

Void Standard

The Void Surveyor compiling the work schedule is required to carry out the pre void inspection in a methodical manner room by room in order to reduce the likelihood of items being missed. The schedule is to be used in conjunction with this standard.

Generally all fixtures and fittings left in the property at re letting should be safe, functional and fit for purpose.

Items not in working order, non-compliant or unsafe should be fixed or replaced. Items deemed inappropriate or beyond economic repair should be removed from the property.

Redundant switches as well as gas and oil supply pipes should be removed and blanked off.

It is intended that we should provide the following as a minimum.

Structurally Stable

Free from serious disrepair

Free from damp prejudicial to health

Adequate provision for lighting, heating and ventilation

An adequate supply of wholesome water

Satisfactory facilities for the storage preparation and cooking of food, including a sink with hot and cold water

A suitably located water closet for exclusive use of the occupants

A suitably located fixed bath (or shower) and wash hand basin with hot and cold running water, for exclusive use of the occupants

An efficient system for the draining of foul, waste and surface water

Floors and Floor Coverings

GYCH will only provide a floor covering in wet areas i.e. kitchens bathrooms shower rooms and internal WCs. Floor coverings in these areas are to be sound with no lifting tiles/edges, moisture resistant/hygienic and free from paint or stubborn marks.

New vinyl floors when laid are to be Safe Tread or equivalent and have edges sealed including skirting and around WC pans. Floors in non wet areas will be left in a sound, level and even enough condition so as to receive a floor covering provided by the incoming tenant.

Carpet grippers have to be removed at all times from all floor areas. This has a H&S concern and if not removed could cause further damage.

Broken tiles around the perimeter of rooms may be replaced or removed and the area patched using laytex (which ever is the most cost effective). It is acceptable to remove all tiles and leave bare concrete as long as it has a sound surface.

When vinyl covering (sheet and tiles) is to be laid over floor boards a 3mm ply base is to be fitted first. Hard board sheeting should be soaked in water prior to fitting in accordance with good practice.

When patching existing floor tiles the contractor will attempt to match the existing colour/pattern. Poor quality carpets are to be removed unless stated on the specification.

Windows and Glazing

All glazing must be sound. Double glazed sealed units should be free from internal condensation/misting. Works to be replaced can be issued to day to day repairs. UPVC frames are to be free from paint. Mould and nicotine stained mastic should be removed and re-sealed in anti-mould grade silicon. All furniture, hardware and friction hinges should be checked to be in working order, and if necessary lubricated to ensure smooth operation.

Casements and sashes should be warp free and sit evenly in the frame on closing. Child restrictors should be fitted to first floor windows and above. Replacement handles are to be button operated. All cracked panes should be replaced, day to day repair to be raised for completion following occupation of property..

Existing key operated window handles must have keys available, one key per property will suffice. UPVC window boards and trims should be paint free and securely fixed. Glazing to doors and screens below 800mm should be toughened safety glass.

Locks

Locks directly to the property are to be changed as a matter of course on completion of all (non-sheltered) void properties.

Front and back doors are to have a minimum of one lock and each lock to have a minimum of two keys. Locks to out buildings and shed doors do not require changing if a key is present and require a minimum of one key per door.

Sheltered schemes use a suited system where the scheme manager holds a master key and therefore do not require a lock change. Security chains are to be removed on sheltered schemes to ensure that the warden has access.

Communal doors should have at least one key or electronic door fob. If these keys are not available the void contractor must notify the **XXXXXX** so that keys can be issued for sign up.

Garden sheds left for the new tenant do not require locks/keys if none are fitted / available.

All locks including three-point locking mechanisms are to have smooth, firm and secure operation. Where doors have more than one lock only one lock change is required providing keys are available.

Doors

All doors are to be sound including ease of opening/closing and fitted with one pair of lever handles, latch, door keep and serviceable hinges. Latches and furniture are to engage properly and to have smooth operation. Internal glass doors are to be removed / replaced due to H&S issues.

Doors to bathrooms and toilets are to have tower bolts or lever lockset furniture fitted.

New doors are to have an even “penny” gap between the door and frame, and a gap at the bottom large enough to accommodate carpet and underlay.

New doors are to include new hinges and furniture. GYN will try and match the existing doors. In some instances it may be necessary to paint /stain veneer doors if a match is unavailable or if a repair is required.

All new doors should be of good quality and constructed from seasoned timber to prevent warping, splitting or swelling after fitting.

Some internal doors may be fitted with Perko door closers, which must be fully functioning if fitted.

The preferred door type is a flush hard board door in white. New hard board doors do not require painting.

New fire doors should have the appropriate performance given in table B1 of Approved Document B of the Building Regulations. Automatic door closing devices should be fitted to new fire doors and existing devices are to be checked to ensure functionality.

Front entrance door will be provided with letter plates and a serviceable Yale latch. The cylinder on the front entrance door (or flat door in shared properties) should always be changed and two keys will be provided at the time of the void.

In sheltered schemes, keys must match existing master cylinder and lock changes should only be done if required and advised by sheltered staff.

All rear exit doors shall be in good sound condition with no enforced entrance damage and fitted with one pair of lever handles, mortice lock (two keys) and metal keep.

Any secondary door locks to front and rear doors will be left in-situ and existing keys provided to tenant, if keys are missing, secondary locks will be replaced to match existing or removed and the door made good.

Internal Joinery and Stairs

All timber should be free from major defects and ready for decorating. Risers and treads to staircases should be sound and not excessively noisy/squeaky. Newel posts and balustrades should be securely fixed and rigid. Staircases should have at least one handrail fitted.

New hand rails should be between 900mm and 1000mm measured from floor or pitch line of stairs. Horizontal timber banisters to stairs and landings are to

be covered in ply-wood if there is a risk of a child climbing and potentially falling as instructed by the void surveyor on site.

Openings between timbers/banisters and open stairs should not allow a 100mm sphere to pass through as stated in Approved Document K of The Building Regulations. Architraves and skirtings are to be provided in all rooms and securely fitted with no protruding nails or fixings. The contractor should match existing when new sections are fitted.

Stair-lifts if present will need to be highlighted by the Void Surveyor to Housing Services.

Staircases should be well lit and have a two way light switches operable at the foot of the stairs and on the landing.

New skirting/spliced sections are to be joined neatly and sanded down in preparation for decorating. Holes/gaps where old hinges/latches and keeps have been removed are to be filled/made good with wood filler. Floor boards should be checked for noise/spring and re-secured by drilling and screwing if necessary. Nailing is to be avoided especially at edges to prevent timber splitting.

Walls and Ceilings

Major cracks/holes and loose plaster should be filled and repaired. The condition of walls may not be apparent if wall paper is left in place.

Any defective plaster, which is in danger of falling off, shall be replaced prior to letting the property. It is difficult with the older properties to know how much plaster will come away. When the tenants redecorate, it may be that further plastering work will need to be undertaken after the property is let. This would normally be done on a room by room basis.

Inflammable ceiling tiles and coving should be removed and affected areas made good throughout.

Offensive graffiti will be removed or painted over with an oil based eggshell paint. Artex and textured coating (TC) on walls will be removed if found to be in poor condition.

Testing can prove asbestos content, but cannot prove asbestos free. Therefore all TC is to be treated as asbestos containing material (ACM). Removal will be carried out in accordance with HSE guidelines by a competent contractor fully trained with the correct tools and PPE.

Removal of TC will require a method statement.

Under no circumstances should TC be sanded drilled or scraped while dry as this will create dust. Disposal of debris/waste should be in accordance with HSE guidelines.

Wall Tiling

A minimum of two courses of 150 x 150mm glazed wall tiles shall be provided around the perimeter of the bath and as splash-backs to worktops, the

stainless sink-top and wash-hand basin. Any loose or broken tiles shall be replaced or re fixed as necessary. Tiles to be matched as near as possible to existing.

Plumbing, Sanitary Ware and Bathrooms

All sanitary fittings including cisterns, ball valves, wastes, traps, overflows, taps etc. to be tested for leaks and left in full working order. Tanks in lofts are to be checked to ensure that they are securely mounted on a purpose built solid platform with a lid fitted and sufficient lagging/insulation provided. Defects to be reported to asset team for future programme. Associated pipe work in lofts and other un-heated areas should be lagged. Hot water cylinders should have adequate lagging jacket/foam insulation present.

All hoses, fittings and non return valves shall be in compliance with local water authority regulations/bylaws which may vary in the quality and type of device fitted from area to area. These materials must be water authority approved.

Any mains fed ball valve which will include cistern devices, tanks and external taps must be fitted with a non return device as per water regulations/bylaws.

Toilet pans, baths whb sinks/drainers and taps are to be clean, free of stains and scale. Taps are to be securely fixed and have new washers fitted if necessary. When new taps are installed isolating valves to both hot and cold feeds should be included.

If steel baths are chipped or contain holes they are to be replaced.

Baths should have an effective seal around the edge. Mouldy mastic should be replaced with anti-mould grade silicon. The bath should have an effective side and end panel (if applicable) fitted. New bath panels should be white.

Tiled areas are to be re grouted if necessary with an effective mastic seal at junctions. Cracked tiles should be replaced, nearest match. Stopcocks should be tested, left in working order easily accessible and the location(s) noted on the property data form.

Plugs and chains to be secure and in working order. Toilet seats will be replaced with new toilet seats being white.

The preferred method of drainage for washing machines is a waste stand pipe, although multi-waste spigots are acceptable where layout/ space options are limited. Multi wastes should be blanked off if applicable. Flexi hoses and speed fit connections are not to be used unless access is severely restricted.

If existing water stopcocks are concealed the contractor will alter the boxing to ensure the water stopcocks are exposed (allow 12" gap). A neat detail to close existing boxing is required above and below the water stopcock. (This is to help prevent future needle stick issues with concealed stopcocks.) All staff are to avoid placing hands into concealed boxing without checking. A mirror and torch can be used to check for sharps.

N.B. New bathrooms are to be fitted, where previously missed on planned programme works/works planned to be completed within two years of void

period. All work to be completed in accordance with current GYCH upgrade specification.

Bathrooms

The toilet seat must be fixed securely to the W.C. pan and free from defects

All wash basins and baths must be fitted with a plug and chain

All wash basins and bath tubs must be mastic sealed, the mastic being free from staining and mildew growth

All toilet cisterns must flush as designed

Overflows and pipe work must be free from defects and function as designed

There must be at least two rows of wall tiling around the bath and wash basin

All splash back wall tiling must be free from defects and fixed and grouted to an adequate standard

All bathroom fixtures and fittings must be cleaned with lime scale remover. Scaled or stained sanitary ware should not be replaced but cleaned using a suitable chemical cleaner which should be applied strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All fixtures should be free from defects and securely fitted.

Kitchens (existing) that do not require replacement must achieve the following standards.

All wall/base units must be fixed securely.

All doors and drawers must open and close securely.

All worktops must be free from excessive marks, scoring and staining.

All abutments/junctions must be mastic sealed and free from staining and mildew growth.

All fixtures, fittings and worktops must be in a hygienic condition

There must be at least two rows of wall tiling around the sink and behind all working surfaces.

All wall tiling must be free from defects and must be fixed and grouted to an adequate standard.

There must be adequate power sockets for appliances.

The floor must have a vinyl floor covering

Kitchens should be fitted with a washing machine waste outlet with hot and cold water plumbing supplies **when space permits**. There should be no washing machine plumbing supplied in a sheltered scheme where there is a communal laundry. Space must also be allowed for the provision of a washing machine, fridge freezer and cooker. Power sockets should be placed close to each appliance.

Ideally, both gas and appropriate electric supplies should be provided to the cooker space. However, some dwellings may only have one of these options.

Kitchen door and drawer hardware/hinges should be operational and securely fixed. The contractor is encouraged to retain doors, drawer fronts and handles etc from units being removed if they are of a clean and serviceable standard and keep a stock for future use/matching purposes. Doors and drawers need to be level with even gaps and a smooth opening/closing function.

Glazed wall tiles are to be replaced if cracked. A minimum of two rows provided above work tops and across the cooker space. New tiling is to be in white 150 x 150 mm bumpy whites. Attempts to be made to match colours/patterns when replacing existing items. Exceptions may be allowed to the above guidelines if matching is not possible and the addition of new tiles would be unsightly.

Plinths and kicker boards should be neat and the same colour. Joints should be of a high quality, but if not, plastic cover trim used to hide gaps/edges at junctions and internal/external corners. Where screws have to be used plastic cover domes should be fitted. Bare edges to chipboard should not be visible. Iron on edging should be applied in matching colour or corner protectors fitted.

Kitchen replacement

Kitchens are to be replaced, if no longer fit for purpose, previously missed on a planned programme or does not comply with HHSRS. All work to be completed in accordance with current GYCH upgrade specification. The void surveyor will meet with the kitchen unit supplier, who will jointly design new kitchen. Kitchen plan will be in a digital format with dimensions, to help with explanation to incoming tenant, if available at time of viewing.

A new works order will be raised using the Capital Works code.

Where practicable, spaces for a washing machine, 640 mm wide, fridge, 620 mm wide, and cooker, 640 mm wide, should be provided. Spaces should be wide enough to accommodate 600 mm appliances comfortably. Metal edging strips are to be used to join worktops and to cover edges at cooker spaces.

Cooker spaces should be clearly defined and have work surfaces either side. Electric cooker nosing and control panel should be provided.

Gas supplies for cookers where available should be capped off in accordance with GAS SAFE best practice. Tenants are responsible for fitting of gas cooker and will be required to get a bayonet fitting installed so that the appliance can be safety checked at the same time by a qualified/competent person. Void contractors will occasionally be asked to provide this service but at the tenant's expense. This service is not offered at the recommendation of GYCH and this should be made clear to the tenant.

Flammable materials like plastic electrical trunking and switches should not be sited near the cooker area. Wall units should be at least 150mm away from the cooker space. The preferred position for washing machines is under the sink drainer, and tall fridge freezers at the end of a run of base units.

Electrical Test and Report

The installation is to be checked to ensure that it is completely safe for the incoming residents. A periodic inspection report, signed by the inspector and

the qualifying manager must be returned with the keys on completion of the work clearly showing that the property is “good/satisfactory” condition. Cat 3 and 4 works on the report may be acceptable and referred to day to day repairs for completion.

Cat 1 and 2 works are not acceptable and works to correct these should be carried out at the time of the inspection/void work. Failed reports should not be submitted, and the final report should be clearly legible.

It is imperative that major work including rewires and upgrades should be identified as early as possible to avoid delays. Electrical bonding and new wiring in properties should be carried out in accordance with BS 7671- and the latest edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations.

The contractor shall place a sticker on the consumer unit following the electrical test. The next test date should be written as timescale 10 years from the latest test date or the next change of occupancy.

Painted/dirty electrical fittings should be cleaned/scraped if necessary or replaced.

Landlords appliances within sheltered blocks must be safety checked. Any electrical items to be left on site for incoming tenants must be safety checked with PAT stickers clearly dated and attached to the appliance in a prominent position.

Existing extractor fans should be taken apart and thoroughly de-greased, cleaned and serviced. Existing electric showers if being retained should be tested and left in working order.

Immersion heaters should be checked and functional. Hot water cylinders should have an immersion fitted as back-up water heating. Since 01/04/2004, the fitting of such a feature has been recommended in relation to any repair, replacement or installation work on domestic immersion heaters (British Standard BS EN 60335-2-73:2003)

This is to prevent tanks in lofts overheating in roof spaces and the contents spilling through ceilings on to the occupants below.

The contractor is to issue a signed statement on the checklist form handed in with the keys confirming that the immersion heater has an integrated cut-out, and tanks in the loft if applicable are securely mounted on a solid platform. Replacement immersion heaters should have a minimum manufacturer's five-year warranty.

A full NICEIC / ECA or equivalent recognised governing body Electricity Safety Check will be undertaken on all void properties and a written report will be provided. Any relevant remedial work to the installation will be carried out prior to re letting.

The minimum amount of fittings in each room should be as follows:-

Kitchen	4no. Double switched socket
	2no. Switch fused spurs with 2 single socket outlets
	1no. 45 amp cooker switch and outlet connection
	1no. IP45 Bulk Head

	1no. One way wall switch
	1no Two way wall switch
	1no. 2 speed wall mounted extractor fan / spur
	1no. Mains connected smoke detector
Dining Area	2no. Double switched socket outlets
	1no. Pendant light
	1no. One way wall switch
Living Area	4no. Double switched socket outlets
	1no. Pendant light
	1no. One way wall switch
Bedrooms	2no. Double switched socket outlets
	1no. Pendant light
	1no. One way switch
Hall/Landing	1no. Double switched socket outlet
	1no. Pendant light (2 on stairs)
	2no. Two-way switches
	1no. Mains connected smoke detector
Bathroom	1no. IP45 Bulk Head
	1no. One way pull switch
WC	1no. IP45 Bulk Head
	1no. One way pull/wall switch

Earth Bonding

CCU Complete inc MCB's and installation

The Consumer unit must contain a full set of circuit breakers/blanks/fuse carries. Each Consumer Board shall be fitted with a secure cover.

Some residents may have fitted dimmer switches, these must be replaced with rocker type switches. All non standard lighting must be removed and returned to standard.

All existing electrical fittings must be in sound, serviceable condition with no signs of damage. A visual inspection should be made of all light switches, power points, ceiling pendants, cooker control points, immersion heater cabling and switch and any mechanical extraction units that may be fitted.

Smoke Alarms

All properties are to have **mains** type smoke alarms. These will be fixed to ceilings at least 300mm from any wall or ceiling luminaire (light fitting) and will be permanently wired to a local lighting circuit. The contractor should test and

check existing mains smoke detectors to ensure that they are operational and function correctly.

New units if required should be Firex Ionization Smoke Alarms. With one fitted to both the upstairs and downstairs of the property. Flats and bungalows are to be fitted with one Smoke Alarm.

N.B. Some sheltered/supported accommodation and flats may have linked systems that are different from the units described above and may be covered by a maintenance contract. Further advice/guidance should be sought before working on these systems.

Existing CO (carbon monoxide) detectors where fitted should be tested to ensure operational.

Optical sensors are more responsive to smouldering fires producing large particle smoke typical of fires involving furniture and bedding. They are more immune to invisible smoke produced by 'burning the toast' and similar cooking fumes. This makes them ideal for siting in hallways close to kitchens where false alarms from ionisation alarms may be a particular problem. The BS 5839: Pt.6: 2004 Standard recommends the use of optical alarms in circulation spaces of a dwelling, such as hallways and landings. Optical alarms are prone to false alarm if exposed to steam and should not be located too close to poorly ventilated bathrooms or shower rooms.

Ionisation type sensors are particularly sensitive to the almost invisible smoke produced by fast flaming fires. This makes them more liable to false alarm due to cooking fumes if sited in a hallway close to a kitchen. Ionisation alarms are less vulnerable to false alarms caused by dense tobacco smoke, excessive dust and insect ingress. The BS 5839: Pt.6: 2004 Standard recommends that ionisation alarms should not be used in hallways and landings, where there is a risk of false alarms caused by cooking fumes.

It is a Department of Health recommendation, for properties with solid fuel heating systems to be fitted with a carbon monoxide detector.

If fitting a single Carbon Monoxide detector, this detector should be placed next to sleeping areas, where the alarm will be loud enough to wake up every person sleeping in the premises, as you are most vulnerable when sleeping.

If you are buying more than one Carbon Monoxide Detector, you should place one next to the sleeping areas, and the others next to potential sources within the premises.

A carbon monoxide detector should be at a horizontal distance of between 1m and 3m from the potential source.

A carbon monoxide Detector should be at least 150mm from the ceiling if fitted on a wall.

Gas Test and Report

Appliances and all aspects of the gas installation including associated pipe work, ducting and ventilation requirements should be checked to ensure that

they are completely safe for the incoming tenants. These works are to be completed by the current gas servicing contractor.

The Gas contractor shall carry out a service and safety check in compliance with current Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations.

A sticker is to be placed in a position where it can be seen without dismantling the boiler. Where possible the sticker should be affixed on the inner surface on a hinged access panel. The sticker will confirm the date of test. The contractor will be asked to recall if the sticker cannot be found at post inspection.

The contractor should provide a written landlord's CP12 safety / service record returned with the keys on completion of the work. Please note that the "tenants" copy must be returned to GYCH.

Any remedial work should be carried out to ensure the installation is fully operational. Any variations are to be emailed for approval. High cost repairs above £250 need to be discussed with the asset team before commencement to ensure economically viable.

Work that will obviously fail a safety check and is apparent, or likely to cause disruption for the new tenant, such as painted/damaged fire fronts or damaged flues needs to be carried out before the tenant moves in.

In properties where there is a primary heating boiler/central heating system, secondary gas fires/room heaters and solid fuel fires are to be removed.

Redundant gas supplies are to be capped off preferably in a concealed position. Fire places/ hearths are to be removed and the opening bricked up in block work with provision of adequate ventilation for the flue.

Block work should be plastered and the area made good including flooring/skirtings and vent covers etc. In certain circumstances it may be acceptable to leave fire surrounds/hearths in situ as a feature, providing the opening can be blocked up as described above. It is not acceptable to block up openings in studwork/plasterboard.

Dampness and Condensation

Where properties do not have any windows or mechanical ventilation in bathroom or kitchen, a humidity stat type extraction unit should be fitted wherever possible. Existing fans should be serviced as part of the re let works. The surveyor should always be aware of any inherent condensation or damp problem and should specify necessary works to rectify any problems as part of the re let works and also carry a 'Protimeter' to investigate any possible dampness.

The surveyor should check internally and externally for signs of rain water ingress, leaks and rising damp. All rainwater goods including hopper heads and down pipes as well as the roof/external envelope should be visually checked and water tested if suspect.

Mortar joints to brick work should be in good condition and special attention should be given to stained areas or where there is moss growth. Badly spalled brickwork and defective pointing should be reported back to day to day repairs for appropriate remedial works.

DPCs should be checked for bridging. Ideally the external ground level should be 150 mm or 2 brick courses below DPC level. If this is not the case, appropriate remedial works need to be identified and actioned with day to day repairs.

Air bricks/vents for sub floor ventilation/chimneys and roof spaces etc. should be free from obstructions, functional and suitable for providing sufficient air movement.

Evidence of water staining or salts/efflorescence to the surface of walls should be reported back at the earliest opportunity so that they can be tested and a damp survey carried out if necessary.

Damp/musty smells should be investigated and floor boards taken up to allow a visual inspection of sub floors especially in older properties. Any evidence of insect attack or rot/fungi to timbers should be reported back to the Void Surveyor.

Black spot mould is usually an indication that condensation is occurring on the affected surfaces. All mould spores should be removed with a damp cloth and the area sterilised with fungicidal wash.

Mouldy wallpaper should be removed and the area treated in the same way. Stubborn areas where it is difficult to remove mould or stains should be painted with stain block or oil-based eggshell/primer sealer after being treated.

Internal Decorations

In an effort to minimise the cost of decorating dwellings internally, the current GYCH decoration allowance scheme should be given to incoming tenants. Decoration will only be considered, if walls are badly nicotine stained or have been neglected for a considerable time.

External Works

Footpaths and drives are to be free of obstructions and tripping hazards.

Boundary walls should be structurally sound and free from major defects.

Overgrown gardens are to be strimmed and cleared of builder's rubble/glass and any other dangerous items.

Garden ponds are to be emptied and filled-in.

Manhole covers are to be checked and re-bedded/sealed if necessary.

Gullies and drains should be free from debris and free flowing.

Garden gates/posts should be fit for purpose (exterior grade timber) with functioning hinges and furniture such as Suffolk latches and tower bolts.

Existing damaged fence panels, should be reported back to day to day repairs and relevant responsive orders raised, posts/rails and boards should be repaired or removed/replaced in chain link which ever is the cheaper option. Major fencing or landscaping work will need prior authorisation.

External painting/roof line work does not fall under the void remit, relevant works should be noted and reported back to the asset team for further investigation. However fascias and soffits in very bad condition should be spliced/repared and any new timber undercoated and glossed to match existing, by the day to day repairs team.

Sheds, lean-to conservatories and porches erected by the previous occupants can be left provided they are in reasonable condition. The contractor is required to make a note of these items on the GYCH Property Data LM1 Form to record that they will not be maintained by GYCH.

External graffiti should be removed or painted over where appropriate. Problems with stubborn marks to pebble-dash or external wall insulation, stone chippings should be reported to day to day repairs for further action/completion.

Cleanliness

All rubbish, disused furniture and household effects are to be cleared from the property and loft and taken away. This is to include carpets and underlay. All kitchen units, sanitary ware, ceramic tiling, vinyl floors, woodwork (including doors and skirting boards) should be thoroughly cleaned.

The property and the garden must be free from rubbish. The property must be free from visible infestations of cockroaches, fleas, vermin, bedbugs, wasp's etc. All cookers/fridge's (where provided by GYCH) must be cleaned. All carpets (where provided by GYCH) must be vacuumed/swept clean, or steam cleaned where excessively dirty. All floors must be swept and washed of any dirt, dust or grime. All drains and gullies must be cleaned.

Cleaning

A builder's clean is not acceptable. Emphasis should be given to the final presentation of the void property and the prospective new tenant's first impression. Windows are not normally cleaned on the outside but will need to be, if very dirty. Externally, the front and back doors will need to be clean, and porches, pathways, patios and out buildings swept down and free of cobwebs/litter etc.

A systematic approach will need to be adopted to ensure each room is cleaned methodically starting in the upper floors and working from the top down. Cobwebs/dust is to be removed with a damp cloth from all surfaces including the tops of curtain pelmets/battens, doors/frames and ceilings etc. Floors are to be swept down and dust removed from behind radiators and pipe work etc. Foam backing and adhesive tape from carpets should be removed by scraper.

Internally windows and window frames/boards and hardware should be clean and free of streak marks. All electrical fittings should be grease/nicotine and finger print free; paint should be removed if necessary.

All woodwork including doors architraves and skirting are to be washed down with detergent; left free of grease marks, nicotine and graffiti. Floors are to be

washed down with detergent then with clean water to remove mop marks. Special attention should be given to floors where a finished floor covering is provided i.e. kitchens bathrooms and WC's. Floor coverings in these areas should be hygienic and scuff/paint free. Radiators and pipe work should also be cleaned thoroughly.

Kitchen units, work tops and tiled areas should be cleaned with water based solvents to dissolve grease and cooking fats. Grout between tiles should be clean and mould free. Sinks taps and drainers should be lime scale/streak free and shiny.

Baths basins shower trays and bathroom fittings are to be free of soap scum, grime and lime scale, rinsed with clean water then wiped down to remove streaks/marks and left shiny.

Odours should be treated with deodorising fluid and thoroughly disinfected. If odours persist floorboards/floor coverings may need to be removed and replaced. (The Void Contractor is expected to identify ingrained or persistent odours at the start of the void process)

Walls should be washed down where necessary and ready for redecoration.

Rubbish Clearance and Disposal of Waste

GYCH actively encourages and promotes the recycling of materials removed from void properties to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. It is suggested that the use of Hippo Bags are used to remove waste from site as 80% of this is recycled.

Household belongings/rubbish and furniture etc left by the previous tenant should be removed by a licensed waste disposal contractor. Lofts basements and outbuildings should be checked and left clear.

Items being removed must be photographed for recharging purposes and checking clearance costs.

Health and Safety (general guidelines)

Void properties are to be treated like a building site unless all work has been completed and the property is safe/ready to let. Members of the public, prospective tenants are/or members of GYCH staff should be refused entry to the property unless an appointment has been made and it is safe for them to view the property. Claims for personal injury from persons visiting the property or garden will be the responsibility of GYN while they have the keys.

The contractor's supervising officer and individuals on site are responsible for ensuring that personal protective equipment (PPE) is available and used when necessary. RCD protection should be used with power tools and or 110 volt transformers..

Lone working should be avoided especially when working at heights or with chemicals.

The Void Contractor should have an effective and up to date Health and Safety Policy made available to all employees and contractors. GYN should

ensure individuals visiting site should have the necessary H&S training. The contractor should have appropriate up to date personal liability insurance. Copies of certificates should be sent to GYCH when renewed.

Legionella

Void properties likely to have had water standing in pipes or tanks for longer than 14 days, are to be drained down in order to have the tanks emptied and taps/pipes flushed through including toilet cisterns. Tanks and cisterns can then be refilled providing there is no danger of freezing. Certain sheltered schemes are exempt but the Wardens will be able to clarify.

Asbestos

A full asbestos survey will be completed for the property while void, in accordance with the GYCH asbestos policy and procedures.

All contractors there employees and any sub contractors are to have completed and have been on a Asbestos awareness course (Un-Licensed Works with ACM's to HSG210). The preferred course of action when encountering materials suspected of containing asbestos is to leave in situ and report back to GYCH if there are any concerns. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to remove items for access or if damaged. Contractors are required to use a licensed contractor as recommended by GYCH for such works.

Non licensable asbestos containing materials (ACM) such as Artex and asbestos cement (crysotile) can be worked on, providing individuals concerned are competent and have had the necessary training and are provided with the correct tools and PPE. HSE guidelines should be followed at all times to eliminate the creation of dust, and procedures followed to greatly reduce risk to individuals. Method statements will need to be provided on work taking longer than one hour.

A suitably qualified Supervising Officer is to oversee work and to ensure it is carried out in accordance with the method statement.

Under no circumstances should the Void Contractor work on licensable materials. Specialist contractors will need to be brought in to survey the property and provide a written report if the proposed work involves asbestos insulation, coatings or asbestos insulated board (AIB). If there are any doubts regarding the identification of the material it may be necessary to arrange for a sample to be tested. If in doubt the material should be considered a licensable material.

Needles, Bodily Fluids etc

Properties including gardens and out buildings must be checked for the above before any work/rubbish clearance begins. Special attention/care should be given to concealed areas such as behind furniture/kitchen units, access

panels/stopcocks behind hot water cylinders and sofas (under/behind cushions) etc.

On finding any suspect material/fluids or sharps the Void Surveyor should be notified. If the property requires a clinical waste/needle stick clearance, it must be carried out by a licensed clinical waste disposal contractor employing trained operatives or ideally have the relevant trained operatives within the organisation to deal with this sort of event.

Void work should not resume until the property is completely clear. A Needle Report Form will need to be filled out by the Void Contractor and handed in with the keys. The Void Contractor will also need to sign the checklist stating that the property is safe. This confirms that the property has been checked thoroughly and is free from sharps/syringes and bodily fluids.

Values and Behaviours

GYCH is a value driven social business and expects the following from its staff and contractors. We care and believe in what we do and we do what we say. Our values are at the heart of what makes GYCH what it is now and what it will become in the future.

Keep it simple

Be professional and committed

Always show respect and understanding

Be enthusiastic and willing

Take responsibility

GYN will ensure its employees and contractors while carrying out work on behalf of GYCH adopts these values and behaviours. Furthermore contractors will be regarded as representatives of the association and will be required to be courteous, presentable and polite. Identification badges should be worn at all times.

The contractor will need to show consideration to neighbours regarding noise from construction work, and not work outside office hours if the work is likely to produce noise likely to disturb or become a nuisance for anyone. Vehicles should be parked considerately and radios will need to be kept at an acceptable volume. Shouting or swearing will not be tolerated. Rubbish/contractor waste and building materials should be concealed preferably within the property or out buildings.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Contractors are required to collect all post found at the void property and keep it in a safe place, including post delivered during the void period. Under no circumstances should post be opened or disposed off. Once the void is finished all post should be left neatly stacked in a prominent position

preferably on a kitchen work top. This will enable the Housing Officer to remove post relating to previous occupants and deal with it appropriately, when signing up the incoming tenant.

GYN staff are not to discuss the whereabouts or any personal information relating to former residents. Individuals, neighbours debt recovery or local authority officials are to be referred to GYCH head office if they require information on previous tenants.

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