

The Lancaster Standard

Decent homes, decent neighbourhoods

**This booklet can be made available in
large print, on tape, in Braille
and in other languages**

THE LANCASTER STANDARD

The Decent Homes Standard

What is the Decent Homes Standard?

The Government has set a minimum standard that all social housing must meet by 2010. This is known as The Decent Homes Standard. A definition of a decent home is that it must meet the following criteria –

1. It must meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing.

Basically this means that a dwelling must be fit for human habitation.

2. It must be in reasonable state of repair.

If a dwelling has one or more key components that are old (beyond their life expectancy) and because of their condition require replacing or major repair then the property would fail the decent homes standard. Key components are external walls, roofs, windows/doors, chimneys, central heating boilers, gas fires, storage heaters and electrics.

3. It must have reasonably modern facilities.

A dwelling would not meet the decent homes standard if it lacks three or more of the following facilities –

A kitchen which is 20 years old or less.

A kitchen with adequate space and layout.

A bathroom which is 30 years old or less.

An appropriately located bathroom and wc.

Adequate noise insulation.

Adequate size and common layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats.

4. It must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

A dwelling must have both efficient heating and effective insulation.

All dwellings owned by Lancaster City Council currently meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Lancaster City Council maintains its stock to a level above that of the decent homes standard.

The Lancaster Standard has been developed over time with feedback from tenants, and the involvement of the District-wide Tenants Forum.

The Lancaster Standard is Decent Homes Plus

KITCHEN REFURBISHMENT



The Lancaster Standard

- Every property is visited and the customer consulted over layouts and choices. Individual plans are drawn up tailored to the specific requirements of each customer.
- New base and wall units are provided together with a stainless steel inset sink and worktops to provide maximum storage and working spaces.
- Tile splashbacks are provided along all worktops.
- Electrics are upgraded to provide sufficient outlets for customers needs.
- New vinyl floor coverings are provided.
- Customers are given a choice of style of units and colour of worktops.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 15 years

Decent Homes Standard is 20 years

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 30 years

BATHROOM REFURBISHMENT



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- Bathrooms are fitted with new enamel steel bath with handgrips and non-slip surface, a low-level wc suite and a pedestal wash hand basin.
- An over-bath electric shower with curtain is fitted wherever possible.
- Tile splashbacks are fitted above the basin and bath
- The shower area is fully tiled.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 30 years

Decent Homes Standard is 30 years

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 40 years

WINDOW REPLACEMENTS



The Lancaster Standard

- Windows are replaced with PVCu double glazed frames
- All windows are fitted with energy efficient glass and trickle ventilation to prevent condensation
- Security locks are fitted as standard.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats

Decent Homes Standard is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats.

EXTERNAL DOOR REPLACEMENTS



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- Front doors are replaced with composite double glazed doors.
- Customers are given a choice of style for front doors.
- All front doors are fitted with a multi-point locking system.
- Rear doors are replaced with composite double glazed doors
- All rear doors are fitted with a multi-point locking system.
- Customers are given a choice of colours.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats

Decent Homes Standard is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats.

BOILER REPLACEMENTS/ENERGY EFFICIENCY



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- Existing boilers are replaced with highly efficient gas condensing boilers wherever possible to provide affordable whole house heating for customers.
- Thermostatic radiator valves are fitted to radiators
- Cavity wall insulation and loft insulation is installed
- Lancaster's average SAP rating for its housing stock is currently 71.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 15 years

Decent Homes Standard is 15 years

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 15 years

RE-WIRING



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- The City Council carries out 5 yearly inspections of the wiring within its housing stock. This provides information on the condition of the wiring and whether the wiring needs replacing.
- The Council has included within its Business Plan to carry out rewiring on a 30 year cycle and has identified from the stock condition survey when it is likely that properties will require rewiring. However this work will actually be undertaken on a just in time approach dependent on the information fed back from the 5 yearly electrical inspections.

Replacement Cycle Comparison

Lancaster's replacement cycle is 30 years

Decent Homes Standard is 30 years

Major Repairs Allowance Funding replacement cycle is 30 years

RE-ROOFING



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- The Council has included within its Business plan to carry out re-roofing works to properties identified in the stock condition survey as requiring this type of work.
- Again as with the rewiring programme this work will be carried out on a just in time approach which means that properties will be re-surveyed prior to due dates in order to effectively manage the programme.

EXTERNAL REFURBISHMENTS



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- External refurbishment works are undertaken
- Renewal of doors and windows as described previously
- Renewal of fascias and gutters with PVCu materials
- Re-rendering or re-pointing of the external walls to maintain the weatherproofing of exterior of the dwellings and to improve the environmental impact of Estates.
- Replacement cycle for re-rendering/re-pointing is 60 years however regular surveys would determine the need for this work.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS



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- Lancaster has made provision of £350,000 per year within its Business Plan to carry out environmental improvements on estates providing new pathways within the property boundaries, boundary treatments (fencing and walls), renewing access footpaths, off street parking and communal facilities in order to improve the environmental appearance on estates.
- Priorities for these works are determined in consultation with tenant groups

SECURITY WORKS



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- The Council has a home security policy which is taken into consideration whenever improvement works are carried out.
- For example the specifications for the windows and doors meet secured by design standards.

ADAPTATIONS



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- The Council carry out adaptations to individual properties as recommended by the Occupational Therapists in order to improve the quality of life for customers with disabilities.

Contact Information

Health and Housing Services Council Housing

Postal address:

PO Box 4, Town Hall, LANCASTER, LA1 1QR

Office:

38 Cable Street, LANCASTER, LA1 1HH

Telephone:

01524 582929

Email:

councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Web site:

www.lancaster.gov.uk

Our office hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm weekdays
(10.00 am to 5.00 pm Wednesdays)

When the office is closed, if there is an emergency,
ring the Council's Emergency Call Centre,
which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The number to call is: 01524 67099

Calls may be recorded to help improve
our standard of service and accuracy of information

