

CORE LETTABLE (Void Technical) STANDARD

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1. General requirements

All properties are to be offered for handover:

- Clean, secure and in a reasonable state of general repair and decoration as described herein
- Wind and weather-tight
- Free of infestation with pests

Any non Health and Safety/Statutory works or any other works not completed that would not cause a significant discomfort or risk to the tenant or their household which cannot be completed within the void period or would cause an excessive delay in the letting of the property may be completed with the tenant in situ.

And with

- A hot and cold water supply
- A working form of heating
- A safe and operational electrical system
- A useable kitchen with sink
- A useable W.C.
- A useable bathroom with a wash basin and bath or shower
- A valid Landlords Gas Safety Certificate
- An electrical safety certificate.

2. Information gathering and recording

- Gas, electrical and water meter readings are to be taken at the first opportunity and then re-taken at Handover, by completing the agreed Void Survey Form. If solar panels are in place, this needs to be passed on to the Empty Homes Co-ordinator who will arrange for the feed in tariff to be paid to Stevenage BC.
- Any residual debt left on meters is to be cleared and the Empty Home Co-ordinator advised of any missing or damaged items.
- A note if these are card/key meters and if credit is available is to be made.
- The position of the stop tap and utility meters should be noted on the Void Survey Form.
- Any serious defects e.g. structural cracking, subsidence, damp etc. shall be reported to the Empty Home Co-ordinator immediately
- Any major aids and adaptations shall be referred to the Empty Home Co-ordinator for a decision on removal and replacement
- Check that the property has an EPC and make arrangements for one to be prepared if not.
- Check the asbestos register for the property and take measures to ensure that all operatives are aware of the content.
- Take photographs in line with the process map but in any event any extraordinary conditions such as excessive rubbish or damage shall be photographed and provided to the Empty Home Co-ordinator and rechargeable items.
- Provide details and a condition schedule of any aids and adaptations.

3. Security

- For the duration of the void period a suited lock or key safe system shall be provided and net curtains installed as soon as possible for security purposes.
- If required, and agreed with the Contract Administrator, security screens shall be installed.
- All external doors must be sound and the door furniture must be in working order.
- External door locks must be changed on the day of handover to a new insurance approved lock, minimum of 2 keys for each lock. Where the door leads into enclosed internal areas, the new lock must retain the same level fire protection.
- Windows must be capable of being opened and operable for ventilation
- Opening windows on the 2nd Floor or above or where an opening window is less than 800 mm from the floor level and where the fall is greater than 600 mm are to be fitted with restrictors that comply with current regulations relating to fire escape and opening restriction.
- Window catches and locking handles must be serviceable.

- Windows at ground floor or accessible from a balcony must be lockable from the inside.
- Window keys must be provided where key operated locks are fitted.
- Any defective glazing must be replaced. All glazing within 900mm of floor level to be 6mm toughened or 6.4mm laminated safety glass, or thicker. In any case the glazing must meet with the current regulatory requirements
- Any fire breaks to be checked in flats and confirmed that they comply with current regulatory requirements.
- Fire doors are to be checked and confirmed that they comply with the current regulatory requirements.

4. Clearance and removal of assets

- The property must be cleared of all rubbish and any non-standard fittings removed. The previous resident's cooker, fridge, washing machine etc. must be disconnected and removed from the property. Where appliances have been provided and maintained by Stevenage BC because of the nature of the scheme, they should be left at the property, cleaned and tested. Where hobs are removed the worktop shall be made good.
- Remove all gas fires other than in lounge, see below.
- All loose cabling should be clipped/tied up or removed if no longer in use/needed
- Where the property is let as furnished (e.g. foyer scheme) no removal or repairs will be required to any furniture or fixtures and fittings unless damaged.
- All rubbish must be cleared from the bins, gardens, garages, sheds and outhouses
- The garden should be checked for Japanese Knot Weed and dealt with accordingly

5. Hot water and heating installation (including Gas)

- At the start of the void period, the heating and hot water system is to be checked and repaired to be left in good working order with all necessary repairs being carried out.
- All back boilers are to be removed and replaced
- The gas installation is to be decommissioned following the above checks and the main gas supply capped off including the gas cooker and gas fire supply, if present. Within 24hrs
- If the carcass or boiler is beyond their useful life the Empty Home Co-ordinator shall be advised and asked for a decision to repair or replace
- On occupation, at the request of the resident, or the Empty Home Co-ordinator, the gas installation shall be re-commissioned and have a safety check undertaken by a GAS SAFE registered engineer and a LGSR (CP12) provided.
- Cap off supply to gas cooker, if present.
- Central heating and hot water installations must be drained down when the property is void and refilled just prior to re-letting if the temperature is expected to be below 0C.
- All insulation to pipe work and cylinders to be checked and insulated as necessary.
- Any gas fires situated in the lounge are to be left if operable and safe. If found to be unsafe gas fires in the lounge are to be removed and made good.

6. Electrical installation

- An electrical test must be completed by a qualified electrician and defective fittings identified and replaced, NICEIC certificate to be provided on completion of works. An Electrical Installation Condition Report and completion certificate must be supplied.
- All Code 1 and 2 defects identified by the electrical test must be rectified and a new "satisfactory" certificate fitted.
- All smoke\heat\carbon monoxide detectors must be tested and left in full working order,
- Where hard wired detectors are not fitted, they shall be fitted, tested and left working; 1 per floor.
- Test all installed emergency call facilities or complete visual inspection.

- At least one main light fitting to be fitted with a light bulb
- Leave extractor fans in good working order.
- A visual safety check of storage heaters to be undertaken along with a NICEIC test
- Any electrical appliances that are left in the property must be PAT tested.
- Any fixed non-standard electrical appliance found to be safe and good working order that provide an enhancement to remain and be gifted to tenant. All other electrical appliances to be removed

7. Internal Decorations

If the internal decoration is clean and sound then no decorating work should be undertaken unless stated below:

- If graffiti is present this should be removed/decorated over.
- All surfaces must be able to receive paint/decoration.
- Where we have contractual obligations, such as some sheltered housing schemes.
- Any previous tenant decorative enhancements that pose a risk are to be removed
- Polystyrene tiles present in kitchens or main means of escape are to be removed

Property to be prepared and ready for decoration. Any other decoration applied only to make property lettable.

8. Internal walls

- Any damaged wall or ceiling plaster must be made good.
- Missing or damaged skirting boards should be replaced.
- If rising damp, dry rot or timber infestation is suspected, refer to Empty Homes Co-ordinator.
- Wall tiles that are damaged or missing to be replaced to match existing where possible, if not match using standard white tiles.
- All mould to be treated with an anti-fungal solution and a coat of sealant applied
- Any previous water penetration marks to be treated with a coat of sealant

9. Internal doors

- All internal doors and frames must be sound and door furniture must be in working order.
- Doors are to be replaced if damaged beyond repair or fitted if missing.
- Where property is a flat or has only 1 means of exit the kitchen door must be checked/upgraded/replaced to give 30 minutes fire protection (FD30), with intumescent strips if fire detection exists in the kitchen. Where fire detection does not exist in kitchen a fire door rated for 30 mins (FD30) omitting the intumescent strips.
- Fire doors/ intumescent strip and closers must be in working order.
- Any non-standard glazed doors to be removed.

10. Floors and staircases

- All timber floorboards to be secure, sound and with a minimum of squeaks. Remedial work for woodworm or dry rot should be completed.
- If rising damp, dry rot or timber infestation is suspected, specialist opinion shall be sought as to the cause and a quotation for any remedial work sought and provided to the Empty Homes Co-ordinator.
- The external sub-floor ventilation must not be blocked; the DPC must not be bridged.
- All laminate flooring and carpets should be left unless of poor condition. Where laminate is present in first floor flats or above these will be removed unless in kitchen or bathroom
- All broken or damaged vinyl flooring/tiles to be replaced or made level.
- All unnecessary gripper rods, thresholds, stair fixings are to be removed and surfaces to be made good.
- Banisters, handrails and staircases are to be sound and secure.

11. Kitchens

- Plumbing\waste for washing machine to be provided if suitable space provided and blanked/plugged
- Valves and waste connections for washing machines should left ready for use
- Sinks, taps and wastes should be left in proper working order; sink plugs and chains to be replaced if missing.
- The rising main stop tap is to be tested, labelled and left accessible.
Unit drawers and doors shall be left in good working order, where a replacement is required and an exact match not possible a best match should be obtained.
- All kitchen wall units and worktops should be hygienic, have tiled splash backs, be sound and sealed.
- Sinks and worktops must be replaced if damaged so as to breach the integrity of the protective fabric.
- If the floor covering requires replacement Polysafe Standard PUR shall be used.
- At least 2 double sockets should be available above the kitchen worktop.

12. Bathrooms & toilets

- All sanitary fittings must be clean and in working order, with tiled splash backs, to bath and basin being sound and sealed.
- Sinks, taps, cisterns and wastes should be left in proper working order.
- Sink plugs and chains to be replaced if missing.
- Toilet and shower seats should be replaced only if soiled or stained.
- Power showers are to be removed and the plumbing reinstated if fitted by previous tenant and of poor or unserviceable standard.
- All over bath electric showers to be removed. Do not replace.
- Clean non-slip flooring shall be provided. Polysafe Standard PUR shall be used.
- Shower cubicles shall be fully tiled. Tiling shall be sound and sealed.
- Over bath shower area to be tiled..

13. Roof voids

- The roof space should be free of rubbish.
- All pipe work and tanks must be clean, lagged and free flowing
- Water storage tanks and cisterns shall be insulated and have close fitting lids.
- Ventilation to loft spaces shall be clear.

14. Disabled adaptations

- Minor grab rails and the like are not to be removed and are to be left in good working order and safe to use.
- Unless instructed otherwise by the Stevenage BC Empty Homes Co-ordinator aids and adaptations shall be left in place and left in full working order and ready to use.

15. External areas (within curtilage of property)

- All non-standard dangerous and dilapidated structures should be demolished and removed
- Garden buildings, which are sound, should be left and noted on the void inspection form to be gifted to tenant unless obtrusive
- Boundary walls should be repaired as necessary and left safe.
- Fencing and gates to be repaired or replaced if unsafe.
- Gates & latches shall operate effectively.
- The external sub-floor ventilation must not be blocked; the DPC must not be bridged.
- Leaking, blocked or damaged rainwater goods should be cleared, repaired or replaced and left free flowing.
- The roof must be watertight with any missing or damaged slates or tiles replaced. Any missing or damaged flashing to be replaced.
- Locks to associated outhouses and garages must be left working and keys left in property.

- Drains shall run clear and free and have sound and secure inspection chamber covers.
- Garden ponds are to be removed / filled in.
- Any tree surgery shall be agreed with the Empty Home Co-ordinator.
- Balcony to be watertight and in sound condition.
- Any satellite dishes should be noted to be gifted to the incoming tenant or removed if damaged or damage risk to property.
- Replace fencing when the existing is in poor condition and in a poor state of repair. Where none existed previously and where necessary to define boundary or when property fronts main road fencing to be provided.
- Replace gate if in poor condition or provide if property fronts main road
- Where fencing is not a safety issue i.e. boundary to a road, all fencing works to be carried out with tenant in situ

16. Asbestos survey and removal

- The asbestos register shall be checked for the property by the Stevenage BC Empty Homes Co-ordinator and a survey commissioned if required.
- A survey shall be commissioned if any intrusive works are identified
- If the property is safe by age or is confirmed no ACM's present no further action is required.
- If, during the course of the works, the presence of asbestos is suspected the Stevenage BC Empty Home Co-ordinator shall be informed and any work that may disturb the material suspended.
- In all cases reference must be made to SBC asbestos policy

17. Cleaning

- All grease, lime scale, dust, grime and other marks should be removed from all surfaces and sanitary fittings.
- All windows must be left clean.
- All floors must be swept and free of dust and dirt.
- All contaminated waste, needles, or soiled matter should be removed (by specialist contractors where necessary) and disposed of in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- The property must be left free of any infestation by pests and/or vermin.

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