



# The DASH Scheme Manual

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**DASH** Landlord Accreditation

*Providing Quality Housing Services*

# DASH Landlord Accreditation Manual

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Accreditation represents **quality** and **commitment**, and shows that a landlord is serious about setting, achieving, and maintaining high standards in both the physical and management standards of their portfolio.

## What is DASH?

DASH (Decent & Safe Homes) Services is a joint-working initiative with landlords and Local Authorities, which aims to improve housing conditions in the private rented sector. DASH Services was established in response to the introduction of the Housing Act 2004 and has since expanded to adapt to the ever-changing housing market. Expansion has also occurred in terms of the geographical area covered by the scheme.

DASH continues to grow and develop, and is a **leading provider** of accreditation, housing advice, information, training, and guidance for the private rented sector.

DASH is delivered by **Derby City Council** for administrative purposes; however, our accreditation scheme, training and information services can be accessed across England.

## What is DASH Landlord Accreditation?

DASH Landlord Accreditation is a **voluntary accreditation scheme** that has been operating since 2008. It is open to landlords who agree to meet a set of benchmark standards and complete training. These standards are set out in the [DASH Scheme Manual](#), which covers both housing management and property standards.

The aims of DASH accreditation are:

- To improve housing standards in the private rented sector
- To encourage and promote good property standards and management practices by recognising landlords who commit to accreditation
- To raise the profile and promote the public image of the private rented sector
- To support landlords in their development and knowledge by offering training and regular updates by email and online information sessions
- To inform, educate, raise awareness, and encourage good practice
- To reduce disputes and misunderstandings between landlords, tenants, and Local Authorities

DASH Landlord accreditation offers a quality mark to members and is **not** a landlord association or licensing scheme.

**Please note that some of the requirements outlined in the Scheme Manual may be higher standards than the Local Authority would ask for; this is because accreditation is a voluntary undertaking and not legal enforcement.**

## The Nottingham Rental Standard

DASH Landlord Accreditation also acts as a pathway to gaining the 'Nottingham Rental Standard' for landlords who have properties *within* Nottingham City Council boundaries. Nottingham is just one of the many Local Authorities who work with DASH. For more information on the Nottingham Standard, visit [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottinghamstandard](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottinghamstandard)

### What are the benefits of being accredited?

#### Information and training:

Access to training, continuous professional development (CPD) and best practice guidance. Landlords can take advantage of DASH guidance materials and events to enable them to fully understand property management and how to deal with tenancies in an ever-changing environment

#### Incentives and reduced licence fees:

Becoming accredited can give access to preferential services from Local Authorities (LAs) and other organisations. These incentives can include reduced licensing fees, access to Bond schemes and University accommodation centres. Check these incentives with your Local Authority

#### Recognition:

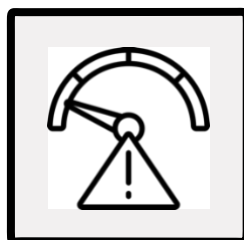
Being a DASH Accredited Landlord demonstrates to tenants and Local Authorities that you are accountable and responsible. The scheme provides public recognition that you are a reputable landlord, who not only maintains property standards, but also treats tenants fairly and manages the property well

#### Less Risk:

DASH will help you to understand property standards and aims to assess at least one of your properties for compliance with the Scheme Manual without introducing any enforcement action. DASH is there to guide you. An accredited landlord is often viewed as low risk by Local Authorities, tenants, and Universities

#### Branding:

The DASH accreditation logo can be used in adverts, on landlord's websites and letterheads to promote the fact that the landlord is accredited



## Who can join DASH landlord Accreditation?

Any landlord with private rented sector accommodation in England where DASH is an approved accreditation scheme is eligible to join the scheme, providing they have had no legal or civil enforcement action within the last two years and have no ongoing issues/ investigations with any Local Authority. For a list of our partner Local Authorities please see the DASH Services website.

Unfortunately, DASH Landlord Accreditation is **not** open to:

- Letting Agencies
- Managing Agents
- Buying Groups

The person or company wishing to become accredited **must own the properties they register with DASH** and be able to commit to the accreditation process themselves.

For the purposes of DASH accreditation, the definition of 'owning the property' is the person named on land registry as the owner.

**Please note that if a landlord is accredited in their own right but is also a Director/Owner of a company and that company is prosecuted, receives a Civil Penalty or is part of an ongoing case, this will be a breach of the Scheme Manual and the landlord's accreditation may be cancelled.**

## How do I become an accredited landlord?

### To become accredited with DASH you will need to:

- Sign the DASH Code of Conduct and complete all Self-Assessment questions online
- Provide details of all of your properties in the East Midlands plus other areas where DASH is an approved accreditation scheme. Failure to disclose all properties or any ongoing Local Authority issues to DASH at this point will result in the application being cancelled
- Where a property is divided into flats, each individual flat should be registered separately
- Pay the membership fee (if applicable – see 'What is the Cost section)
- Complete the DASH Landlord Development course (Foundation)– the course is included in the membership package and is available online. Upon renewal of accreditation the completion of further training courses will be required
- Undergo a compliance inspection of a sample of your properties (a minimum of 10% of properties owned per membership period)
- Complete any works our inspectors deem necessary to bring your property up to DASH standards within the timescale given
- Commit to increasing your professional development as a landlord

## What is the Cost?

The cost to join DASH Landlord Accreditation depends on which Local Authority your property/ies are based in. Some Local Authorities pay a subscription to DASH for landlords in their area to be accredited, therefore no fee is payable by the landlord.

To find out if your Local Authority pays for your accreditation please click here [DASH Services - How much does it cost to become an accredited landlord?](#)

If you let properties in an area where the Local Authority *does not* pay for your accreditation, for example Nottingham City Council or Portsmouth City Council, then it is you as the landlord (rather than the Local Authority) who will pay directly to join DASH.

### The following fees will apply for new application & upon your renewal:

**1-5 properties £110+VAT**

**6-10 properties £185+VAT**

**11-29 properties £435+VAT**

**30-39 properties £575+VAT**

**40 + properties Please email [dash@derby.gov.uk](mailto:dash@derby.gov.uk) for a quote**

The fee payable is for the application, so it is important to ensure that you are committed to completing the DASH accreditation process. Refunds cannot be given more than 48 hours after the application has been received by DASH.

*Please note the DASH fees are reviewed annually in line with increasing costs.*

## How long does accreditation last?

Once granted, accreditation lasts for a period of up to 3 years from the date of the initial application. After this time, landlords will need to renew their membership should they wish to remain accredited.

*Under exceptional circumstances accreditation may be awarded for a shorter period.*

### Renewals

The renewal process involves reconfirming your commitment to accreditation, paying the membership fee, a further inspection and completing a further online training course.

**Please note that if you have received a reduction on your licence fee as a result of being accredited with DASH accreditation, the relevant Local Authority may seek to recoup the amount of that discount should you not renew your DASH accreditation to cover the full licensing period (which is up to 5 years.)**

## Management and Operation of the scheme

The day-to-day management of the scheme is via the DASH Services Principal Manager who operates as an employee of Derby City Council (DCC). DCC has an agreement with each participating Local Authority partner to deliver accreditation in their geographical area.

The overall responsibility for ensuring DASH Landlord Accreditation is 'fit for purpose' lies with the Accreditation and Appeals Panel (AAP). The AAP is made up of representatives from key stakeholders; including Local Authorities, housing professionals and individual landlord members.

The AAP makes decisions on the operation of the accreditation scheme.

For the terms of reference for the AAP, please see the DASH website: [DASH Services - About the Scheme](#)

## Landlord and tenant disputes

In the case of a problem with the property/ landlord, tenants should first raise their concern with their landlord directly. The landlord should remedy any defect. If a repair is not carried out or the problem continues, tenants can refer their problem to DASH who will help to resolve the dispute.

Tenant complaints sent to the scheme must be in writing (or email) and clearly state:

- Details of how the landlord has breached DASH accreditation standards which are set out in the DASH scheme manual, making clear reference to each point (for example point 1.15 in the DASH manual states landlords should have an EPC and my landlord does not)
- How the tenant has already tried to remedy these breaches with the landlord
- If a third party (such as a deposit protection scheme, solicitor, local council) are already involved
- Relevant dates concerning the particular problem
- A contact address and telephone number for the person making the complaint

If the tenant is not satisfied with the decision the case may be referred to the DASH Accreditation and Appeals Panel who will make a decision on whether to uphold the tenant's complaint or not.

If the complaint is upheld, the AAP will decide what happens as a result of this, including whether a landlord's accreditation should be cancelled. The decision of the AAP is final.

## Important Notes about DASH Landlord Accreditation

### The Scheme Manual

Before applying to be a member, landlords should read the DASH Scheme Manual thoroughly to ensure that they can commit to it. By making an application for membership to the scheme, the landlord is signing up to, and agreeing to abide by, the DASH Scheme Manual.

Landlords will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any staff (or person acting on their behalf) complies with the Scheme Manual, as decisions taken by these people can affect the status of accreditation.

Landlords will ensure that their properties comply with the Property Standards in the Scheme Manual.

Where a landlord purchases a new property, it should be added to the DASH portal within 2 months and the landlord must commit to bringing it up to DASH standards, if necessary, within a 2-month timescale. Please note this does not replace your legal responsibilities.

The Scheme Manual will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with new legislation. A full review of the content and standards will be carried out **every three years**.

### Information Sharing

If a DASH inspector finds significant safety or safeguarding issues/ hazards at a property during a DASH inspection, the relevant Local Authority may be informed/ requested to carry out a joint visit, even if the landlord decides not to proceed with accreditation. DASH may also notify the relevant Local Authority if a landlord's membership is cancelled. For more information on data sharing, you are advised to read our privacy notice: <https://www.derby.gov.uk/site-info/privacy-notice/about/>

### Correspondence

Please note that the application to join DASH is online and all written correspondence, including newsletters is by email. For this reason, it is vital that you maintain an up-to-date email address. Members can update their details at any time through their DASH membership login. Application forms can be posted to landlords who do not have an email address/access to a computer.

### Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

As part of DASH membership, landlords are asked to maintain their CPD. In addition to offering training courses and webinars, DASH sends out regular correspondence in the form of e-newsletters and newflashes to members which counts towards CPD. You should log CPD hours through your DASH membership login for any training course, conference, or landlord forum that you attend.

## Cancellations

Landlords are required to complete the DASH Landlord Accreditation application process within a reasonable timescale, that is to say they have completed:

- Their contact details
- Details of all of the properties they own in applicable areas
- The self-assessment questions
- The relevant online training course
- Payment for membership (if required)

Applications not fully completed within 4 weeks will be cancelled and the landlord will be asked to re-apply at a later date when they can commit the time to the process. Please note that further fees may be applicable, and the relevant local authority can be informed that the application has been cancelled. DASH will also cancel an application in the following circumstances:

- If the landlord is found to be part of an open case being investigated by the Local Authority or has been prosecuted within the last 2 years
- If the landlord does not provide evidence of completed works by the deadline following an inspection (or after the extension if one has been agreed)
- If the landlord does not reply to requests for a property inspection within four weeks of their application/ renewal.
- If the landlord does not supply safety certificates for the property/ies within the deadline set
- If the landlord does not meet the Management Standards in the Code of Conduct
- If the landlord does not renew their membership within 4 weeks of being notified that their membership is due to expire
- If a tenant complaint against a landlord is upheld by the AAP, this may result in cancellation.

## Appeals

If a landlord disputes the works requested following a DASH inspection, this should be put in writing (via email) to the DASH Principal Manager in the first instance, including reasons as to why the works are being disputed and suggesting a suitable alternative.

The DASH Principal Manager will review the information and decide whether the works are justified taking into consideration the views of the Accreditation and Review Group.

Should the landlord disagree with the DASH Manager's decision, this will be referred to the Accreditation & Appeals Panel (AAP) – **the AAP decision is final.**

Similarly, if a landlord has their application or accreditation cancelled due to not completing works or breaching the Code of Conduct (laid out in the scheme manual) and disputes this, the case can be referred to the AAP. **The decision of the AAP is final.**

For more information on our cancellation and how we handle complex cases please visit:

[DASH Services - About the Scheme](#)

# The DASH Code of Conduct

## **Section 1. Housing Management Standards**

### **Business Conduct**

#### **Equal Opportunities**

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- 1.1 Landlords will ensure that nobody is treated less favourably because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, disability, relationship status, sexual orientation, or any other factor upon which unlawful discrimination may be made.
- 1.2 Landlords will not refuse a tenant a reference for the purpose of securing a new tenancy without good cause.
- 1.3 Landlords and their agents will co-operate fully with the requirements of the Scheme Manual.
- 1.4 Landlords will act in a fair, honest, and reasonable way in their dealings with tenants and will respect their right to peaceful and quiet enjoyment of the property.
- 1.5 Before the commencement of the tenancy, permission will be sought to ensure that mortgage providers and other interested parties permit the letting of the property.
- 1.6 Tenancy agreements must not contain any unfair terms (*as defined in the Part 2 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015*) or any terms or conditions that conflict with the tenant's statutory or common law rights or the provisions of this Manual.
- 1.7 Landlords will not act in a manner that brings the accreditation scheme into disrepute.
- 1.8 Landlords must register with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) as a Data Controller to comply with GDPR.
- 1.9 Where a landlord charges any fees, these must be in compliance with the *Tenant Fees Act 2019*.

#### **At the Start of the Tenancy**

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- 1.10 All properties must be in a decent and safe condition as per the *Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018*, well maintained and in good decorative repair.

#### **Tenancy Agreement**

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- 1.11 All tenancies shall be issued using a written tenancy agreement at no cost to the tenant. Such agreement will be written in clear legible English, with no unfair terms, detailing any contractual terms under which the property is offered and kept for the lifetime of the tenancy.
  - 1.11.1 **The tenancy agreement must state clearly:**
    - Contact details for the landlord or agents, including emergency contact details – at least one of the contacts provided must be in England
    - The rent payable, due date and payment method

- The deposit payable and details on how it is held and when it will be refunded
- Who holds responsibility for utility and council tax charges
- The obligations of the tenant and landlord

**1.12** Prospective tenants should be permitted at least 48 hours in which to seek advice on the contractual terms of the tenancy agreement.

**1.13** Where transactions are undertaken in cash or cheque, a written receipt will always be provided by the landlord, or the payment recorded in a rent book.

## Deposits

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**1.14** If a deposit is taken, it must be protected in a statutory tenancy deposit protection scheme and all legal requirements should be met by the landlord, including providing the *Prescribed Information* (provided by the relevant deposit scheme operator) to the tenant within 30 days of receipt of the deposit.

## Documentation

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**1.15 All properties should have the following certificates in place (where applicable):**

- Gas Safety Certificate
- Satisfactory EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report) dated within the last five years  
NOTE: An EIC can only be accepted in place of an EICR where the property is a new build (within the last 5 years) or has had a full rewire
- Mandatory/Additional/Selective Licence
- Planning and Building Approvals
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Proof of Deposit Protection
- Fire Alarm Servicing Report/Smoke Alarm Test Certificate
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Sprinkler or Misting System Test Certificate
- Any other certificates required by law

*Copies of these must be made available to tenants and DASH services during the tenancy at no cost to the tenant or DASH.*

**1.16 At the start of the tenancy, the landlord must provide tenants with the following information as a minimum:**

- Emergency contact details
- Response times for repairs (see **1.18**)
- Appliance operation guides (e.g., boiler, heating, alarms)
- Refuse/bin collection days
- Correct use of the fire equipment and safe means of escape in the event of a fire
- Location of the 'stop tap' and gas shut off valve

## **Right to Rent**

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**1.17** The landlord will carry out all necessary checks on the tenant and ensure that the tenant has the *Right to Rent as per Section 22 of the Immigration Act 2014* (see useful web links section at the end of this document).

## **During the Tenancy**

### **Repairs**

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**1.18** Where the landlord is notified of a defect or disrepair within the property, repairs must be completed within the following timescales:

- **Emergency Repairs:** Any issue that poses a risk to health and safety of the tenants or serious damage to the property or residents belongings. These repairs should be completed **within 24 hours** of the defect being reported. In circumstances where this is not practical, landlords should make the best temporary arrangement and complete the work as soon as possible. For example, a ground floor window that is completely smashed after a burglary should be boarded up and the glass removed while a new window is ordered.
- **Urgent Repairs:** Repairs or defects which materially affect the comfort or convenience of the residents should be resolved **within 5 working days** of report of defect. For example, a boiler that is broken so the tenants do not have heating. The landlord should provide suitable temporary heating at no additional cost to the tenant while the repair is carried out.
- **Day to Day Repairs:** Repairs should be made within reasonable timescales, **within 28 working days** of being reported unless a longer timescale is agreed with the tenant in writing. For example, a broken or damaged wardrobe.

- 1.19** The date of reporting the matter to the landlord in writing/text or email shall be considered the start date for the completion of any repairs.
- 1.20** With the exception of emergencies, tenants will be notified at least 24 hours prior to the attendance by contractors or others to undertake repairs.
- 1.21** Maintenance and servicing tasks, which can be carried out in a planned and cyclical manner, will be carried out with due regard to the convenience of tenants
- 1.22** Decorative finishes for which landlords have responsibility will be made good within 12 weeks, or by agreement with the tenant, if damaged during any repairs

## Disputes

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- 1.23** In the case of an issue with the property or management that does not fall into the repair categories in **1.18**, the landlord will acknowledge all written communication received from the tenant **within 2 weeks**.
- 1.24** If any issues remain unresolved, DASH can give advice to both parties and will act as an intermediary with the purpose of assisting parties to reach an agreement. If the dispute is considered to be of a serious nature or is potentially in breach of the Code of Conduct, then DASH services will refer the complaint to the AAP in line with the complaints procedure.
- 1.25** A landlord/tenant shall abide by any decision made by the AAP.

## Access and Tenant Privacy

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- 1.26** If the landlord requires access for the purpose of routine inspection, repairs, maintenance, or viewings, the landlord shall notify the tenants of the date, time, and purpose of the visit **not less than 24 hours in advance**. The tenants' privacy should be respected at all times.
- 1.27** Landlords will not cause harassment to a tenant, instruct, or undertake action that involves the tenant being illegally evicted or harassed.
- 1.28** The landlord or their agent will visit their property/ies a **minimum of every 6 months** to inspect the general condition of the property.
- 1.29** The tenancy agreement should include, as a minimum, a clause requiring the tenant not to cause a nuisance or annoyance or anti-social behaviour.

**1.30** In the event of any anti-social behaviour (defined as “*behaviour likely to cause alarm, harassment, inconvenience, or distress to members of the public not of the same household as the perpetrator*”) by tenants in the property, landlords will use reasonable endeavours to intervene with a view to ending that behaviour and ensure that the occupants are treating the property and its surroundings in a tenant-like manner. A record should be kept of any action taken. It is accepted that not all intervention will be successful, and, in this case, assistance can be requested from statutory agencies who may be able to intervene.

## **End of Tenancy**

**1.31** All tenants are issued with clear written guidelines regarding matters that require their attention before vacating, including cleaning, payment of bills and return of keys.

**1.32** Members will adopt the correct procedures for tenancy terminations and refrain from any act of harassment, illegal eviction, or unlawful means to regain possession of their property.

**1.33** All deposits (or balances on deposits) will be returned to former tenants **within 10 days** of the end of the tenancy in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenancy deposit scheme. In the event that a deposit is not to be returned within 10 days then the tenant will be sent reasons for that delay, in writing, together with a statement of account providing reasonable details of any and all deductions to the former tenant/s.

## **Section 2. Property Standards**

### **Hazards**

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**2.1** Landlords will ensure that any properties and boundaries are maintained free of any avoidable or unnecessary hazards as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and there are no known Category 1/high Category 2 hazards which will cause harm (see appendix for more information). This includes any cladding on the exterior of buildings.

**2.2** Any appliances, furnishings and wiring should conform to National Standards on Fire and Electrical Safety: <https://dashservices.org.uk/Resources/Fire-Safety>

## Facilities and Space Standards

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- 2.3** All accommodation provided will be in a reasonable state of repair and free from significant hazards. All accommodation must comply with the relevant Local Authority Amenity Standards in which it is based. It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure they check the requirements with their own Local Authority.
- 2.4** The kitchen must be suitable for the number of occupants and have a safe layout, including the location of the cooker which should ideally have a minimum of 300mm of work surface either side.
- 2.5** An adequate number of suitably located washing and bathing facilities must be provided with hot and cold-water supply, which is suitable for the number of occupants as required by any relevant National or Local legislation.
- 2.6** Where a WC is located in a separate compartment, and is not adjacent to the bathroom, then a wash hand basin with hot and cold running water should also be provided within the same compartment.
- 2.7** All licensable House in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) must meet the National minimum room size as specified under *Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004*. Rooms must have an adequate floor to ceiling height as required by any relevant Local legislation.
- 2.8** The landlord should ensure that the property is not overcrowded or sublet; and if it is, the landlord should take all reasonable steps to resolve this.
- 2.9** All property must comply with the *Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022*. Carbon monoxide detectors conforming to **BS EN50291-1:2018** will be fitted to any room where there is a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers). This includes any open fireplace that is available for use. Carbon monoxide alarms must be in working order at the start of the tenancy and maintained (replaced or repaired once informed and found they are faulty) throughout the tenancy. All carbon monoxide alarms have a limited working lifespan (often around 7 years). Please ensure that you know when the carbon monoxide alarms in your properties are due to expire, so that they can be replaced when required.

## Fire Safety

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### All Properties

**2.10** Landlords must familiarise themselves with the LACoRS Housing – Fire Safety Manual (see useful web link section at the end of this document).

*As a minimum, your property/ies must comply with LACoRS guidance.*

#### **2.11 ALL properties will comply with the following:**

- Ideally mains wired interlinked smoke detectors will be fitted on each level of the property (including the cellar). However, as a minimum, a lithium 10 year sealed battery powered smoke detector is required on each floor of the property (including the cellar) and on the route of escape. Please note that additional coverage may be needed depending on the size, layout, management, and occupancy of the property (see **2.17**).
- Detectors must be in working order at the start of the tenancy and maintained (replaced or repaired once informed and found they are faulty) throughout the tenancy. Smoke detectors should be tested (and the tests recorded) as part of your regular property inspections.
- All smoke detectors have a limited working lifespan (usually 10 years). Please ensure that you know when the when the smoke detectors in your property/ies are due to expire so that they can be replaced when required.
- All exit routes in a property, including hallways, landings, and staircases, must remain free of obstruction to enable safe evacuation in the event of a fire.
- Cellars must be kept clear of combustible materials.
- If the boiler is located in the loft, a smoke detector is required in the loft space, in addition to a carbon monoxide alarm, adequate lighting and safe access to the loft.

*Where tenants do not live as a cohesive family group or present with risk factors such as drug, alcohol or mental health issues, or the property is of an unusual layout (such as inner rooms or no hallways) DASH may require a greater level of fire alarm coverage, higher than that in the LACoRS guide.*

**2.12** All properties should be routinely risk assessed by the landlord as the level of fire protection will depend on variable factors, particularly the occupancy, which a landlord will need to regularly monitor. Properties with common areas must have a *Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)* as required by the *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*.

**Note:** Under the Fire Safety Order, a FRA is not required where the property is let to a group of people on a joint tenancy agreement, **although Local Authorities may still require one as part of their licencing scheme requirements**. This FRA should be made available to DASH upon request at no charge.

- 2.13** All internal doors on the route of escape must be of sound construction and 'close fitting' to the frame. Egg box doors are not acceptable.
- 2.14** Where fire doors are required, both the door and frame should be approved fire-resistant standard with intumescent strips/cold smoke seals and self-closing as appropriate to the scheme of fire safety works required at a specific property.
- 2.15** Any glazing in internal doors must be safety glass with a kite mark. This includes fan lights over doors. Doors with glass panels (with the exception of vision panels with safety/Georgian wired glass in fire doors) must be avoided on the escape route.
- 2.16** If window locks are present on escape windows, they must not hinder the means of escape in the event of a fire.

### **High Risk Properties, HMOs & Flats above Shops**

- 2.17** Regardless of HMO status, where the escape route from a property passes through a risk room (kitchen, bedroom, living or dining room) an alternative means of escape must be provided. Where an escape window is appropriate, it must be accessible to *all* occupants and have a keyless escape. Any window provided for emergency escape purposes should have an unobstructed openable area that is at least 0.33m<sup>2</sup> and have a minimum 450mm height and 450mm width. The bottom of the openable area should not be more than 1,100mm above the floor and no less than 800mm above the floor.
- 2.18** All HMO and higher risk properties (see **2.17**) will meet the standards set out in LACoRS and require a Grade D1 Category LD2 automatic fire alarm system as a minimum, with mains interlinked smoke detection on each floor level, in the living room and cellar (if applicable), with an interlinked heat detector in the kitchen. Depending on the layout and occupancy, a higher Grade and Category of fire alarm system might be required upon risk assessment; for example, the addition of mains interlinked smoke detectors in all the bedrooms. Fire doors, smoke seals, intumescent strips, self-closers, means of escape window and emergency lighting may also be required as per LACoRS guidance.
- 2.19** Fire detection, alarms and emergency lighting systems shall be properly checked and maintained by a competent approved engineer.
- 2.20** All internal and final exit doors in HMOs and high-risk properties (as per **2.17**) that form part of the primary escape route must be openable from the inside without requiring the use of a key.

## All Properties

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### Security Measures

- 2.21** External doors and frames should be of sound construction, secure and fitted with secure locking systems which do not impede the level of fire safety available at the property.
- 2.22** Landlords will consider and implement, where appropriate, measures recommended by Local Police Authority backed Crime Prevention Initiatives.
- 2.23** Windows accessible from ground level will be of sound construction and resistant against unauthorised entry without compromising the fire safety of the property.
- 2.24** Any security grilles installed must be used responsibly and must be fit for purpose, taking into account fire safety requirements.
- 2.25** If present, burglar alarm systems should have a 20-minute cut out and a key holder nominated to the Local Authority.

### Gas Appliances

- 2.26** All means of use and supply of mains gas, alterations and repairs to gas installations must comply with the current Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.
- 2.27** The landlord will ensure that all gas appliances are serviced annually by an engineer endorsed by the Gas Safe Register and a record of the service is kept and made available to tenants. Landlords will self-certify to DASH that they hold a current certificate for all properties, and this may be checked by DASH services at any point in time.

### Electrical Installations

- 2.28** Landlords must ensure that the whole electrical installation, and any electrical appliances provided, is in a safe condition and in good working order throughout the tenancy. All properties must have a satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), carried out by a competent electrician who has membership of a Part P competent person scheme body and relevant qualifications, dated within the last 5 years or sooner if identified by your electrician.

**Note:** *an EIC can only be accepted in place of an EICR where the property is a new build (within the last 5 years) or has had a full rewire.*

**2.29** Appliances should be visually inspected and checked on a regular basis (**at least every 6 months**) as part of the Landlord's routine property inspection programme for signs of wear and tear.

### **2.30**

**a) Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** should have a **minimum** of three double plug sockets above worktops in kitchens, in addition to sockets dedicated to white goods, such as refrigerator and washing machine.

**b) Non-HMOs** should have a **minimum** of two double plug sockets above worktops in kitchens, in addition to sockets dedicated to white goods. Living rooms and bedrooms in all properties should have a **minimum** of two double plug sockets.

*Note: Landlords should monitor the use of extension leads and adaptors to prevent hazards from overloading and trailing wires.*

## **Lighting and Ventilation**

**2.31** All properties should be provided with adequate lighting, including the communal areas and especially on any steps and stairs. Properties must also be sufficiently well ventilated.

**2.32** Where a shower is provided in a bathroom and there is no openable window, a suitable extractor fan shall be fitted ducted to the outside.

**2.33** All kitchens must be fitted with a suitably located mechanical extraction fan (ducted to the outside where possible).

## **Trips and Falls**

**2.34** A secure handrail should be fitted on all steps, both internal and external, where there are three or more steps (including cellars). Handrails should be sited between 900mm-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. All staircases should have suitable balustrading with gaps less than 100mm and be well lit. Horizontal 'Ranch Style' balustrading **will not be accepted**. Any unguarded drops internally or externally greater than 500mm are likely to require protection of a barrier/guarding to prevent falls.

**2.35** Escape windows can present a fall hazard where the sills are located less than 800mm from the ground. In these cases, window restrictors should be fitted – a simple finger release type restrictor would be most suitable so that the window can still be opened fully in the event of an emergency and your FRA should be updated accordingly.

## Heating and Energy Efficiency

- 2.36** Gas central (or electrical) heating **must** be provided. The heating system should be appropriate to the property design, layout and thermal construction and should be adequate, controllable, and programmable by the tenants. Plug in portable electrical heating is not acceptable.
- 2.37** The temperature control and timings **must remain accessible to the tenants at all times**, along with keyless access to both the gas and electrical meters.
- 2.38** The dwelling **must** be free from excessive draughts.
- 2.39** Energy efficiency improvements should be incorporated, where practicable, into refurbishment schemes.
- 2.40** Thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) should be fitted on all radiators (except one).
- 2.41** Landlords must comply with the *Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)* which came into force in England and Wales on 1 April 2018 and was updated on 1 April 2023. **It is an offence to let a property which does not achieve a minimum “E” efficiency standard** (unless an exemption has been granted).

**Note:** *Compliance with MEES may not be sufficient to reduce the Hazard of Excess Cold, additional works may be required.*

## Hygiene

- 2.42** All floor coverings in kitchens, bathrooms and WCs **must** be impervious and capable of being cleaned with suitable domestic disinfectant products. Any cracked tiles or damaged flooring should be replaced to avoid a build-up of dirt or grease and the risk of injury.
- 2.43** All dwellings will be provided with suitable refuse disposal facilities sufficient for the number of occupants, as advised by the Local Authority’s Waste Collection Service.
- 2.44** Landlords will inform tenants of the need for proper refuse management and any available recycling schemes.

## Neighbourhoods

- 2.45** All gardens, yards and outbuilding will be maintained in a safe and reasonable condition. This includes boundary walls and fences which should be stable and in good repair. The landlord is responsible for garden maintenance unless stated in the tenancy agreement that is the responsibility of the tenants.

## Vermin Infestations

**2.46** Landlords must take all reasonable measures to prevent vermin at their rented property/ies. Premises should be vermin-free at the point of letting and have sufficient pest-proofing measures installed as may be necessary. The landlord will remain responsible for the ongoing costs associated with the control of vermin if present at the time of letting.



**Note:** *Where vermin issues arise during the letting (and are the responsibility of the tenant) such as a new mouse, rat, cockroach, flea, wasp, fly, or bedbug infestation, the landlord must take all reasonable steps to engage with the tenant and facilitate appropriate vermin control by directing them to professional pest control services.*


## APPENDIX

### Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

HHSRS was introduced under the *Housing Act 2004* and applies to residential properties in England and Wales. It is a risk-based evaluation tool to help Local Authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. This applies to all types of residential premises, whether or not amenities are shared.

The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard, which can be split up into **four different categories**:

<b>A – Physiological Requirements</b>	
<b>Hygrothermal Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Damp and mould growth</li> <li>▪ Excess cold</li> <li>▪ Excess heat</li> </ul>
<b>Pollutants (non-microbial)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asbestos and Manufactured Mineral Fibres (MMF)</li> <li>▪ Biocides</li> <li>▪ Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products</li> <li>▪ Lead</li> <li>▪ Radiation un-combusted fuel gas</li> <li>▪ Volatile organic compounds</li> </ul>
<b>B – Psychological Requirements</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crowding and space</li> <li>▪ Entry by intruders</li> <li>▪ Lighting</li> <li>▪ Noise</li> </ul>
<b>C – Protection against infection</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Domestic hygiene</li> <li>▪ Pests and refuse</li> <li>▪ Food safety</li> <li>▪ Personal hygiene</li> <li>▪ Sanitation and drainage</li> <li>▪ Water supply</li> </ul>

<b>D – Protection against accidents</b>	
<b>Falls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On level surfaces etc.</li> <li>▪ Between levels</li> <li>▪ On stairs etc.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Associated with baths etc.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Electrical hazards</li> <li>▪ Fire</li> <li>▪ Flames, hot surfaces etc.</li> <li>▪ Collision and entrapment</li> <li>▪ Explosions</li> <li>▪ Position and operability of amenities etc.</li> <li>▪ Structural collapse and falling elements</li> </ul>

**Note:** Hazards are scored in bands, from Band A, the most severe, to Band J. Category 1 hazards are those rated in bands A-C. Category 2 hazards are those rated Band D or lower.

For more information on HHSRS, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals>

## **Useful Web Links**

### **Damp and Mould**

Damp and mould: understanding and addressing the health risks for rented housing providers - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018**

Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### **How to Rent Guide**

How to rent - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

**Note:** *This leaflet is frequently updated – search on GOV.UK for How to Rent to ensure you have the latest version.*

### **LACoRS Fire Guidance**

<https://www.dashservices.org.uk/Media/Default/Docs/Lacors%20Fire%20Safety%20Guide.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022>

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022: fire door guidance (accessible) - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### **Minimum Level of Energy Efficiency (MEES) Regulations**

Domestic private rented property: minimum energy efficiency standard - landlord guidance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### **Right to Rent Checks**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent/how-to-rent-the-checklist-for-renting-in-england>

### **The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarms-explanatory-booklet-for-landlords/the-smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarm-england-regulations-2015-ga-booklet-for-the-private-rented-sector-landlords-and-tenants>

## **Useful Web Links (continued)**

### **Tenancy Deposit Protection**

Tenancy deposit protection: Overview - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### **Tenant Fees Act**

Tenant Fees Act - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))