decorate themselves or arrange decoration of the property by a third party.

-  All doors and windows are secure and open and close properly.
-  Sufficient keys are provided for window locks.
-  There are new locks to the front and back doors.
-  All floors are even, in a good state of repair and have no protruding nails.
-  All roofs, walls, gutters and downpipes are safe and securely fitted.
-  A hard-wired, functioning smoke detector is located in the property.
-  If the property has a solid fuel heating system, all functioning chimneys are to be swept.
-  Any asbestos containing materials (ACM's) in the property are in a good condition, safe, sound and to maintain safety, only require regular managing and monitoring.

A safe supply of electricity, gas and water, a safe sewerage and water disposal system and a heating system that works safely and efficiently.

Electricity

- ✎ The electrical supply will have been checked prior to letting, in line with the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC) inspection procedure. The incoming tenant will be given a copy of the Electrical Condition Report Certificate.
- ✎ All sockets, switches and fittings are to be free from dirt, paint, undamaged in any way, securely fixed to the walls or ceilings and be safe to use
- ✎ Each room (except the bathroom and toilet) has at least one plug socket



Water









- ✎ All water supply pipes are intact and that the drainage system is operating effectively
- ✎ The water stopcock is in an accessible location, the surveyor advising the allocating officer where the stopcock is so that the new tenant can be shown by the allocating officer where and how to use stopcock.
- ✎ If the property has a cold-water tank, consider whether or not it is practicable and affordable to remove the tank and have the cold-water supply direct from the main.

Heating and hot water








- ✎ Each property will have a safety compliant heating system
- ✎ Any gas supply and gas appliances have been tested in line with current gas safety regulations to make sure they are in safe, working order. The allocating officer will issue a copy of the landlord's gas safety certificate at the sign-up.
- ✎ The emergency control valve to turn off the gas/oil supply is in an accessible and safe location. The allocating officer will show the tenant where this is and how to use the valve.
- ✎ All other forms of heating will have relevant certification demonstrating that at the time of letting the heating systems fully comply with all relevant and applicable installation, servicing and commissioning requirements.

Kitchens

-  Every property will have a fully functioning kitchen.
-  All kitchen cupboards, drawers, sink, taps, plugs, worktops, wall tiles, grouting and sealant are cleaned.








-  If the worktop is damaged (for example knife gouges, chips or other damage that may harbour food or other waste) it should be replaced.
-  The kitchen sink is to be clean with hot and cold taps which are in good condition and don't leak or drip and has a plug and chain. All new taps are to be lever taps
-  There is a supply of hot and cold water to the kitchen sink and at least three rows of tiles above the sink, where possible.
-  All kitchen units are secure, the edging is complete and doors and drawers work properly. (The number of storage cupboards in the kitchen will vary depending on the size of kitchen).
-  There is space for a cooker with either an electricity or gas supply and one electric cooker switch.
-  Dependent on the size of the kitchen there should be space for a fridge, freezer and washing machine. If the kitchen is small there must be space for a fridge.
-  There should be space for a tumble dryer, if not we need to provide a line for drying clothes. This can be either a rotary or a line fixed to a post(s) in the garden.
-  The kitchen contains a working extractor fan.

Bathrooms and toilets

-  Each property should have a fully functional bathroom, which contains a washbasin, toilet and either a bath or shower.
-  There is to be an over-bath shower and bath, or in cases of properties allocated to an elderly or disabled tenant, a level access shower base.
-  The bath and all wash hand basins each must have a plug and chain.
-  All fittings and taps are in good condition and don't leak or drip. All new taps will be lever taps.
-  There are three rows of tiles above each wash hand basin and bath (if there is a bath).
-  If the property has a shower the shower area will be fully tiled and a new shower curtain and shower head installed.
-  The toilet is fully working, has no cracks, is securely fixed, has a new secure seat and flush handle or chain.

Letting a home

When a tenant moves into their new home, the allocating officer will give them a copy of the Tenant Handbook. The Tenant Handbook will include for the property:

-  The tenancy agreement.
-  The gas safety certificate (if applicable).
-  The electrical safety certificate.
-  The energy performance certificate.
-  A user guide to the heating system.
-  A summary of the proposed WHQS work for the property over the following five years (noting that the programme is subject to change at any time).
-  How to report repairs and maintenance requests (including clear details of what the tenant and the council are each responsible for).

- ✿ Any fire safety requirements (for example use of communal areas, shared halls, landings and stairways), including testing of smoke alarms and giving the tenant a Scarlet Pointernet.
- ✿ Date of next heating service.
- ✿ Any relevant garbage disposal requirements (for example use of bin areas, storage of wheelie bins, if applicable).
- ✿ Guide to the correct use of drying areas (if applicable).
- ✿ Garden Maintenance Guide (if applicable).
- ✿ All health, safety and other relevant certificates will be provided to the allocating Housing Officer by the Housing Quality Officer with responsibility for void works.

Eight weeks after signing the tenancy, the area Housing Officer will visit to:











- ✿ Gather information from the tenant about their experience of our services during the first eight weeks of their tenancy.
- ✿ Gather information from the tenant about the neighbourhood in which they live
- ✿ Make sure that any repairs agreed at the time of letting are complete.
- ✿ That decorating is complete (if vouchers or decorating packs were issued at the time of letting).
- ✿ Accept any repair requests and arrange for these to be passed to the Council's repairs and maintenance team or, if necessary, a Housing Quality Officer to visit and assess the reported situation.
- ✿ Address any potential breaches of tenancy conditions or expectations.

One year after signing the tenancy, the area Housing Officer will visit to:

- ✿ Gather information from the tenant about their experiences of our services during the first year of their tenancy.
- ✿ Gather information from the tenant about the neighbourhood in which they live.
- ✿ Accept any repair requests and arrange these to be passed to the Council's repairs and maintenance team or, if necessary, a Housing Quality Officer to visit and assess the reported situation.
- ✿ Address any potential breaches of tenancy conditions or expectations.







Appendix A: Fitness Standard

There is a minimum fitness standard for all our properties. To meet the fitness standard, the property must:

-  be structurally stable
-  be free from serious disrepair and be habitable.
-  be free from dampness that could damage the occupant's health
-  have adequate provision for lighting, heating and ventilation
-  have adequate piped water
-  have satisfactory facilities for food preparation, cooking including the supply of hot and cold water, space for a cooker and a fridge and clean surfaces upon which to prepare food
-  have appropriate sanitary, washing and bathing facilities (bath, shower or wet-room, toilet and wash had basin).
-  have an effective system for the draining of foul, waste and surface water
-  be reasonably secure and adequately protected from the weather (with lockable and weathertight doors and windows, no leaks in the roof).
-  be clean and reasonably decorated (or the provision of a decoration voucher or decoration allowance will be offered to the tenant).

Structural stability

The house should not have any progressive structural movement that could cause any part of the building to fail or collapse. Before letting a house to tenants, the Housing Quality Officer with responsibility for specifying works prior to letting will check the condition of the property and will look for issues, such as:


-  leaning chimney stacks and pots
-  sagging roofs
-  bulging brickwork to the main external walls
-  settlement cracks above windows and doorways
-  distorted window and door openings
-  sloping floors.

Minor structural defects will be corrected by the Council's Housing Quality team. Major defects, as long as they do not pose a risk to the safety of the occupants, passers-by and immediately neighbouring properties, should be considered for incorporation into the Council's Capital Investment programme, recommendations for which could be completed following commencement of the tenancy.

Tenants will be advised when their tenancy starts of any relevant works to their home that are being considered for the Capital Investment Programme.

Damp

The house needs be free from rising and penetrative dampness, which could damage health. The Housing Quality Officer will need to check for:

-  Rising dampness to ground floor walls - this is normally indicated by a damp tide mark usually about 18 inches above the floor level

- ☞ Rising dampness to ground floors - old quarry tile floors and poorly constructed solid concrete floors with no damp-proof membrane are particularly susceptible
- ☞ Penetrating dampness to walls and ceilings due to leaking roofs and gutters, perished external brickwork and mortar joints, leaking hot or cold water pipes
- ☞ Condensation can lead to mould growth on walls and ceilings in kitchens and bathrooms. Condensation also gathers on bedroom walls behind cupboards and wardrobes and beneath windows.

Heating

All heating systems should be efficient, safely designed and cost effective to run.

With the reduction of carbon emissions by 2030 a requirement from both the Welsh and British Government, we will be exploring ways to reduce the incidence of fossil fuelled systems and how we can reduce the energy needs of our homes.

This means that we will be paving the way for alternative fuels (for example hydrogen), greater use of electricity that is generated in an environmentally friendly way, renewable energy (for example solar voltaic) and higher levels of insulation.

However, we will be taking a long-term approach making sure that our chosen options can be easily and economically maintained, are user friendly, have long lives and do not cause other problems elsewhere within our homes.

Insulation

It is important to have good thermal insulation. Housing Quality Officers must:

- ☞ Make sure roof spaces are insulated
- ☞ Adequate draught proofing is fitted to external doors and windows
- ☞ Make sure that all water pipes likely to be exposed to frost, such as those in the roof space or those servicing external taps, are properly insulated against frost damage
- ☞ If the house is fitted with a hot water tank, make sure it is fitted with a good quality insulation jacket.

Lighting

All rooms need adequate natural lighting to allow people to do domestic activities safely. A clear glazed window equal in size to one tenth of the room floor area will normally be adequate. However, this may not always be possible to retrofit to a property where this facility for allowing natural light into the property is not there.

- ☞ All staircases, landings, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets should have a window wherever practicable.
- ☞ There should be adequate electric lighting to all accessible parts of the house.
- ☞ Light switches must suitably positioned so that they can be switched on quickly when entering any room, hallway or landing.
- ☞ Two-way switches that switch on and off should be fitted at the top and bottom of stairs.

Ventilation

- ☞ All habitable rooms should be able to be ventilated directly to the open air by opening a window.
- ☞ Kitchens and bathrooms must have adequate mechanical ventilation. In kitchens and bathrooms with windows, it is good practice for the extractor fan to have smart technology via an automatic humidistat to remove moist air before it condenses on walls and ceilings.
- ☞ All rooms containing an open flue heating appliance should be provided with enough suitable permanent ventilation by air brick or similar.

Tenant Agreement

New tenants will be given the opportunity to consider the compliance of the property with the Minimum Fitness Standard before signing the tenancy of their new home.

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**Carpet, Curtain and Window Blinds Disclaimer –
Reletting of Property**



Name _____

Address _____

I, _____ confirm that I am happy to take ownership and accept full responsibility and any and all liabilities in respect of any carpets and floor coverings, curtains and window blinds that have been left at the address above.

I understand that Powys County Council will not be responsible for the maintenance or upkeep of the floor covering, carpets, curtain and window blinds including any damage or defects that may occur.

Tenant Signature _____ **Date** _____

Print Name _____

Officer Signature _____ **Date** _____

Print Name _____

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Appendix 3: 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	Head of Service	Nina Davies	Portfolio Holder	Clr Iain McIntosh
Proposal	Implementation of a revised Quality of Accommodation Standard and the gifting of existing flooring to new tenants				
Outline Summary / Description of Proposal					
The proposal is to introduce a revised empty homes (void) standard for the Council’s housing stock i.e the Quality of Accommodation Standard to provide more detailed information regarding the standard tenants can expect from a new home. As part of minimising the financial burden of new tenants in setting up their homes, the revised standard will include ‘gifting’ existing carpet on the understanding that the new tenant wishes to accept it and any ongoing maintenance liability.					

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

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
V1	Richard Batt	Interim Service Manager – Tenancy Services	21.5.2021
V2	Richard Batt	Interim Service Manager – Tenancy Services	24.5.2021
V3	Richard Batt	Interim Service Manager – Tenancy Services	10.9.2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

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

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
No consultation required (please provide justification)	Revision of existing standard to improve service delivery.

Appendix 3: Cyngor Sir Powys County Council Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?) PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY					
Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal and Democratic Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transformation and Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing and Community Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Workforce and OD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data Protection Impact Assessment					
Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment. For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.					

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4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)							
Powys	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Builth and Llanwrtyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfair Caereinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

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The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy		Neutral		Neutral
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	The proposal will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.	Good	The reintroduction of pre-tenancy termination visits to identify existing flooring that can be left for the new tenant.	Good
Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills		Neutral		Neutral
Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities	The proposal will have a positive impact on tenancy sustainability and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.	Good	The standard will be regularly monitored with the intention of utilising tenant feedback to ensure the standard continues to have both a positive impact on tenant satisfaction and tenancy sustainability.	Good

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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

N/A

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 a more positive impact or to 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.	The gifting of existing flooring as part of the implementation of the Quality of Accommodation Standard will reduce the volume of flooring particularly carpeting (which can be recycled) which is subsequently removed and disposed of as part of the voids process.	Good	The standard will be regularly reviewed to establish if any further existing fixture & fittings can be gifted to new tenants to minimise both the financial burden on new tenants setting up their home and the number of items that need to be disposed of as part of the voids process.	Good
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).		Neutral		Neutral

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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 a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The proposal will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>The reintroduction of pre-tenancy termination visits to identify existing flooring that can be left for the new tenant</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>		<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The gifting of existing flooring as part of the implementation of the Quality of Accommodation Standard will reduce the volume of flooring particularly carpeting (which can be recycled) which is subsequently removed and disposed of as part of the voids process.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>The standard will be regularly reviewed to establish if any further existing fixture & fittings can be gifted to new tenants to minimise both the financial burden on new tenants setting up their home and the number of items that need to be disposed of as part of the voids process.</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>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. <i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i></p>				
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</p>		<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>

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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 a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>		Neutral		Neutral
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>Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).</i>				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal will have a positive impact on tenancy sustainability and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.	Good	The standard will be regularly monitored with the intention of utilising tenant feedback to ensure the standard continues to have both a positive impact on tenant satisfaction and tenancy sustainability.	Good
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal will have a positive impact on tenancy sustainability and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.	Good	The standard will be regularly monitored with the intention of utilising tenant feedback to ensure the standard continues to have both a positive impact on tenant satisfaction and tenancy sustainability.	Good
<i>Gender reassignment</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Race</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Religion or belief</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Sex</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>		Neutral		Neutral
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>		Neutral		Neutral

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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

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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 a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
<p><i>Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</i></p>	<p>The gifting of existing flooring as part of the implementation of the Quality of Accommodation Standard will reduce the volume of flooring particularly carpeting (which can be recycled) which is subsequently removed and disposed of as part of the voids process.</p>	Good	<p>The standard will be regularly reviewed to establish if any further existing fixture & fittings can be gifted to new tenants to minimise both the financial burden on new tenants setting up their home and the number of items that need to be disposed of as part of the voids process.</p>	Good
<p><i>Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.</i></p>	<p>The Quality of Accommodation Standard has been developed collaboratively from staff working across Housing Services.</p>	Good	<p>The delivery of the standard will be regularly reviewed with the consideration of tenant feedback being a key consideration in these reviews to identify any further revisions needed to improve both tenant satisfaction.</p>	Good

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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 a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	The development of the Quality of Accommodation Standards has actively considered and incorporated tenant feedback.	Good	The delivery of the standard will be regularly reviewed with the consideration of tenant feedback being a key consideration in these reviews to identify any further revisions needed to improve both tenant satisfaction	Choose an item.
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i>		Neutral		Neutral
Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i>		Neutral		Neutral
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?		Neutral		Neutral
Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g., Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?		Neutral		Neutral

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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
Welsh Language impact on staff		Neutral		Choose an item.
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?		Neutral		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

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

Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
	The proposal will have a positive impact on tenancy sustainability and well-being of new tenants in helping to minimise the financial burden of setting up a new home.	Good	The standard will be regularly monitored with the intention of utilising tenant feedback to ensure the standard continues to have both a positive impact on tenant satisfaction and tenancy sustainability.	Good	New tenant survey feedback.

9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

PCC: *Impact Assessment Toolkit (March 2018)*

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Description of risks			
Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
Inconsistent implementation of the Quality of Accommodation Standard	6	The implementation of the standard will be regularly reviewed by a cross-functional team drawn from across Housing Services and regular review will also be presented to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel for consideration.	3

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
Following a review in December 2020, this report sets out the recommended changes to the allocation policy proposed by the 'Homes in Powys' working group. The changes aim to clarify the allocation process for both staff and applicants and look to address the pressures on the housing services such as the increase in homelessness presentations, lack of suitable stock and the promotion of sustainable tenancies.	

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

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
New Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
The Tenant Scrutiny Panel will monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality of Accommodation Standard through regular progress reports.
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
Annually

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Richard Batt	RDBatt	21 st May 2021
Head of Service:			
Portfolio Holder:			

**Appendix 3: Cyngor Sir Powys County Council
Impact Assessment (IA)**

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Choose an item.	Date required	
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FORM ENDS

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