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Decent Homes Standard – 4MH

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Welcome

Welcome to the Decent Homes Standard Review Webinar

- Nov 2020 **Social Housing White Paper** commits to reviewing the Decent Homes Standard
- Feb 2021 **Part 1** explores the case for change and possible updates with senior SRS stakeholders
- Sept 2022 Consultation launches on extending the Decent Homes Standard to **privately rented homes**
- Spring 2023 **Part 2** examines specific changes with members of the SRS and PRS

Aims

The aim of today's session is to take you through the main proposals within the consultations for reforming the Decent Homes Standard and introducing Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard into the SRS. We will then be interested in hearing any views you may have on the proposals.


The link to the DHS consultation is here: [Consultation on a reformed Decent Homes Standard for social and privately rented homes](#) - GOV.UK

The link to the SRS MEES consultation is here: [Improving the Energy Efficiency of Socially Rented Homes in England](#) - GOV.UK

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What is the Decent Homes Standard?

The DHS is the minimum standard for physical decency that social homes are required to meet

Overview of the DHS

- The Decent Homes Standard was first published in 2001 and updated again in 2006.
- The DHS sets the minimum standard to which all SRS properties (H&L-owned and L&O-owned) are to be held to.
- There are four criteria that make up the DHS (see table opposite).
- In 2006 the DHS was updated, introducing the requirement for homes to be free from the most dangerous 'category 1' hazards, assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The HHSRS does not set a minimum standard, but instead assesses and categorises hazards in residential premises by seriousness.
- Last month, we launched consultations into reforming the current DHS and introducing it into the PRS for the first time and a consultation on SRS MEES.


The four criteria that make up the current DHS

- A Criterion A – it meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing**
 - HHSRS - Free from cat 1 hazards
- B Criterion B – It is in a reasonable state of repair**
 - No key building components are old and in poor condition
 - No more than one other key building component is old and in poor condition
- C Criterion C – It has reasonably modern facilities and services**
 - Lacks no more than 2 of a list of facilities, including reasonably modern kitchen (<20 years old) and bathroom (<30 years old)
- D Criterion D – It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort**
 - Has both effective insulation and efficient heating

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Updating the Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

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Disrepair

Criterion B of the DHS requires properties to be kept in a reasonable state of repair

Updates

- Components no longer need to be old as well as in disrepair to fail
- The definition of disrepair is simplified to be more descriptive
- New building components are brought in scope

Decent Homes Standard - Criterion B

Key: New/updated requirement Existing requirement

A dwelling satisfies this criterion unless:


- One or more **key building components** is not in a reasonable state of repair and
- Two or more **other building components** are not in a reasonable state of repair

Key building components:	Other building components:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wall structureExternal wallsRoof structureRoof coveringWindowsExternal doorsChimneysHeating systemsElectrical systemsKitchens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BathroomsLiftsInternal doorsFire alarm systemsFire safety signageSanitary systemsInternal finishMechanical ventilationRainwater goodsPathways and stepsReinforcedHandrails andExternal lightingBoundary wallsDoor entry systemsSRS onlyChimneys

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Facilities and Services

Criterion C of the DHS requires properties to have reasonably modern facilities and services

Updates

- Age is no longer a reason for failure
- Properties must contain 3 out of 4 core facilities
- Window restrictors added, considering evidence for security and floor coverings

Decent Homes Standard - Criterion C

Key: New/updated requirement Existing requirement

A dwelling must provide three of the following core facilities:

- a kitchen with adequate space and layout
- an appropriately located bathroom and WC
- adequate external noise insulation
- adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats

Landlords must also:

- Provide child-resistant window restrictors on wide opening windows above the ground floor

We are also:

- Considering adding secure doors and windows to the list of essential facilities.
- Considering requiring floor coverings at the start of a tenancy

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Damp and Mould

Introducing a new criterion to the DHS that aims to tackle the rise in damp and mould

The current DHS requires homes to be free from the most serious cases of damp and mould that fall into 'category 1' hazards. However, this does not go far enough.

We want to add a new section to the DHS to address damp and mould. This will set a stronger requirement that homes should be free of damp and mould.

For example, these homes will fail the DHS:



- This will encourage landlords to address damp and mould when reported to them by tenants and take a proactive approach to prevent damp and mould.

Awaab's Law provides a safeguard for tenants against damp and mould, and other hazards that are dangerous to health and safety.

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Implementation Date and Exemptions

When the new Standard starts and what exemptions will apply

Implementation Date

There are two potential implementation dates for the new Decent Homes Standard:

- 1) An earlier date of **2035**
- 2) A later date of **2037**

Why these dates?

- Landlords must meet a number of new regulatory requirements and build new housing at the same time.
- The timeframe is similar to the original DHS implementation period.
- We expect to see standards steadily improve over the next 10 years.

Exemptions to the DHS

Homes will be exempt for the Decent Homes Standard if:

1. Tenants refuse access for work to be carried out.
2. The landlord cannot get planning permission to carry out work.
3. The building has physical or structural limitations that make it impractical to carry out work.
4. The landlord plans to sell, demolish or regenerate the property.

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Social Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

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What are Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards?

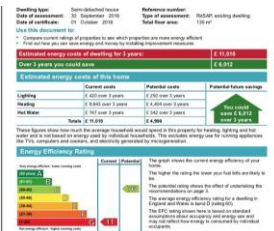
- Energy efficiency means how well a home uses energy to stay warm, lit, and comfortable. This is judged by using Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)
- The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) would be a baseline for how energy efficient a property must be to be rented out.
- The Government is considering introducing MEES into the DHS for social housing for the first time, under criterion D of the DHS governing thermal comfort alongside requirements for a heating system to heat your whole home.



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Energy Performance Certificates

- Energy efficiency means how well a home uses energy to stay warm, lit, and comfortable.
- Every home has an energy efficiency score called an EPC.
- Buildings are rated on a scale from A – G with A being the most efficient and G being the least efficient
- A home with good energy efficiency will keep heat in better, waste less energy, have lower bills, and cause less pollution.
- How we measure EPCs is changing, from the current approach looking at average cost of your energy in your home to a more targeted approach that looks at specific aspects of your home.



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How do we plan to measure compliance?

Examples of proposed new ways of assessing compliance



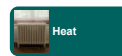
Fabric

- Refers to the building's fabric, meaning how well the walls, floors, roof, windows and doors keep in heat
- Examples of how the fabric may be improved: Insulation, new windows and doors, implementing a ventilation system



Smart


- Based on how well the home can use and save energy in a smart way
- Examples of how the smart energy use may be improved: Smart meters, censored lighting, solar panels



Heat

- Based on whether the building's heating system is environmentally friendly
- Examples of how heat performance may be improved: Heat pumps, replacing old heat pumps, improving heating controls

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Our Policy Proposal

The background and overview of MEES for the social rented sector

We want to introduce new rules on Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) to the social rented sector. By 2030 we want rules to say that all social housing must have an EPC score of C or higher based on the new way of measuring them.


Our proposals

Metrics	Fabric + Heat or Smart	Make sure landlords improve the Fabric Performance of their homes first. Then make sure they improve either the Heating Systems or the Smart Energy Use of their homes
Compliance Date	2030	Landlords have until 2030 to meet the new standard
Spend exemption	£10,000 per property	Providers maximum required spend of £10,000 before exempt from reaching standard for 10 years
Transition Period	Current EPC C compliance allowed until 2028	If your home already meets current EPC C standards before they change or in the following two year, we will give landlords a bit longer to do anything extra they need to.

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Alternative options

The background and overview of MEES for the social rented sector

The consultation also presents a number of different options for MEES, so people can have the opportunity to say whether they think these are the right ones.


Our proposals

Metrics	Fabric Only (just insulation)	Would mean that only insulation measures are installed, but we wouldn't require anything more.
	Additional flexibility	Rather than requiring landlords to improve the fabric first, we would give landlords more choice over what they would install in your home.
Compliance Date	Earlier or later than 2030	We would be interested to hear your opinions on whether we should set the compliance date earlier or later
Spend exemption	£15,000 or no exemption per property	We are also considering options with a maximum required spend of £15,000 before being exempt from reaching the standard for 10 years; or not having this exemption at all.

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Benefits


We think that introducing this will:



Improve the quality of social housing



Make energy bills more affordable, because people will only need to pay for the energy they use, instead of wasted energy




Be better for the planet as there will be less pollution

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Next Steps

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Next steps

Upcoming Activity



Next Steps

- The [DHS](#) and [SRS MEES](#) consultations are currently live until 10 September. We could encourage you and those you represent to complete these before the deadline.
- We have committed to publishing an updated DHS and setting out SRS MEES by the end of the year. We will publish technical guidance and government responses to accompany these new standards.



Contact

If you would like a follow up conversation or to submit feedback, please contact us at:

DecentHomesReview@communities.gov.uk
SRS.MEES@communities.gov.uk

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