### What do I have to do when I leave my property?

**When you leave your Council property, you have to hand it back to us in good condition – this will allow us to quickly re-let it to someone else. This handy checklist will ensure your property will meet the Empty Homes Standard**

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| 1. You have arranged for a Maintenance Officer to visit before you leave – they can advise you on the Empty Homes Standard, compensation for any improvements you have made to the property.
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| 1. All repairs required should have been reported to us before the notice period;
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| 1. The property should be decorated to a reasonable standard – if the wallpaper is badly torn, paintwork is badly scratched, if unusual colours or unusual materials have been used or if there is smoke discolouration, we may ask you to fix this before you leave. If this is not done, and we have to strip the paper and paint, or give the new tenant a decoration allowance, we will recharge you the cost; if you have fitted items such as wooden panelling or cladding, you may be asked to confirm these have been treated with fire – retardant paint or varnish.
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| 1. The property has been cleared of all furniture, rubbish and your own belongings and it has been cleaned. If the property does not meet our standard, we will have it cleaned and cleared and recharge you the cost. You may want to check:
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| * The kitchen cupboards are empty and shelves, doors and the outsides of units have been wiped down – especially those beside the cooker or hob.
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| * The kitchen sink, taps and draining board are clean
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| * The worktops and tiles have been wiped down
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| * You have removed all your appliances such as cookers and fridges – you can leave any washing machine pipes for the next tenant.
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| * The bathroom sink, bath, any shower\* and taps have been cleaned and wiped down
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| * The toilet has been cleaned and flushed
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| * Any bathroom cupboards have been cleared and wiped down
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| * The floors throughout the rest of the house have been swept, mopped or vacuumed
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| * Skirting boards have been dusted or wiped down
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| * The windows have been cleaned and windowsills wiped down
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| * You have cleared the loft and all cupboards and fitted wardrobes
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| * You have removed any light shades
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| * You have removed any fittings such as curtain tracks, poles and blinds\*;
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| * You have cleared any rubbish or belongings from any communal areas such as flat landings and any external sheds or garages provided with the property.
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| 1. You have left the keys for the window locks;
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| 1. There are no holes in walls – small holes left by drawing pins or picture hooks are acceptable;
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| 1. The internal doors are all in a reasonable condition - fair wear and tear accepted. If there are large holes or serious damage to the doors, the Maintenance Officer will ask you to replace them with doors of an acceptable standard at your own cost – if we have to replace them due to damage you have caused after you move out, we will charge you for this. We will not recharge you if we are replacing due to fair wear and tear;
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| 1. All the electrical switches, sockets and light fittings are in good repair and are in working order;
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| 1. There are no cracks or breaks in any glass in windows or doors;
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| 1. The skirting boards and door surrounds are in reasonable condition;
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| 1. There are no polystyrene tiles or polystyrene coving in the property – these and any other cladding of walls such as pine lining strips should be removed if varnished with non-fire retardant varnish;
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| **Outside:** |  |
| 1. If you have a garden:
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| * It has been cleared of rubbish
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| * The grass has been cut
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| * Any trees or bushes are cut back to a reasonable size
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| 1. If you are taking away your shed or garage, you must also take away any concrete base or hardstanding. If you wish to leave sheds and garages, this must be agreed with the Maintenance Officer and they must be in good condition. If not, we will remove them and recharge you the cost of this;
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| 1. If you are removing items such as satellite dishes, any damage to the property due to fitting or removal has been repaired;
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| 1. Make sure you have had all the wheeled bins emptied
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| **Other:** |  |
| 1. You have let the gas, electricity and telephone companies know you are leaving and given them your new address, and have cleared your accounts with them - make sure you take a final meter reading before you leave.
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| 1. You have paid your rent up to the date you hand your keys in – remember, even if you move out before the end of your 28 day notice period, you still have to pay the rent until the end of the tenancy – and you may not get Housing Benefit if you claim it if you are not living in the property – if in doubt, ask us for advice;
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| 1. You have cleared any other outstanding housing related charges such as repair charges or court expenses.
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| 1. Hand in all sets of keys on the day following your tenancy end date - this will normally be two or three keys for each lock, depending on the type of lock. Don’t forget shed or coal store keys.
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| 1. If you move out before the end of your tenancy and this is between October and March please let us know so that we can drain the water system to avoid burst pipes. If you do not let us know and damage occurs due to burst pipes, you will be recharged for this.
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| 1. Please also let us know your new address when you hand the keys in as we may need to contact you.
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\*You can leave any alterations or improvements you have been given permission to carry out, such as showers. You can also leave curtain tracks and poles, blinds and carpets you have agreed with the Maintenance Officer, or if they are in good condition. Remember, if we have not agreed that they can be left, or they do not meet our standard, we will remove them and recharge you the cost.

**If you are in any doubt about what is expected of you when you leave your home, please contact us for advice on 01349 886602**