

# Powys County Council Housing Services

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

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

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## **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         |
| <b>Total FTE</b>                                      | <b>15</b> |

***Housing Maintenance Team, 1 April 2019***

| <b>Role description</b>                       | <b>FTE</b> |
|---|------------|
| Client Services Team Leader                   | 1          |
| Housing Surveyors                             | 7          |
| Heating Services and Renewable Energy Officer | 1          |
| Responsive Maintenance Assurance Officer      | 1          |
| <b>Total FTE</b>                              | <b>8</b>   |

- 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         |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>£20,423,696</b> | <b>£16,286,738</b> | <b>£14,760,280</b> | <b>£14,760,280</b> |

#### ***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          |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>£3,798</b> | <b>£3,029</b> | <b>£2,745</b> | <b>£2,745</b> |

- 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   |
| <b>HHSRS Hazard 29: Structural Collapse and Falling Elements</b>  |
| <b>Powys standard</b><br><br>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.<br><br>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.<br><br>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.<br><br>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. |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 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.  |

|   |
|---|
| <b>1(b) free from damp</b>  |
| <b>primary</b>  |
| <b>HHSRS Hazard 1: Damp and mould growth</b>  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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.

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| <b>2(b) The kitchen should have adequate space for appliances</b>   |
| <b>secondary</b>  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>2(c) The kitchen should be a well organised working area with adequate work surfaces for resting pans and food preparation</b>  |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>2(d) The kitchen should have sufficient storage to meet the needs of the residents</b>  |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></p> <p>Kitchens should have convenient and adequate storage cupboards for food, crockery and pots and pans. This should be 1.1m<sup>3</sup> in a two person dwelling, increasing by 0.2m<sup>3</sup> for each additional person as determined by Nominal Occupancy referred to in Part 7 of this section.</p> |



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| <b>2(e) The kitchen should have sufficient and conveniently located power sockets</b>   |
| <b>secondary</b>  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>2(f) The dwelling should have flooring suitably designed for kitchens and bathrooms, and, where necessary, flooring suitable for use in wet areas</b>   |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>2(g) The dwelling should have an external fire escape</b>  |
| <b>secondary</b>  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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

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| <b>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</b>   |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>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</b>                      |
| <b>primary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>2(k) The dwelling should not have windows fitted with locks with an automatic locking action in rooms used for sleeping</b>   |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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> |

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| <b>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</b> |
| <b>primary</b>  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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.

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| 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:<br>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.<br>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:<br>All necessary steps should be taken to ensure the thermal performance of external walls is adequate to avoid the likelihood of condensation.  |

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| <b>3(b) External doors and windows must be sufficiently well fitting so that they do not cause severe draughts</b>  |
| <b>primary</b>  |
| <b>Powys standard</b><br><br>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. |

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| <b>3(c) The main entrance door should not open directly into the living room</b> |
| <b>secondary</b>   |
| <b>Powys standard</b>  |

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.



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| <b>4(b) The dwelling should have adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes</b>  |  |
| <b>secondary</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></p> <p>A. There should be adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes, which include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. space, power and plumbing for a washing machine</li> <li>II. provision for an external drying line</li> <li>III. an airing cupboard (see under D)</li> </ol> <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 1m<sup>2</sup> 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> |  |

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| <b>4(c) The bathroom and WC facilities must be 25 years old or less, unless it is in good condition</b>  |  |
| <b>primary</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Powys standard</b></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 &amp; 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**

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| 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. |
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| <b>6(a) All roads and footpaths should be accessible and provide safety</b> |
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| <b>secondary</b> |
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| <b>Powys standard</b> |
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| All landlord owned roads and footpaths should be accessible and provide safety for residents, pedestrians and children. This includes ensuring that: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. main roads through residential areas are clear and well maintained</li><li>II. 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 appropriate</li><li>III. 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 dwelling</li><li>IV. 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 hinges</li><li>V. only grass or low ground cover is used as landscaping around footpaths</li><li>VI. planting that limits open view should not be used within two metres either side of the footpath</li></ul> |
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| <b>6(b) There should be soft and hard landscaping</b> |
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| <b>secondary</b> |
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| <b>Powys standard</b> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. All landlord owned areas should have hard and soft landscaping in protected areas.</li><li>B. Landscaping should not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and must avoid the creation of potential hiding places.</li></ul> |
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| <b>6(c) Street lighting should be adequate</b> |
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| <b>secondary</b> |
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| <b>Powys standard</b> |
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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.

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| 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.   |

| <b>6(g) Utilities should be clearly identified</b> |   |
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| <b>secondary</b>                                   |   |
| <b>Powys standard</b>                              |   |
| 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. |

| <b>6(h) Car parking should also be practically located and should be clearly visible to residents</b> |  |
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| <b>secondary</b>  |  |
| <b>Powys standard</b>   |  |

- 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 10m<sup>2</sup> floor area) and one single (between 6m<sup>2</sup> and 10m<sup>2</sup>), would be classified as a five person dwelling and would be expected to have a dining room of at least 7m<sup>2</sup> and a lounge of at least 16m<sup>2</sup> (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 6m<sup>2</sup> and less than 10m<sup>2</sup>):*

- 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 10m<sup>2</sup>):*

- 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 10m<sup>2</sup> 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.