

**Nuneaton
&
Bedworth**



United to Achieve

**VOID PROPERTY LETTING
STANDARD POLICY**

Housing Communities and Economic Development

POLICY MANAGEMENT

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VOID PROPERTY LETTING STANDARD POLICY

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VOID PROPERTY LETTING STANDARD POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

- 1.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will ensure that all properties for re-letting have been subject to our standard checks for cleanliness and condition, for the integrity of all services including gas, electricity and water supply and for the proper operation of appliances for the use of water and heating.
- 1.2 All repairs detailed within the 'Letting Standard' should be completed as a minimum before tenants move into their new home, unless we previously agree with a prospective tenant to complete specific repairs upon allocation.
- 1.3 Providing the highest level of satisfaction is a key aim of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and to ensure we provide a level of consistency in the standards we deliver our void properties to new tenants, we have agreed this detailed 'Letting Standard' for all our contractors and staff members to work to.

2.0 INTERNAL WORKS

2.1 Cleanliness

- 2.1.1 All Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council properties will be cleaned upon completion of all repair and refurbishment works.
- 2.1.2 All surfaces will be disinfected with particular attention given to the kitchen and bathroom areas.
- 2.1.3 Baths, wash hand basins and toilets will be cleaned with water running freely (unless property drained down in certain circumstances, which will need to be re-inspected and tested again prior to re-let).
- 2.1.4 All woodwork will be washed down.
- 2.1.5 All windows will be cleaned and floors swept and mopped.

2.2 Services

- 2.2.1 All electrical and gas services to a property will be checked for faults and general integrity.
- 2.2.2 All taps, wastes and overflows will be clean, be securely fixed, and be free from blockages and in full working order.
- 2.2.3 All gas appliances will be tested on tenancy and all properties with gas must have a Gas Safety Certificate issued. A copy of this Certificate is issued to the new tenant once completed.

2.3 Condition of Appliances

- 2.3.1 All appliances such as central heating systems, showers and electric heaters will be tested as necessary and/or checked for general condition to ensure they are safe for use. Any inspection made should include an assessment of whether the appliance/installation complies and meet with current statutory regulations and/or legislation.
- 2.3.2 If an outgoing tenant has installed a fixed appliance without a certificate these will be removed. In new build properties where some appliance's are fitted these will remain in situ and will be gifted to the new incoming tenants who will then maintain responsibility for such items.
- 2.3.3 All gas fire appliances will be removed and the floor and wall openings made good.

3.0 SECURITY

- 3.1 There will be a minimum of two keys for each external door at a property.

4.0 GLAZING

- 4.1 All broken, panes of glass will be replaced. Any cracked and or misty panes of glazing will be repaired upon tenancy.
- 4.2 All glazing at low level or in doors will be installed with laminated glass or replaced with timber panels.
- 4.3 Window locks will be fitted on all ground floor flats and in Independent Living accommodation.

5.0 ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

- 5.1 All sockets and light fittings will be securely fixed and in good condition.

6.0 INTERNAL DOORS & FRAMES

- 6.1 All internal doors and frames will be free from holes and in full working order
- 6.2 Doors will have a suitable latch with handles fitted that are fully operational and fit comfortably into the door recess.

7.0 ARCHITRAVES AND SKIRTING

- 7.1 All architraves and skirting boards will be securely fixed to the wall and free from loose nails and screws.

8.0 PLASTERING

- 8.1 All internal wall surfaces will be free from major visible defects.
- 8.2 All visible plasterwork will be repaired to walls that have defects larger than hairline cracks, or where plasterwork is not keyed to the brickwork. Hairline cracks are considered acceptable and can be repaired with decoration.
- 8.3 Where there is loose wallpaper this will be removed from the complete wall
- 8.4 Any graffiti will be removed

9.0 FLOOR COVERINGS

- 9.1 All carpets, laminates and other floor coverings will be removed. If floor coverings are in good condition they may be gifted to the incoming tenant.
- 9.2 Anti-slip floor coverings in bathrooms, where provided in Independent Living and General Purpose properties, should be in good condition. Missing or broken floorboards or tiles will be replaced to match existing fittings (where possible).
- 9.3 Bathrooms and Kitchens will have suitable floor coverings left in-situ. If floor coverings are in good condition they may be gifted to the incoming tenant.
- 9.4 All floors should be even and free from trip hazards.
- 9.5 Airbricks to suspended ground floor voids should be checked to ensure adequate air circulation.

10.0 REDECORATION

- 10.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council operates a Decoration Allowance Scheme in partnership with Wilkinson and has a separate Decoration Allowance Policy to determine when an allowance may be made and the value of the allowance. The allowance is a contribution towards the cost of decorating and not intended to cover all the costs involved. The allowance is valid for six months from point of sign up. See Redecoration Policy.

11.0 KITCHENS

- 11.1 All kitchens (space permitting) will have a minimum of the following units dependent on property size and kitchen and where practically possible
 - 11.1 **1 bedroom property**
 - 1 wall unit
 - 1 sink unit
 - 1 base unit

11.2 **2 bedroom property**

- 1 wall unit
- 1 sink unit
- 1 base unit
- 1 base unit

11.3 **3 bedroom property**

- 3 wall units
- 1 sink unit
- 3 base units

11.4 All work surfaces will be securely fixed, be free from cracks and burns and be safe for the preparation of food. This may include the renewal of jointing and edging strips.

11.5 Any gas supply pipe to a cooker space will be 'capped off' by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's Gas Servicing and Maintenance Contractor, if no bayonet connector is fitted.

11.6 There will be a space between the cooker, sink and fridge and 300 mm wide x 600 mm deep worktop to both sides of the cooker where practical.

12.0 BATHROOMS

12.1 All properties will have the following items as a minimum:

- A bath that is enclosed with a bath panel, or a walk in shower
- Toilet and toilet seat
- Wash hand basin

12.2 All missing and defective wall tiles will be replaced, grouted and sealed, bath and wash hand basin areas will have at least 2 rows of tiles above.

12.3 Where a shower is installed by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, tiling should be full height adjacent to the shower, with a shower rail and curtain fitted.

12.4 Where the shower is DIY this will be removed and made good.

13.0 FIRE PROTECTION

13.1 All Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council properties, where practicable, will comply with all current Fire Regulations.

13.2 Where fire doors are fitted, to comply with Regulations and have automatic door closers installed ensuring the door closes mechanically.

- 13.3 All electrical circuits should be earthed in accordance with current requirements.
- 13.4 A mains powered smoke alarm is to be provided on each floor of the dwelling: The property will be fitted with working smoke detector(s) which will be 'hard wired' with an integral battery back-up system. All smoke detectors will be tested and all defective units replaced. A minimum of one smoke detector per floor will be provided. A minimum of one heat detector in a kitchen will be provided and one carbon monoxide detectors located adjacent to the boiler. Carbon Monoxide alarms will be checked and if required a new one will be fitted.
- 13.5 Polystyrene ceiling tiles will be removed as they are considered a Fire Risk and repairs will be carried out following removal.

14.0 INSULATION/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- 14.1 All roof spaces will be inspected prior to any new tenant moving into a Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council property.
- 14.2 All roof spaces should be insulated with at least 250 mm insulation. Tanks and pipes in roof spaces should be lagged. Insulation should not prevent ventilation of any roof space. Where insulation does not meet the required standard then the property will be placed on a list of programmed works and will be carried out within an agreed timescale dependent on need and existing programmes.
- 14.3 All hot water cylinders will be insulated.
- 14.4 All hot water pipes and cold water tanks that are out of the insulated part of the property will be separately insulated.
- 14.5 An appropriate and current EPC certificate to be obtained and issued to new tenant

15.0 DAMP AND MOULD

- 15.1 All Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council properties should be free from damp and mould. All sources of damp should be thoroughly investigated and the appropriate remedial action taken prior to any new tenant moving in.

16.0 ROOFS

- 16.1 All fascia's, bargeboards and soffits will be inspected, minor repairs will be undertaken, if identified to be defective the property will be added to the Planned Fascia and Soffit's programme.
- 16.2 The roof should be in good condition, structurally sound and watertight.
- 16.3 Flashings should be in good condition and correctly dressed.
- 16.4 Loft spaces will be cleared, and any fire compartmentation will be checked for compliance and rectified if required.

17.0 DRAINS AND GUTTERS

- 17.1 All gutters and downpipes should be free from visible blockages, debris and plant growth, have adequate fall settings and be free from leaks.
- 17.2 Gully covers will be provided to all drain heads. Manhole covers will be in good condition and securely placed.

18.0 GARDENS, FENCES AND BOUNDARIES

- 18.1 Fences and walls that form boundaries to a Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council property will be stable and in good condition. Where Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is responsible for a boundary, remedial works may be raised to rectify or replace any damaged part. Replacement fencing will consist of 2m x 2m privacy fencing to the rear, 900mm high chestnut fencing to the rear and 900mm high pale fencing to the front. This may be carried out on tenancy.
- 18.2 Gardens should be free of all rubbish and will be in reasonable order with grass cut and all structures that are in a poor condition, eg sheds, greenhouses will be demolished
- 18.3 Ponds should be filled in.
- 18.4 Uneven pathways or loose paving will be re levelled and securely fastened to front, side, rear doors and washing lines
- 18.5 Overgrown vegetation should be cleared or reduced to a reasonable level.
- 18.6 Make safe steps that would cause a trip hazard
- 18.7 Trees that are in a dangerous condition or causing structural damage will be removed. This will be determined following an inspection by the Council's tree officer.
- 18.8 Provision will be made for outside clothes drying facilities, whether communal, or individual.
- 18.9 Bins will be checked and emptied. Any damaged bins will be replaced.

19.0 ADAPTATIONS

- 19.1 Where a property had previous adaptations carried out i.e. grab rails, handrails, stair lifts through floor lifts as assessment will be made and these will either be left in situ or removed. This assessment will be on a case by case basis.

20.0 VOIDS COMPLAINTS

20.1 Tenants who wish to make a complaint about the voids process can do so by raising their concern through the Council's Corporate Customer Feedback process.

21.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

21.1 All Council policies aim to address the general duty of the Public Sector Equality Duty (A requirement on Public Bodies within the Equality Act 2010) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

22.0 POLICY REVIEW

22.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or when a change in legislation is received which would require this to be reviewed sooner.