

Stockton Rental Standard



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment and Housing

Big plans for our places and open spaces

Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council has a clear vision for the private rented housing sector in the Borough - **for all private rented properties to be of a high quality and be consistently well managed.**

We know the majority of landlords* are good landlords and that they are already meeting the standards set. However, there are a few who are either not aware of the requirements or have no intention of raising their property and management standards. The purpose of the Stockton Rental Standard is to provide a quick and easy guide detailing what is expected of all private sector landlords operating within the Borough, whilst helping to ensure privately rented properties are of a consistently high quality.

Additional regulations apply to Houses in Multiple Occupation and for further information on these landlords are advised to call the Private Sector Housing Team on 01642 527797.

**Throughout this document where a reference is made to a "landlord" it includes their agents or representatives.*

How to use the Stockton Rental Standard

The Stockton Rental Standard covers both property and management standards.

The use of the word '*must*' indicates a legal requirement while the word '*should*' indicates best practice. Where a landlord '*should*' do something and has not, they will need to justify their reasons for not doing it.

Landlords are encouraged to read the Stockton Rental Standard in conjunction with the **Stockton Rental Standard Guidance Document** and **Stockton Rental Standard Contact List**.

Property Standards

1. Landlords **must** ensure that their properties provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor. This includes, but is not limited to ensuring that the property is:
 - Free from damp and has adequate natural or mechanical ventilation where necessary to control moisture levels.
 - Provided with adequate thermal insulation and a suitable and effective means of space heating so that the dwelling space can be economically maintained at a reasonable temperature.
 - Free from hazards and provides a safe and secure home for tenants.
 2. Landlords **must** ensure that the property has adequate fire detection and where a gas or solid fuel appliance is present, adequate carbon monoxide detection.
 3. Landlords **must** ensure that the electrical installation is safe and that adequate checks are undertaken on each property (best practice would include obtaining an electrical safety certificate).
 4. Landlords **must** ensure any furnished properties comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988.
 5. Landlords *should* ensure all properties are provided in a clean decorative condition at the start of each tenancy.
 6. Landlords *should* ensure that all gardens are in a clean and tidy state at the start of each tenancy.
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Management Standards

7. Landlords **must** comply with all relevant housing legislation and regulations, including but not limited to the following:
 - An annual gas safety inspection **must** be carried out in properties with gas installations.
 - The property **must** have an Energy Performance Certificate; the rating should be “E” or better.
 - Any deposits taken **must** be protected under a Government approved scheme.
 - Correct legal procedures for possession **must** be followed in all cases.
8. Tenants *should* be provided with a written tenancy agreement and written inventory at the start of a new tenancy. Model forms are available from www.gov.uk by entering the words ‘model tenancy agreement’ into the search box.
9. Landlords **must** respond to any reported repairs in a timely and professional manner.
10. Landlords **must** give at least 24 hours written notice for access in all cases except where access is required in a genuine emergency.
11. Landlords *should* try to minimise void periods or when this is unavoidable are encouraged to contact the Private Sector Housing’s Empty Homes Team on 01642 527797 for advice and assistance.
12. Landlords *should* always act in a fair, reasonable and professional manner in their dealings with tenants. Landlords **must** not discriminate because of colour, ethnicity, disability, age, sex, or sexuality.
13. Landlords are encouraged to work in partnership with the Council and its partners (including for example the Police, Fire Brigade and UK Border Agency) on initiatives to ensure that properties and/or tenants do not cause a nuisance to neighbours and the local community. This includes:
 - Joining our **free** Landlords Accreditation Scheme (LAS).
 - Utilising the Councils **free** tenant referencing service (provided through the Landlord Liaison Scheme) before letting a property.
 - Working with us to address incidents of any illegal/criminal and anti-social behaviour, associated with your tenant/s and or property.
 - Working with the Council on future private sector improvement initiatives.
 - Seeking support from the Private Sector Housing Team if you have any queries about your obligations as a private landlord.

Finally, landlords are reminded that safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is everyone’s responsibility. Should you ever have any concerns regarding the health or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Councils First Contact Team for advice and support.

Should you have any queries regarding the Stockton Rental Standard please contact:

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Private Sector Housing Division
16 Church Road
Stockton-on-Tees
TS18 1TX

Telephone: 01642 527797

Fax: 01642 526541

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