

**COUNCIL HOUSE SERVICE (HRA)
LANDLORD PROPERTY SAFETY
AND COMPLIANCE POLICY**



Glossary of Terms

Allocations Policy: The rules the Council uses to decide who is offered a council home.

Accountability: Being responsible for actions and decisions. The Council must explain how it keeps your home safe.

Asbestos: A material used in older buildings that can be harmful if disturbed. The Council safely manages it where present.

Category 1 Hazard: A serious risk to health or safety (e.g. dangerous electrics, severe damp). These must be fixed quickly.

Communal Areas: Shared spaces such as hallways, stairs, lifts, and entrances used by multiple residents.

Compliance: Making sure homes meet all legal safety requirements.

Continuous Improvement: Regularly reviewing services to make them better over time.

Damp and Mould: Moisture problems in a home that can cause black mould, damage property, and affect health.

Decent Homes Standard: A government standard that ensures homes are safe, in good condition, warm, and have modern facilities.

Equality and Accessibility: Making sure services are fair and can be used by everyone, including people with disabilities or specific needs.

Governance: How the Council is organised and makes decisions to ensure services are safe and effective.

HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) A system used by the Council to assess risks in homes and decide what needs fixing.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA): The Council's housing budget used to manage and maintain its homes.

Inspection: A visit to your home to check its condition and safety.

Legionella / Water Safety: Bacteria that can grow in water systems. The Council manages this risk through regular checks.

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH): The organisation that checks housing providers (like the Council) are meeting required standards.

Statutory Requirements: Legal duties the Council must follow.

Stock Condition: Information about the state of homes (e.g. age, condition, repairs needed).

Vulnerability: When someone may need extra support (e.g. due to age, disability, or health).

Void (Void Property): A home that is empty between tenancies. It must be checked and made safe before a new tenant moves in.

1. Introduction

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all homes within its housing stock are safe, secure and free from hazards.

As a social housing landlord, the Council has a clear responsibility to protect residents, visitors and employees from risks arising from the condition of its properties. This includes meeting all statutory health and safety duties while delivering homes of an appropriate quality.

This policy sets out the Council's overarching approach to statutory compliance, property safety and housing quality. It explains how risks are identified, managed and monitored, and how the Council ensures it is meeting its legal and regulatory responsibilities.

2. Policy Principles

We are accountable to tenants for the safety of their homes and will be transparent in our performance. Therefore, the principles of this policy are:

- Safety first
- Risk-based decision making
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Continuous improvement

3. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear and consistent framework for landlord statutory compliance that supports safe, good-quality homes.

The Council will:

- Ensure all legal health and safety requirements are met
- Maintain homes that are safe and free from significant hazards
- Deliver a high-quality housing service
- Provide assurance to tenants, Members and regulators
- Use tenant feedback to shape and improve services
- Ensure transparency in how safety and quality are delivered

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Council-owned homes within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- All communal areas, shared spaces and relevant building services
- All compliance activities delivered by Council staff or contractors
- The Council retains overall responsibility for compliance, including where services are delivered by external providers.

5. Regulatory Context and Consumer Standards

This policy supports the Council's compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards, in particular the Safety and Quality Standard.

Through this policy, the Council ensures that:

- Homes are safe, well maintained and of appropriate quality
- Risks to residents' health and safety are proactively identified and managed
- Compliance is embedded in both day-to-day delivery and strategic decision-making

This policy provides assurance to tenants, Members and the Regulator that statutory compliance is effectively governed and consistently delivered.

6. Our Approach to Compliance

The Council takes a proactive, risk-based approach to compliance.

This includes:

- Understanding the condition of homes and assets
- Carrying out regular safety inspections and testing
- Acting promptly where risks are identified
- Maintaining accurate data and records
- Providing clear governance, oversight and accountability

The Council does not rely solely on minimum legal compliance but seeks to prevent risks before they impact residents.

7. Key Compliance Areas

The Council manages statutory compliance across key safety areas, including:

- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Fire safety
- Asbestos management
- Water safety (Legionella)
- Lift safety (where applicable)

The Council also manages wider risks affecting safety and quality, including:

- Damp and mould
- Excess cold and heating failure
- Structural and environmental hazards
- General housing condition

While this policy provides the overarching framework, detailed arrangements are set out in specialist policies and procedures.

8. Related Policies and Strategic Documents

This policy operates alongside the following documents, which provide detailed guidance for specific service areas:

- **Damp and Mould Policy** – prevention and management of damp and mould risks
- **Housing Repairs Policy** – responsive, planned and safety-related repairs
- **Voids Policy / Procedure** – ensuring homes are safe before re-letting
- **Asbestos Management Policy** – safe management of asbestos risks
- **HRA Land Strategy** – long-term asset management and investment planning
- **Aids and Adaptations Policy** – ensuring homes meet residents' needs

Together, these documents form a comprehensive framework for maintaining safe, compliant and good-quality homes.

9. Safe Homes, Hazards and Standards

The Council is committed to ensuring that all homes are safe, healthy and free from unacceptable risks to residents, visitors and others who may be affected by the condition of its housing stock. The Council will maintain homes that:

- Are safe and free from serious hazards
- Comply with all relevant statutory requirements
- Meet the Decent Homes Standard and any successor standards
- Support the health, wellbeing and safety of residents

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The Council will use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), established under the Housing Act 2004, as the primary framework for identifying, assessing and managing risks arising from housing conditions. The Council will:

- Assess properties for potential health and safety hazards using HHSRS principles and recognised good practice
- Identify, record and monitor hazards that could impact the health, safety or wellbeing of residents
- Take prompt action to remove, reduce or control identified risks
- Prioritise resources using a risk-based approach that reflects the severity of identified hazards
- Maintain appropriate records of inspections, assessments, remedial actions and outcomes

Management of Hazards

Where hazards are identified, the Council will:

- Take urgent action to remedy or mitigate any Category 1 Hazard
- Manage Category 2 Hazards in a proportionate and timely manner based on risk, vulnerability and potential impact
- Consider the needs of vulnerable residents when assessing risk and determining appropriate interventions
- Ensure that remedial works are appropriately prioritised, monitored and completed

The Council will assess and manage hazards including, but not limited to:

- Damp and mould growth
- Excess cold and inadequate heating
- Electrical hazards
- Fire safety risks
- Structural instability
- Falls on stairs, steps and level surfaces
- Water safety risks
- Domestic hygiene and sanitation issues
- Security and unauthorised access risks

Inspections and Monitoring

The Council will proactively identify hazards through:

- Responsive repairs and maintenance activity
- Stock condition surveys and property inspections
- Void property inspections
- Compliance inspections and safety testing programmes
- Reports from residents, staff, contractors and partner agencies
- Investigations of complaints, incidents and emerging risks

Information gathered through inspections and assessments will be used to inform maintenance programmes, investment decisions, asset management planning and service improvement activity.

Tenant Safety and Assurance

The Council will ensure that residents are provided with clear information about safety-related issues affecting their homes and will encourage residents to report hazards, defects and concerns promptly. Where serious risks are identified, the Council will take appropriate action to protect residents and maintain compliance with its legal and regulatory obligations.

10. Tenant Priorities and Lived Experience

The Council recognises that tenant experience is central to how safety and quality are judged in practice.

Engagement activity, including workshops and feedback sessions, has identified key tenant priorities:

- Homes that are safe and free from hazards
- Clear, consistent communication about repairs, compliance activity and safety checks
- Understanding what will happen during inspections and appointments
- Having a named contact or clear ownership of issues
- Services that are accessible and inclusive, including engagement opportunities that do not require significant travel
- Confidence that the Council listens and responds to tenant feedback

Tenants have also highlighted that technical language, and compliance terminology can be difficult to understand. The Council will therefore ensure that communication is clear, in plain English and supported with practical examples.

These priorities directly shape how the Council delivers compliance services and monitors performance.

11. Understanding Stock Condition

The Council will maintain accurate and up-to-date information on stock condition to support effective compliance, investment planning, and risk management.

12. Tenant Right to Information

The Council will ensure that information provided to tenants explains compliance activity in a clear and accessible way.

This includes:

- What compliance means in practice
- What safety checks will take place and how often
- What tenants should expect during visits (including duration and access requirements)
- What happens after inspections, including any follow-up work

13. Compliance at the Void Stage

The void stage is a key opportunity to ensure compliance. Before a property is re-let, the council will ensure properties are safe, compliant and meet lettable standards, in line with the Voids Policy and procedures

- Inspect for hazards and defects
- Complete required safety checks
- Address any significant risks
- Ensure the home meets safety and lettable standards

14. Roles and Responsibilities

The Council has clear accountability for compliance:

Designated Health and Safety Lead (strategic oversight)

Deputy Health and Safety Lead (operational delivery)

Head of Landlord Services

Director of Place (overall accountability)

Operational teams and contractors are responsible for delivery, record keeping and risk escalation.

Statutory compliance forms part of the Council's wider corporate health and safety framework.

15. Monitoring, Performance and Assurance

The Council operates a structured performance framework.

This includes:

- Monitoring of safety checks and inspections
- Tracking overdue actions and risks
- Governance reporting to senior management
- Where performance falls below expected levels, action will be taken to mitigate risk.
- The Council will seek external assurance, including third-party accreditation where appropriate.

16. Equality and Vulnerability

The Council will:

- Deliver services fairly and inclusively
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Provide accessible communication
- Consider vulnerability in all compliance activity

17. Training and Competence

All staff and contractors involved in compliance will:

- Be appropriately trained
- Demonstrate competence in their roles
- Receive ongoing development where required

18. Continuous Improvement

The Council will continuously improve compliance services through:

- Performance analysis
- Audit and assurance activity
- Tenant feedback
- Service reviews

19. Accessibility

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all tenants can access and understand this policy, regardless of disability, language, or communication needs.

We will provide the policy and related documents in alternative formats upon request, including but not limited to:

- Large print
- Braille
- Audio format
- Easy-read versions
- Translations into other languages

We will also make reasonable adjustments to support tenants with disabilities in understanding and engaging with tenancy-related processes, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Staff will be trained to identify and respond to accessibility needs and will offer support or signposting to appropriate services where necessary.

We will provide services fairly and make reasonable adjustments for those who need them (e.g., translation, accessible communication, support for vulnerable residents).

20. Monitoring and Review

Key performance indicators will be monitored and published:

- % safety checks completed
- overdue actions
- risk levels

21. Tenant Engagement

We are committed to providing high-quality housing services and welcome feedback to help us improve. If you would like to provide feedback about this policy, any policy, or the service you have received from us, please contact us online at: hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/housing or telephone **01455 238 141** and ask for the Service Development Team, or the department you want to speak to.