



Housing Landlord Services

Void and Mutual Exchange Policy 2020

DOCUMENT HISTORY	
Name of Policy:	Housing Landlord Services Void and Mutual Exchange Policy 2020
Document Reference:	HLSPOL08
Purpose of Policy:	<p>New Forest New Forest District Council is committed to providing an effective maintenance service in order to comply with its statutory responsibilities, including but not limited to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) and the Housing Act 2004 and to ensure high levels of resident satisfaction and to protect the value of its housing stock.</p> <p>This policy details the arrangements for the statutory inspections thereof and the repair, condition and safety standards of void properties and tenancy transfers resulting from mutual exchange to properties owned by the Council prior to letting. It also details the arrangements to reduce the risk of vandalism, theft, flood and arson, as far as reasonably practicable to properties whilst void.</p> <p>This policy is to be read in conjunction with and is supported by Housing Landlord Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electrical Safety Policy; ▪ Fire Safety Policy; ▪ Gas Safety Policy; ▪ Legionella Policy; ▪ Lifts and Lifting Equipment Policy; ▪ Maintenance and Repairs Policy
Policy Applies to:	This policy and subsequent arrangements are to be adhered to by housing staff within New Forest District Council and, where appropriate, outgoing or incoming tenants and contractors.
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Appendix 1 Void Processing Activity Timeline

Section 1 Introduction and Key Principles

This policy details the arrangements for the statutory inspections thereof and the repair, condition and safety standards of void properties and tenancy transfers resulting from mutual exchange to properties owned by the Council prior to letting. It also details the arrangements to reduce the risk of vandalism, theft, flood and arson, as far as reasonably practicable to properties whilst void.

The Council is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure and common parts of its properties as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.

The Council will ensure that the management and maintenance activities of void properties reflects the following overall principles:

- providing a flexible, customer-oriented void property management and maintenance service that gives priority to the safety, comfort and condition of properties;
- take all reasonable steps to protect void properties from the risk of vandalism, theft, flood and arson;
- ensuring void properties are turned around as quickly as possible to minimise rent loss and provide homes to those most in need;
- repairing and maintaining the housing stock to the Decent Homes Standard;
- meeting the Council's legal and contractual obligations;
- ensuring that prior to letting, void properties meet the safety, performance and quality standards set by the Council;
- ensuring the services provided are cost effective and obtaining the best value for residents;
- ensuring the principles of health and safety and are central to working procedures and practices;
- maximising economic benefits where possible by creating employment and training opportunities in maintenance related work and by purchasing goods and services locally;
- maximising opportunities for resident involvement in determining the quality of the services delivered;
- measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction to continuously improve services.

Section 2 Legislative and Regulatory Context

In addition to complying with the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, the Council will ensure that it complies with best practice, relevant policy and statute when repairing void properties.

The Housing Act 2004, which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool used to assess potential risks and hazards to the health and safety of occupants from deficiencies identified in residential properties in England and Wales.

The assessment method contained within the HHSRS focuses on the hazards that are present in housing and tackling these making housing healthier and safer to live in and covers 29 categories of hazard.

Other Legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes

The main legislation, approved codes of practice and guidance notes relating to Landlord responsibilities are set out below:

Legislation

- Building Act 1984;
- Building Regulations 2010 (as amended);
- BS 7671:2018 Requirements for Electrical Installations – IET Wiring Regulations (18th Edition);
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970;
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- Defective Premises Act 1972;
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016;
- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended);
- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005;
- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended by the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Development Act 1993;
- The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994;
- The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994;

Approved Codes of Practices

- (a) Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances (Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended)

Guidance Notes

- a) Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating System Guidance 2006;
 b) A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation – June 2006

Section 3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Competent Person	Person(s) whilst not required to possess specific academic qualifications but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) understand the relevant housing ‘Landlord’ legislation and responsibilities; b) have appropriate training, knowledge and experience in the principles of property maintenance; c) understand the hazards, risk and other relevant factors with occupants at special risk within the premises; d) if carrying out property safety or maintenance surveys, have

	<p>appropriate training/experience in this field;</p> <p>e) if carrying out property maintenance activities, have appropriate training/experience in their related trade field.</p>
Energy Performance Certificate	<p>An Energy Performance Certificate shows how energy-efficient a property is. The document includes estimated energy costs, as well as a summary of the home's energy performance-related features.</p> <p>The property will be given an energy-efficiency grade between A and G, with A being the most energy-efficient - and G being the worst.</p> <p>Abbreviated to EPC</p>
Housing Health and Safety Rating System	<p>The housing health and safety rating system introduced by The Housing Act 2004 is a risk-based evaluation tool to help landlords identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings.</p> <p>Abbreviated to HHSRS</p>
Inspection	<p>A visual investigation of a property's condition to establish whether any remedial works are necessary.</p>
Landlord	<p>The owner of property (such as houses, land or apartments) that is leased or rented to another.</p>
Notional Life	<p>The expected life expectancy of a component, fitting, product or repair.</p>
Responsible Person	<p>The 'Responsible Person' is the Landlord.</p>
Stock Condition Survey	<p>A survey to collect information relating to the Government's Decent Home Standard, and about the property in general. An assessment of the main internal and external parts of the property, which identifies when they are likely to require replacing, gathering information on energy efficiency and conducting asbestos management survey on homes built before 2000.</p>
Tenant	<p>A person who occupies land or property rented from a Landlord.</p>

Section 4 Roles and Responsibilities

The Council will ensure that all Council housing staff are fully aware of their role in meeting the Council's responsibilities as 'Landlord'.

Chief Executive
<p>Responsibility for complying with duties as 'Landlord' rests with the 'responsible person'.</p> <p>The 'responsible person' as Landlord is represented by the Chief Executive together with the Executive Heads who collectively form the 'Executive Management Team'.</p>

Executive Head of Governance and Regulation

The Executive Head of Governance and Regulation has overall strategic responsibility for the Council's approach in maintaining its social housing assets controlled by the Council and is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Housing Act 2004, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and supporting Regulations are applied and implemented and to nominate one or more persons to act on their behalf to discharge their responsibilities.

Housing Service Managers

The Housing Service Managers are responsible for the overall effectiveness of the Housing Landlord Services Voids, Mutual Exchange and Empty Homes Policy in their areas of responsibility.

Asset Maintenance Manager

The Asset Maintenance Manager is responsible for leading on housing asset management, maintenance strategy and policy. Their role also includes responsibilities for developing planned and cyclical maintenance programmes and maintaining stock condition data and taking responsibility for ensuring the Council's compliance with its landlord statutory duties and obligations, reporting directly to the Service Manager for Housing Maintenance (Asset and Compliance).

Housing Estates and Housing Allocations Managers

The Housing Estates Manager and Housing Allocations Manager are responsible for the detailed arrangements necessary in ensuring that tenancy terminations, void property allocations and new tenancy processing, which are the responsibility of the Council are acted upon in a timely manner within their respective areas of control.

Void Manager

The Void Manager is responsible for the detailed arrangements necessary in ensuring that void repair and maintenance activities and statutory inspections, which are the responsibility of the Council are acted upon in a timely manner to minimise rent loss and that void properties meet the quality standards set out in this policy.

Void Supervisor

The Void Supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day supervision and delivery of responsive repairs and maintenance activities, which are the responsibility of the Council in accordance with detailed arrangements and policy.

Where contractors are being managed, regular monitoring is to be included to ensure risks that could cause harm or injury have been considered and adequate precautions are in place to minimise risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable

Section 5 Void Processing

5.1 Objectives and Processing Principles

Voids will be processed to ensure that empty properties are turned-around at the earliest opportunity, rent loss is minimised and are available to let to a new tenant at an acceptable standard meeting the Council's legal obligations and the terms of the new tenancy.

Six key principles will be applied when processing empty properties and these are set out below: -

Surety	To comply with the terms of the Council's surety provision, the Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify provider where a void properties resale value is estimated to be in excess of £250,000; ▪ Notify provider where a property has been void for 90 days or more; ▪ Notify provider where a group of properties are void; ▪ Isolate utilities, except electrical supply where this is required to serve fire or security systems; ▪ Drain down water system between 1 April to 30 September; ▪ Maintain heating (min 5 degrees Celsius) 1 October to 31 March; ▪ Seal letterbox and takes steps to prevent mail accumulation; ▪ Secure against unlawful entry.
Statutory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy Performance Certificate; ▪ Decent Home Standard; ▪ Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS); ▪ Gas Safety Inspection; ▪ Electrical Safety Inspection; ▪ Fire Detection; ▪ Carbon Monoxide Detection.
Safe	Properties will be safe and free of hazards arising from faults or deficiencies which could cause harm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physiological; ▪ Psychological; ▪ Infection; ▪ Safety.
Functional	Properties will be functional for the enjoyment of the incoming tenant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kitchen; ▪ Bathroom; ▪ Heating and hot water system; ▪ Glazing; ▪ Security; ▪ Internal doors; ▪ Lighting; ▪ Access, egress and gardens.
Clean and Clear	Properties will be clear of waste and to a good standard of cleanliness prior to letting.
Items for Reuse	Where items left by the previous tenant and found to be in good serviceable condition, and where following inspection are found to be safe for reuse shall be offered to the incoming tenant.

5.2 Termination

5.2.1 The Council will deem a property to be empty in the following circumstances, where:

- the tenant has formally terminated the tenancy by written notice;
- the tenant has died and there is no successor;
- the tenant has abandoned the tenancy, where the appropriate action has been taken to end the tenancy;
- the tenant has been evicted, following court action for possession.

5.2.1 Upon giving the required notice to quit as per the tenancy agreement, tenancies terminate on a Sunday. Tenants or their representatives are required to deliver all sets of keys to vacated properties to their local housing office by midday on Monday. Where keys are delivered late, unless there are exceptional circumstances, tenants may incur a further week's rent. This decision is at the discretion of the Housing Estates Manager.

5.3 Void Processing

5.3.1 Pre-Void Inspection

Attempts will be made to inspect properties at the earliest opportunity. By appointment with the outgoing tenant, a joint pre-void inspection shall be carried out within 7 working days of a termination notification by the Void Manager or Void Supervisor along with a Tenancy Management Officer or Tenancy Management Assistant to discuss with the outgoing tenant the procedures relating to vacation which must be clearly advised both verbally and in writing.

The Council will attempt to ascertain from the outgoing tenant the current utility providers in order to facilitate statutory inspections at void stage. Where pre-payment meters are installed, remind the tenant to leave meter keys or cards which are registered against the respective meters and are non-transferable. Outgoing tenants are required to contact their utility providers upon vacation of the property who can deal with any pre-payment credit or debt against their account/s.

The pre-void inspection shall determine the overall condition and whether the property can be re-let following statutory inspections or requires repairs to bring it up to the Council's standard. The pre-void inspection shall categorize the properties likely 'Ready to Let' status based on the volume of necessary work. Any repairs deemed to fall outside normal wear and tear shall be the responsibility of the outgoing tenant, and if not completed or not completed to a standard which the the Council is satisfied will be recharged in accordance with the Council's 'Chargeable Repairs' section of the Housing Landlord Services Maintenance and Repairs Policy.

The details of the pre-void inspection shall be clearly recorded, and any chargeable repairs noted and countersigned by the tenant.

5.3.2 Void Inspection

Upon receipt of the keys, the locks to the property will be changed to a temporary void key. A full void inspection will be carried out to determine the overall condition of the property following vacation and whether any repairs deemed to fall outside normal wear

and tear and the responsibility of the tenant have been actioned or require recharge. The properties likely 'Ready to Let' status will be reviewed and confirmed.

The void inspection will confirm the schedule of works required prior to commencement and meter readings will be taken for gas, electricity and water utilities and provided to the current utility providers.

5.3.3 Post Void Work Inspection

A quality assurance inspection will be carried out upon completion of all void work and any shortfalls in standards identified will be remedied as high priority.

Meter readings will be taken for gas, electricity and water utilities and provided to the current utility provider.

New locks will be fitted, and keys delivered to the local housing office ready for collection by the incoming tenant.

5.3.4 Pests and Infestation

Where there is evidence of pests and/or infestation, pest control measures will be taken, and any pest control work carried out in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The property will be inspected for structural defects, holes through walls and-the-like and any such defect repaired and/or made good prior to letting.

5.3.5 Legionella

Where single dwelling properties have been unoccupied for one week or more, the water system will be thoroughly flushed on a weekly basis with the minimum release of aerosol i.e. removal of any shower heads prior to flushing and prior to occupation.

Single dwelling properties that have been unoccupied for 2 months or more will be chemically disinfected prior to occupation (where systems permit). This should take place no more than one week from the proposed occupation date and be undertaken by a reputable contractor.

5.3.6 Stock Condition Survey

The Council will take advantage of the opportunity to undertake a Stock Condition Survey of a property whilst it is void, where the Council holds no stock data or where the last inspection undertaken exceeds 5 years or is due to be inspected within the next 12 months.

5.4 'Ready to Let' Target

The Housing Maintenance Service void 'Ready to Let' target shall be categorized as:

CATEGORY		
A	B	C
Good Condition	Average Condition	Poor Condition
Statutory Inspections Serviceable and Functional Minor repairs (1-5 days) Clean & Secure	Statutory Inspections Serviceable and Functional Repair schedule (5-10 days) Clean & Secure	Statutory Inspections None Serviceable or Functional Significant repair schedule Clean & Secure
10 working days Or less	15 working days Or less	Defined by Volume of Works (as soon as reasonably practicable)

Section 6 Property Standards

6.1 Component Standard and Action Table

The property shall be in good condition in order to let which is defined by the statement:

"All components of the dwelling house shall be serviceable, in good working order and free from serious defect."

Repairs will be ordered by a Housing Maintenance representative in consultation with the Tenancy Management Officer to bring any component to the quality defined in the standards statement. The Housing Maintenance Service shall carry out all statutory obligations in respect of void management.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
UTILITIES		
Water	External stop tap functional. Internal isolation valves functional.	Report to Utility. Repair.
Gas	Meter in place & functional. Pre-payment card in place. Debt cleared. Credit on possession.	Utility. Utility. NFDC. Utility provider to refund outgoing tenant.
Electricity	Meter in place & functional. Pre-payment key in place. Debt cleared. Credit on possession.	Utility. Utility. NFDC. Utility provider to refund outgoing tenant.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
STATUTORY INSPECTIONS		
Gas	Gas Safety Inspection. Obtain Certificate. Gas fires.	Repair/Replace. If functional leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove.
Electricity	Electrical Condition Report. Meet Design Standard. Obtain Certificate.	Cat 1 Hazard – Repair/Replace Cat 2 Hazard – Repair/Replace Cat 3 Hazard – Report. Fix, Replace or Install
Detection	Smoke detection – functional, in date, hard wired and interlinked, 1 per floor in circulation space, 1 in principal living room and 1 in converted loft spaces (where applicable). Heat detection – functional, in date, hard wired and interlinked with smoke detection, 1 per kitchen. Carbon monoxide detection – functional, in date in each room containing fuelled appliance fixed to wall or ceiling.	Fix, Replace or Install. Fix, Replace or Install. Fix, Replace or Install.
Energy Performance	Energy Performance Certificate (Expiry 10 years).	Check/Undertake.
FUNCTIONALITY		
Heating	Functional and no missing components.	Repair/Replace.
Hot Water	Functional and no missing components.	Repair/Replace.
Gas fires	Service & inspect for safety.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove.
Electric fires	General needs accommodation with gas/oil/solid fuel heating. Older Person accommodation.	Remove. Inspect/Replace.
Kitchen Units	Sink intact. Taps intact. No leaks. Worktop without obvious burns, cracks, breaks or water blown. Door fronts intact. Functional and minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more.	Replace. Replace. Repair. Replace. Replace. Kitchen modernisation.
Cooker space	620mm cooker space. Gas supply to cooker point. Electrical supply to cooker point.	Provide. Supply and leave capped. Supply.
Washing machine	620mm washing machine space. No leaks from water supply valves. No leaks from under-sink foul waste connection.	Provide. Cap. Cap.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Sanitary Ware	Clean bathroom suite. No chips or cracks. Taps intact. No leaks. Toiler pan seat. Cistern flushes. Plugs intact. Functional and minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more.	Clean. Repair/Replace. Replace. Repair. Change in all instances. Repair. Replace. Bathroom modernisation.
As Built Fire Places	No visible sign of damage. Blocked up opening.	Repair. Block up and make good.
SECURITY		
Front Entrance Door	Locks. Glass intact. Handles serviceable. Opens and closes easily. Letterbox intact.	Change in all instances. Replace. Replace. Replace. Replace.
Rear Entrance Door	Locks. Glass intact. Handles serviceable. Opens and closes easily. Letterbox intact.	Change in all instances. Replace. Replace. Replace. Replace.
Windows	Sound glazing units Open and close easily. Window restrictors to 1 st floor casement. No window locks	Replace. Repair. Repair. Remove and replace handles.
JOINERY		
Floorboards	No serious squeaks. No boards missing. No blown chipboard. No nails protruding. No unhealthy smells or foul stains. No foam carpet residue.	Repair. Repair. Repair. Repair. Clean. Clean.
Bannister, Handrail and Spindles	Intact. Max 100mm C's on Spindles.	Repair. Replace.
Internal doors	No holes or visible damage. Handles and latches serviceable. Opens and closes easily.	Replace. Replace. Replace.
Internal glazed doors	Glazing under 1,000mm is laminated	Replace or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
DECORATION		
Plasterwork	By nature of each scheme – variable.	Repairs to spalling areas. Remove nails, screws and fixings. Fill holes. Investigate ceiling cracks.
Polystyrene Ceiling Tiles or coving	None present in property	Remove.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Papered Ceilings	None present in property.	Remove.
Decoration Ceilings	Clean and bright.	Prepare surfaces and apply 2 coats of matt white paint.
Papered Walls	No patterned wallpaper. Painted Anaglypta style papers in good condition.	Remove. Leave.
Decoration Walls	Clean, bright, blank canvass ready for new tenancy.	Prepare surfaces and apply 2 coats of matt white paint.
Decoration Woodwork	Clean and bright.	Prepare surfaces and apply one undercoat and one topcoat of acrylic white gloss paint.
EXTERNAL		
Roof	Tiled with no leaks.	Repair.
PVCU Fascia's, Soffits and Bargeboards	Functional. Clean.	Repair. Clean.
Guttering and downpipes	Intact and functional. Clear of debris	Repair. Clear.
Paths	No tripping hazards.	Repair.
Steps	No tripping hazards.	Repair.
Fencing	Intact Council boundary fence adjacent to a public footpath or highway. Intact Council boundary fence between adjoining properties. Intact masonry wall	Repair like-for-like or replace before or following tenancy if safe to do so. Repair like-for-like or replace before or following tenancy if safe to do so. Repair or remove and replace with fencing. All fencing as per Maintenance and Repair Policy
Ponds	None.	Infill.
Soft landscaping	Acceptable standard for incoming tenant to maintain	Cut back overgrown shrubbery. Strim and cut lawn.
DISABLED / ELDERLY ADAPPTIONS		
Stair lifts	None unless advised of incoming tenant need.	Remove or service and leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Level access shower	Functional.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Hard wired alarm services	Functional in Extra Care Schemes. None in general needs.	Test. Remove and make good.
TENANT ALTERATIONS		
Shower	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Internal light fittings	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Outside lights	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
External power supplies	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Outside tap	Intact and functional with no leaks.	Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Fireplace (Freestanding)	None.	Remove and dispose
Sheds / Outbuildings	Intact and functional.	Remove, make good base or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Conservatory	Intact and functional.	Remove, make good base or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
ITEMS FOR REUSE (left by previous tenant)		
Freestanding furniture	Clear.	Remove and Dispose.
Fixed furniture i.e. Built in wardrobes	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Carpets	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove and dispose. Remove gripper rods from stairs only.
Vinyl	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Laminates	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Curtain tracks/poles	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Curtains	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Blinds	None.	Remove & dispose.
Freestanding white goods	None.	Remove & dispose.
Built in white goods	Good condition, safe and functional.	Test, clean and leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
PRE-HANDOVER		
Internal waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Garden waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Loft waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Cleanliness	Clean for incoming tenant.	Arrange property clean.

COMPONENT	STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Internal and external windows/casements, door frames and glazing	Clean for incoming tenant.	Arrange cleaning.
Locks and keys	New locks and 2 sets of keys.	Replace and supply.
Toilet seat	New.	Replace and supply.
Light bulbs	Fitted and lighting available for incoming tenant.	Replace and supply.
INFORMATION PACK		
Utilities	Utility suppliers and meter readings to be provided.	Provide.
Emergency	Location of emergency control/stop valves/taps to be provided.	Provide.
Heating and hot water	Operation instruction guide to be provided.	Provide.
Housing contact	Contact information to be provided.	Provide.
Fire Safety	Smoke, carbon monoxide detection and fire safety leaflet to be provided.	Provide.
Tenancy	Tenancy conditions to be provided.	Provide.
Asbestos	Asbestos containing materials information to be provided.	Provide.
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate to be provided.	Provide.
POST-HANDOVER		
Items for Reuse	<p>'Items for reuse' left by previous tenant which remain functional and safe will remain at the property for the new tenant.</p> <p>If the new tenant does not want the 'items left for reuse' Housing Maintenance will remove and dispose of items free of charge.</p>	<p>Incoming tenants must sign a disclaimer for their acceptance with the understanding that the Council will not service or repair these items as part of the Councils repair responsibilities.</p> <p>Items not required by the new tenant(s) must be identified prior to signing for the tenancy and Housing Maintenance will arrange for their disposal</p>

6.2 Design Standards

6.2.1 Electrical Installation

It is a Council aim to raise the standard of our homes to make sure they are fit for purpose for modern living. The Council will take advantage of the opportunity whilst a property is void, to ensure that the electrical installation meets the minimum design and components standard expected for modern living as set out below: -

LOCATION	DESIGN STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Bathroom	1 No. Shower (wet room only); 1 No. Shower Isolator (External or Pullcord - Wet Room Only); 1 No. I.P. Rated Light Fitting; 1 No 1 Gang Light Switch External or Pullcord; 1 No. Continuous Ventilation 3 speed Axial Fan; 1 No Triple Pole Fan Isolator (External or Pullcord)	Fix, Replace or Install
Bedroom	2 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets; 1 No. Light Pendant; 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch	Fix, Replace or Install
Cupboard Housing Immersion Tank	1 No. 20 AMP Double Pole Isolator Switch	Fix, Replace or Install
Hall	1 No. Double Switched Socket Outlet; 1 No. Light Pendant or Batten Holder; 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch or; 1 No. 2 Gang 2 Way Light Switch for Landing Switching (if applicable)	Fix, Replace or Install
Kitchen	1 No. Cooker Isolator and Low-level Connection Outlet; 4 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets; 1 No. Fused Connection Switch and Low-level socket outlet for Washing Machine; 1 No. Fused Connection Switch and Low-level socket outlet for Fridge/Freezer; 1 No. Continuous Ventilation 3 speed Axial Fan; 1 No. 1500 or 1800mm Fluorescent LED Light Fitting; 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch (additional 2 way switching where room has two entrances)	Fix, Replace or Install
Landing (Each additional storey)	1 No. Double Switched Socket Outlet; 1 No. Light Pendant / Batten Holder; 1 No. 2 or 3 Gang 2 Way Light Switch for Hall/Additional Landing Switching.	Fix, Replace or Install
Loft	(If Boiler Located within Loft Space) 1 No. Light Batten; 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch	Fix, Replace or Install
Reception Room (each)	2 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets; 1 No. Light Pendant; 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch (additional 2 way switching where room has two entrances)	Fix, Replace or Install

6.2.2 Fire Doors

Front entrance and internal doors to flats will be inspected and required to meet the minimum standards set out below: -

In circumstances where it is not possible to determine if the required standard has been met, the door/s will be replaced prior to letting.

DOOR	DESIGN STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Front Door	Where the front door is in a fire compartment wall and separates the flat from a space in common use FD 30S	Fix, Replace or Install
Internal Doors	Internal sub-dividing doors within a flat FD 20	Fix, Replace or Install

6.2.3 Kitchens and Bathrooms

COMPONENT	DESIGN STANDARD	ACTION if below standard
Kitchen	Clean, safe and functional with a minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more at the time of letting. Pass the Decent Home standard	Action minor repairs and/or replace damaged components where cost effective to do so. Add property to capital replacement programme or replace at time of void if life expectancy is less than 12 months or more.
Bathroom	Clean, safe and functional with a minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more at the time of letting. Pass the Decent Home standard	Action minor repairs and/or replace damaged components where cost effective to do so. Add property to capital replacement programme or replace at time of void if life expectancy is less than 12 months or more.

Section 7 Mutual Exchange

7.1 Background and Eligibility

Secure tenants have a legal right to assignment by way of exchange - to swap homes with each other, which is commonly referred to as a Mutual Exchange. Exchanges do not have to be between NFDC Council tenants, exchanges may take place with tenants of other Authorities or Housing association tenants.

Tenants who have a secure tenancy of any type (periodic or fixed term) have the right to exchange. The type and length of tenancy granted following a Mutual Exchange will depend on the commencement of tenancy date, type of tenancy and the length of time remaining on that tenancy.

Tenants who are eligible and meet the necessary criteria can apply to the Council to Mutual Exchange.

7.2 Processing

Prior to a mutual exchange, an inspection of the property will be undertaken to identify repairs required, damage caused by or alterations made to the property by the existing tenant.

Repairs which are the responsibility of the tenant will be recorded and become the responsibility of the incoming tenant to repair or maintain.

Any category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, found to have been caused by and the responsibility of the outgoing tenant will be either rectified by the outgoing tenant or by the Council and recharged in accordance with the Council's 'Chargeable Repairs' section of the Housing Landlord Services Maintenance and Repairs Policy.

7.3 Statutory Inspections

The statutory Landlord Electrical Condition and Gas Safety Inspection will be carried out, on the day the mutual exchange takes place.

Section 8 Appendices

Appendix 1 Void Processing Activity Timeline

