



We're Listening

Empty Homes Policy

Background

Providing good quality homes is important to us. We want our properties to be places where customers feel comfortable, can thrive, and their families can flourish.

Our Empty Homes Policy sets out the standards customers can expect when we let one of our homes. In December 2025, we began a review of this policy to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our customers. As part of this review, we sought feedback from customers who had recently moved into one of our homes.

Who did we speak to?

We sent a text message survey to customers who had recently moved into one of our homes. The survey asked how satisfied they were with their home, including questions about internal decoration and cleanliness. Customers were also asked to rate their satisfaction with their kitchen, bathroom, and garden.

We followed the survey with an invitation to attend a customer focus group. This session allowed us to explore topics in more detail, including cleanliness, decoration, flooring, and garden standards. We also discussed customers' experiences of viewing the property and their ability to connect to utility services.

In total, 57 customers completed the survey, and eight customers attended the focus group.

Customers told us

Cleanliness

Customers who completed the survey, or attended the focus group, were asked about the cleanliness of their home when they moved in.

- The majority of customers told us that they were very satisfied with the cleanliness of their new home.
- However, some feedback suggested that the standard of cleaning could have been better, particularly where plasterwork had taken place.

What we're doing

We'll be selecting a new cleaning partner – we'll be using the feedback to ensure we get a brilliant clean every time.

Decoration of home

We asked customers about the decoration of their new home and spoke with the focus group participants about paint packs and the decoration of properties. We explained that if a property is not in a good decorative condition, we may consider redecorating it in neutral colours or provide a paint pack.

- Overall, customers were happy with the standard of decoration in their new home.
- Customers who received a paint pack were happy with what they were offered.
- Members of the focus group discussed whether properties should be painted, particularly as the customer is likely to want to decorate to their own taste. Others thought it was good for homes to be decorated in neutral colours, as it gave them a blank canvas.

What we're doing

It's great to see that most customers are happy with the decoration in their new home.

We're also pleased that customers value the paint packs, and we will continue to provide them where a property's decoration is below an acceptable standard. Alternatively, we'll continue to use neutral colours when redecorating homes where required, as this gives customers the flexibility to personalise their space in their own time and style.

Condition of kitchen

The majority of customers were happy with the kitchen – although a small number did advise that they would have expected it to be in a better condition.

What we're doing

We ensure that our kitchens in our homes are of a good serviceable condition and that they meet the decent home standard. If it doesn't, we'll replace it before a new customer moves in.

Condition of bathroom

The majority of customers were satisfied with the condition of the bathroom.

Condition of gardens

Whilst the majority of customers were satisfied with the condition of their garden – some customers felt they were overgrown or contained litter, in some cases this related to a shared, communal garden.

What we're doing

We always aim to ensure that gardens are left in a manageable condition ready for a new customer. We'll also be ensuring any litter is picked up before they move in.

Utility suppliers

- Some of the customers we spoke to said they didn't know who their utility supplier was when they moved in.
- Several customers advised us that they didn't know where the property's water stop tap was.
- A customer with a solar panel told us they didn't know how it works, so it wasn't benefitting them.

What we're doing

We'll be ensuring every customer receives their meter readings and they know who their supplier is.

We'll be informing every new customer of the location of their stop tap.

We'll be happy to discuss any concerns customers have in relation to solar panels.

Customer handbook and gas & electricity safety certificates

- Several members of the focus group didn't remember getting a copy of the Customer Handbook and gas & electricity safety certificates.

What we're doing

We're putting new processes in place to ensure all customers receive the appropriate documentation. New customers will receive the Customer Handbook via email – but we can also provide a paper copy if this is what customers prefer.



Viewing of the property

Members of the focus group were asked about their experience of viewing their future home.

- Overall, customers felt the viewings went well and appointments were kept.
- Some customers said that they felt they were getting in the way of operatives working in the property.
- There was limited information available on when the property would be ready and timescales were not always discussed.

What we're doing

Wherever possible, we'll try to arrange viewings when the operatives aren't working on a home.

We're putting new processes in place to make sure customers get weekly contact – either by call or text message. We'll be making sure that any of the team have the information you need if you need to phone us.

Floor coverings

- Several members of the focus group told us how grateful they were that the floor coverings from previous customers had been left in the property.
- It was suggested that customers should be given the opportunity to keep any furniture that the previous customer has left.

What we're doing

We'll continue to leave floor coverings, as long as they're an acceptable standard. We'll also give them a clean, if needed.

We're exploring how we can make better use of the furniture that is left in homes, so it benefits customers, rather than being thrown away.

Thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone who took the time to share their feedback. We truly appreciate it.

Your voice matters

