



Contact details

Strategic Housing Team Landlord Accreditation Scheme
Knowsley Council PO Box 26 Archway Road Huyton L36 9FB

0151 443 2340

housing@knowsley.gov.uk

www.knowsley.gov.uk



Knowsley Landlord Accreditation Scheme (KLAS)
and Property Register

Code of property and management standards



Knowsley Council



Knowsley Council

Code of standards

Knowsley Landlord Accreditation Scheme does not replace a landlord's legal obligations but aims to raise property and management standards in Knowsley's private rented sector.

Landlords who sign up to the Knowsley Landlord Accreditation Scheme and Property Register agree to maintain and manage their properties and tenancies to the following standards as a minimum.



Property standards

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

HHSRS is a tool for assessing health and safety risks in properties and was introduced in the Housing Act 2004. Landlords should familiarise themselves with the HHSRS and properties must be free from Category 1 hazards as defined by the current Housing Standard for private let properties in the HHSRS.

For further information please click [here](#).

Gas safety

Make sure all gas appliances are checked and serviced annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer and hold a valid Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR).

Install carbon monoxide alarms in rooms that contain a solid fuel burning appliance, such as an open fire or solid fuel stove. It is best practice to install an alarm in rooms containing gas burning appliances, in particular where the boiler is situated in a bedroom.

Electrical safety

Ensure the property has a current Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) confirming the electrics are in a satisfactory condition. Reports must be within date and renewed every five years.

Carry out a visual inspection when tenants move in and throughout the tenancy to ensure they are safe and maintained in good condition.

Make sure there are sufficient electrical sockets, removing the need for excessive use of extension leads or overloading of adapter plugs.

Any appliances provided should carry the CE marking, which is the manufacturer's declaration that they meet all the requirements of European law.

Portable electrical appliances supplied by the landlord should be Portable Appliance Tested (PAT) and any found to be faulty should be replaced or removed.

Thermal comfort

Properties must have an efficient, programmable 'whole house' heating system coupled with effective thermal insulation.

In properties where communal heating is provided, such systems should allow full and easy access to the boiler and allow tenants to control the temperature in their property at all times.

Security

External doors must be of strong, solid, and safe construction. The door and frame must be of sufficient strength to resist forced entry and be fitted with a five-lever mortice deadlock conforming to BS3621.

Make sure that all windows accessible from the ground level are resistant to unauthorised entry. They should be of a strong construction, well-fitted, in good condition with suitable window locks that can be easily released in the event of a fire.

Where a burglar alarm is fitted to the property, it must have a 20 minute cut-out device.

Pathways to properties should be adequately lit.

Hygiene, sanitation & waste

Kitchens should contain adequate storage, preparation and cooking facilities suitable for the number of occupants. Kitchens should also be able to be cleaned and kept in a clean and hygienic state by the tenants.

Make sure that floor coverings in all kitchens, bathrooms and toilets can be easily cleaned with domestic disinfectant products.

Properties should have satisfactory refuse disposal and recycling facilities sufficient for the number of occupants, as advised by the council's waste collection service.

A sufficient number of toilets, baths and/or showers and washbasins should be provided, with constant hot and cold water, for the number of occupants.

Fire safety

Make sure smoke alarms are provided on each floor of the property in a suitable location. If battery-powered, the smoke alarms should be tested on at least an annual basis and on change of tenancy.

Lighting and ventilation

Mechanical extractor fans should be fitted to kitchens, bathroom and toilets, where opening window space is insufficient.

There should be sufficient natural light in main living areas and stairwells should be well-lit, including a two-way light switch on the stairs.

Opening windows throughout the property should operate with ease.

Trips and falls

Floors and paths should be in good repair and free from serious trip hazards.

Stairs should have even tread heights, be enclosed by balusters and have adequate handrails.

Banister rails should prevent falls over balconies and landings. Low level windows should have locks or catches that prevent children from climbing out or should be restricted from opening too wide.

Internal layout and occupancy

The kitchen should be of a suitable size and have a safe layout for the optimum number of occupants in

the property, for the storage, preparation and cooking of food.

There should be enough bathrooms for the optimum number of occupants of the property, and they should be suitably located. Shared bathrooms should not be accessed via a bedroom.

Building Structure

Properties, outbuildings, gardens, yards and boundaries should be maintained in sound condition to prevent water ingress, damp issues and danger caused by structural collapse.

Properties should not bring the visual attractiveness of an area down.

Houses of Multiple Occupations (HMOs)

For HMOs please seek advice from the **Environmental Health Team** on **0151 433 2863** regarding the appropriate standards your property needs to meet.

Management standards

Pre-tenancy checks

Accurately report property details, allowing future tenants to view the property whilst respecting the existing tenant's rights.

Any repairs carried out before or after the tenancy start date should be agreed in writing.

Inform any likely tenants in writing of any additional charges they will be expected to pay when setting up a tenancy and throughout the tenancy.

Carry out a reference check with a previous landlord or agent if your tenant has rented privately before. A reference should only be concerned with the tenants ability to carry out his or her rental obligations, for example, payment of rent, adherence to the tenancy agreement and upkeep of the property.

Provide an accurate reference upon request for your existing tenant to another landlord.

Tenancy agreements

Ensure that each tenant is provided with a written tenancy agreement in a format that is clear, concise and written in plain English.

The tenancy agreements should include:

- the amount of rent, including dates and method of payment;
- details of any service charges, including the amount, what they are for and how they are calculated;
- each party's responsibilities for utility bills and council tax;
- each party's responsibilities for repairs, maintenance and cleaning, including appliances;
- the name, address and telephone number of the landlord including details of any managing agent's contact details, and emergency contact details;
- a clause making clear that nuisance and anti-social behaviour by the tenant, household members or visitors will not be allowed;
- the amount of notice required by both parties to terminate the tenancy; and
- the tenant's right to quiet enjoyment, and the landlord's right to enter the property with reasonable notice.

Rents and deposits

For tenancies starting after the 6th April 2007 landlords must store any tenancy deposits in one of three Government-backed schemes:

- www.mydeposits.co.uk - including deposits that were held by Capita
- www.tenancydepositscheme.com
- www.depositprotection.com

The schemes protect the deposit and return the deposit once both parties have agreed how much should be returned. Landlords are required to store the deposit and issue the tenant with prescribed information for their chosen scheme.

How to rent guide

From 1st October 2015 landlords are required to issue tenants with the most current issue of the 'How to rent' guide on all new and renewal tenancies.

The guide is for tenants and landlords in the private rented sector to help them understand their rights and responsibilities and contains a useful checklist when renting properties.

The latest edition can be downloaded from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent

Immigration - right to rent checks

Check that a tenant or lodger can legally rent your residential property in England.

Before the start of a new tenancy, landlords must make checks for all tenants aged 18 and over, even if:

- they're not named on the tenancy agreement;
- there's no tenancy agreement; and/or
- the tenancy agreement isn't in writing.

Further checks throughout the tenancy will be required depending on the length of the tenancy or before their permission to stay in the UK has come to an end.

Further information can be found at: www.gov.uk/check-tenant-right-to-rent-documents/who-to-check

Inventory

Provide an inventory of the contents and condition of the property in agreement with the tenant at the start of the tenancy, ensuring it is signed and dated by both parties.

Fire safety

Advise the tenant about fire safety precautions and fire alarms to be checked on an annual basis and at the start of each tenancy.

Gas safety

Provide the tenant with a copy of the annual Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR).

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

From 1st April 2018 there will be a requirement for any properties rented out in the private rented sector to have a minimum energy performance rating of E on an EPC. The regulations came into force for new lets and renewals of tenancies with effect from 1st April 2018 and for all existing tenancies on 1st April 2020.

Landlords must provide the tenant with a valid EPC which lasts 10 years from date of certificate.

Appliances, utilities and waste

Provide tenants with information on:

- how to use the heating system;
- how to turn off the water, gas and electricity, in case of emergency; and
- how to use any appliances supplied as part of the tenancy.

Tenants must also be provided with information about waste and recycling services and relevant collection dates.

Insurance

Make sure your properties have an appropriate level of insurance in place - a standard home policy is unlikely to be sufficient.

Notify your insurance provider every time a tenancy change takes place to ensure you remain covered at all times.

Tenancy sustainment

Tenancies can run into difficulty for a variety of reasons due to unforeseen circumstances.

Before starting proceedings to end a tenancy in such circumstances we encourage all landlords to make contact the Strategic Housing team on **0151 443 2340** who may be able to offer you and /or your tenant advice and assistance to help maintain the tenancy.

