

Safe

Secure



Warm

Home

**Your new
council home
A guide for tenants**

**Tenant
approved**



**NORWICH
City Council**

Before a new tenant moves into one of our council homes we ensure that it is safe and secure and that it meets a basic standard.

This leaflet explains what condition you can expect the property to be in when you move in, what repairs the council is responsible for and what your responsibilities are as a tenant.

The condition of a property largely depends on its age and structure, as well as the condition it was left in by the previous tenant.

The property should, though, meet minimum standards (as set out in this leaflet) before you move in. In some cases it may be of a higher standard.

Repairs

Norwich City Council will carry out essential repairs to the property but you are responsible for doing minor repairs, such as cracks in the plaster and small holes. The council will not replace items in

good working order for purely cosmetic reasons.



Decoration

Norwich City Council does not decorate the property. However, you may be given a contribution towards decoration if the council decides that the decoration is poor. We offer a decoration allowance of £25 for each room that needs decorating.

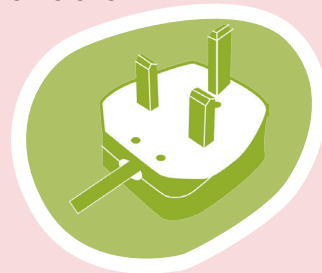
For further details please refer to the council's 'Decoration allowance scheme' leaflet.



When a home becomes empty, the council will always:

- Check for damaged asbestos. Any damaged materials, which may contain asbestos, will be tested and removed if deemed potentially hazardous by our specialists. Your property may contain undamaged asbestos when you move in and you should take care when decorating not to disturb materials that may contain asbestos. For further details please refer to the council's 'Asbestos' leaflet.

- Test the electrics and repair the installation as necessary to ensure that all wiring, sockets and bulb holders are up to standard.



- Test the gas pipe work. All our gas appliances are serviced annually. However, the council is not able to test appliances supplied in the property when it is empty. Testing can only be done once you have

arranged gas and electricity supplies. Problems may be found when the appliance test is carried out. If this is the case, please contact the council who will sort out any issues.

- Clear the property of any rubbish left by the previous occupant.

You may need adaptations made to the property to make it suitable for you to live in.

Please discuss this with us before you accept the offer.

Minimum standards

These are the minimum standards you can expect in your new home:

- **Doors (internal and external):** will open and close correctly and keys will be provided. Only large holes will be repaired. You will be responsible for mending small holes.
- **Keys:** all door locks will be changed (not applicable in sheltered housing). All keys that the council hold are given to you as the tenant. The council only holds spare keys for



sheltered housing schemes, where the sheltered housing officer holds a master key for tenant protection.

- **Windows:** all windows will open and close easily without snagging. You will be able to open and close all window vents. All windows will be safe when you move in but they may be re-glazed or repaired after you have moved in.
- **Bathroom suites:** all items will be clean and in working order.



- **Kitchens:**



Units: there will be a sink unit, double base unit with a work surface over the top, and a double or two single wall units where possible. There will be space for a cooker but there may not be space for any other kitchen appliances. Units will be clean and in working order.

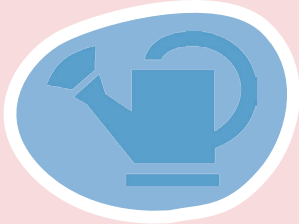
Washing machine points: where kitchens are in good condition but there is no space for a washing machine, without altering the units, the council will not provide these. However, if a kitchen refurbishment is to be done, when the property is empty, we will install washing machine points.

- **Electrical sockets:** the council will provide a minimum of two double sockets and one single

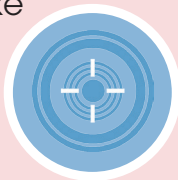
low-level socket for the washing machine (where appropriate) in the kitchen. The position of the kitchen units will determine where the electrical sockets will be placed. All other main rooms will have a minimum of one double socket.

- **Wall tiles:** there will be one row of ceramic tiles around the sink in the kitchen. There will be one row of ceramic tiles around the bath and basin in the bathroom.
- **Flooring:** all floors will be safe. Where there are tiles (eg in bathroom or kitchen) they will all be complete but if some tiles have been replaced they may not always match.
- **Heating:** we will ensure that fires, boilers, radiators and cylinders are in place and fitted securely and show no evidence of leaks.
- **Staircases:** will be safe and complete.
- **Walls and ceilings:** will be sound and intact. The council will patch large holes. You will be responsible for patching small holes.

- **Lofts:** will be cleared and insulated.
- **Gardens:** will be clear of debris and derelict sheds will be removed.



- **Fencing:** the basic provision is post and wire fencing. If there is no fencing at the property contact the customer contact team to arrange for a fence to be put up.
- **Smoke alarms:** will be fitted in the property. You are responsible for maintaining, testing and cleaning them. If you are a sheltered housing tenant, where the smoke alarm system is hard wired, no maintenance is required.
- **Flats with sheds:** where flats have sheds the customer contact team can arrange clearance and/or a change of locks where necessary.



Your responsibilities as a tenant

- arranging gas and electricity supplies to the property
- decorating
- tidiness and cleanliness
- minor repairs
- having a bayonet connection fitted by a GAS safe registered installer if you intend having a gas cooker
- keeping the property and garden in a good condition
- maintaining, testing and cleaning any smoke detector fitted by the council (this does not apply to tenants living in sheltered housing)
- keeping any communal areas, such as hallways/ stairs, clean and tidy
- damage caused by yourself or visitors to the property (you will be charged if the council has to carry out repairs as a result of damage)
- providing or maintaining a TV aerial if there is no communal aerial service.

Alterations made by previous tenants

The previous tenant may have made alterations or improvements to the property. They may have added non-standard fittings, such as a coloured bathroom suite. The council will generally replace all non-standard fittings unless they are in good condition and safe. However, when non-standard fittings need replacing the council will fit its own standard fittings.

Examples of alterations made by previous tenants

- Conservatories in reasonable condition will be left. The council will not, however, repair or maintain conservatories or replace them at the end of their life.
- Fitted kitchens are left in place if they are in very good condition. They will be maintained by the council but replaced with standard fittings at the end of their life or if parts are not readily available to do the repairs.
- Light fittings, including fluorescent lights, brass fittings, wall lights and any simple fitting, will be left if it is evident that the wiring is properly installed and electrically safe. They will be replaced by standard fittings when they need replacing.
- Electric showers will only be left in place and maintained if they are reasonably modern, properly installed and electrically safe.
- Outside taps will be left if they are installed properly and in good condition. The council will maintain them until they are no longer serviceable. The council will then decide whether to replace them or remove them.

Your own improvements

If you want to carry out improvements, you must contact the council and request permission first.

You must not fit ceiling fans in a room with a gas appliance, as this can be extremely dangerous. If a ceiling fan is found when the gas service is carried out the gas supply may be cut off.

At the end of your tenancy the council will inspect the property and carry out the necessary works before a new tenant moves in. Please note that you will be charged for any repairs for which you are liable, or for any damage which you or your visitors have caused.

When you end your tenancy you have a right to claim compensation for some improvements you may have made at your own expense since April 1994. Ask the customer contact team for details about which improvements qualify.

Help and advice

To try and help take some of the stress out of moving we will provide you with:

- information about the local area
- a tenants' handbook full of useful information and contacts.

We will visit you a month after you have moved in to check how you are settling into your new home.



If you would like this leaflet in another language or format such as large print or audio cassette please contact:

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