

Leeds Code of Standards Review

Comparisons between the original content of the Code and the first draft of the version agreed by the working group who have been reviewing the Code.

Code Review Comparisons Document: A Commentary

This document has been written to assist people taking part in the consultation process to better understand the alterations to the Unipol Code that have been suggested.

All changes between the existing Code and the first draft of the revised Code (which is what people are being consulted about) are shown in red. All new or amended text is underlined. In addition, where any alterations to the existing Code have been proposed then a note to this effect appears in larger print (also in red).

Any wording in the comparisons document that is shaded indicates a proposal that the wording is to be deleted from the revised Code.

The most significant alterations between the two Codes are in respect of the sections relating to Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (although the actual requirements themselves are only likely to have an impact on properties with 5 to 6 occupants on 3 or more storeys) and Security. However, the Review Group which developed the revised Code has suggested that some of the proposed changes should be phased in over a period of time. Appendix 2 of the comparisons document highlights which aspects could be phased in and by when.

The Review Group also felt that consultees ought to be given the opportunity of suggesting whether some of the new requirements that are proposed in the revised Code should be optional and, as such, be included into a revised star rating system. Appendix 3 indicated which of the new clauses are regarded as being optional.

Finally, because of the complexities of the proposed changes to the fire safety requirements it was felt that a table setting out what would be required by property type might be helpful. This has been included as Appendix 1.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Owners will ensure that:

1.00

In the provision and letting of housing or associated services and in the letting of contracts for services, no person or group of persons applying will be treated less favourably than any other person or group of persons because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, appearance, marital status, sexual orientation or social status.

MARKETING PRIOR TO LETTING PROPERTY TO TENANTS

Owners will ensure that:

2.00

All property details are reported accurately without misrepresentation to prospective tenants;

2.01

All prospective tenants are granted an opportunity to view the property, having due regard to the rights of existing tenants;

2.02

Interested parties are provided with a copy of any contractual terms under which a property is offered, such terms to include details of any fees payable in addition to rent and any arrangements involving tenants' guarantors. Interested parties are, when specifically requested, permitted not less than 24 hours within which to seek independent advice regarding those contractual terms, during which time the property will not be re-marketed;

2.03

No monies for deposits or rent are demanded prior to the signing and exchange of any letting agreement;

2.04

A full set of agreement/s are issued to the tenant/s at the grant of the tenancy written in type size of not less than 8 point containing no contractual terms in conflict with any statutory or common law entitlement of the tenant or the terms of this Code;

A new clause 2.05 to be added which reads:

2.05

It may be useful for owners to make use of the relevant Unipol model tenancy agreement.

Rent Liability

Owners will ensure that:

2.05 (now 2.06)

Prospective tenants are issued with a clear statement of the rent due to be paid, including the dates, amounts and method of payments due to be made during the contract.

Water Charges

Owners will ensure that:

2.06 (now 2.07)

The owner clarifies whether s/he retains responsibility for payment of water charges, utility charges and Council Tax, or whether these charges fall to the tenants to pay and that this division of responsibility is accurately reflected in the terms of the letting agreement.

Utility Charges (Gas, Electricity, Telephone)

Owners will ensure that:

2.07 (now 2.08)

Where any service charges are levied by the owner, that such services and charges are properly specified and detailed in the letting contract;

2.08 (now 2.09)

Written receipts are issued, where requested by a tenant or future tenant, for all monies demanded whether for rent, deposit, utility or service charges. Where transactions are undertaken in cash a written receipt will always be provided by the Owner.

Identity and Address

Owners will ensure that:

2.09 (now 2.10)

The name and current registered address of the owner/agent is stated on the agreement together with the address and telephone numbers of any managing agent or person/s acting on behalf of the owner.

Anti Social Behaviour

Owners will ensure that:

2.10

Although landlords/agents have no legal responsibility for the behaviour of their tenants, they will use reasonable endeavours to tackle anti social behaviour and will take a measured response in the light of the circumstances, including ultimately Court proceedings. Separate guidance for landlords on dealing with such behaviour will be made available

Clause 2.10 (above) disappears from this Section of the Code and reappears under the new Section 6 entitled Community Relations.

State of Repair

Owners will ensure that:

2.11

Where a property is undergoing refurbishment and the building programme is running late and where this may result in the property not being ready for occupancy, the landlord/agent shall inform the future tenants at the earliest possibility of this likelihood and its consequences for them. *In the event that a property is not ready for occupation on the date that the tenancy begins then suitable alternative accommodation will be provided by the owner.*

The final sentence of clause 2.11 is to be removed, but forms part of the new clause 2.13

2.12

At the commencement of the tenancy or other date mutually agreed with the tenants all obligations on the part of the owner in regard to the repairs and property maintenance and improvements to the property have been fully discharged;

It is proposed to reverse the current clauses so that 2.12 becomes 2.11 and a revised 2.11 becomes 2.12

2.13

Any agreed pre-tenancy repairs or any intentions on the part of the owner to undertake improvements should be confirmed in writing.

Clause 2.13 above is replaced by a new 2.13 which reads:

2.13

In the event that following the commencement of a tenancy a property or room/s is/are not ready for occupation ("not ready" to be interpreted as where the property room/s cannot be used for their intended purpose) on the date that the tenancy begins then suitable alternative accommodation will be provided by the owner if required by the tenant in the event that this is not covered by an agreement and no rent will be payable for the property room/s that are unusable during that period. A kitchen that is unusable would count as a 50% rent reduction on the property rent as would a sole bathroom;

A new clause 2.14 has also been added which reads:

2.14

In the event that the tenant has agreed that the landlord can undertake the works, within an agreed timescale rendering the property room/s unoccupiable during the tenancy this must be agreed in writing and the absence of any such agreement, signed by both landlord and tenant would mean that consent had not been given.

Clauses relating to the marketing of property have been moved to this section of the Code and reworded slightly:

Marketing the Property

2.15

In marketing owners should use the phrase "Unipol Code" or "Unipol Code Owner" or "Member of the Unipol Code" to describe themselves, and "Unipol Code Property" or "Property meets the Unipol Code" to describe a property;

2.16

Owners may use the Unipol Code logo (either as a landlord/agent supplier or for the property/ies to which they relate) in promotional materials, and electronic versions of these logos can be supplied. It is not possible to use the Unipol logo which is for Unipol's exclusive use only.

DURING THE TENANCY

HMO Licensing

Owners will ensure that:

3.00

They have made application for an HMO licence for all of their licensable HMOs, and that those properties meet or will comply with licence conditions within agreed timescales, to ensure compliance with the national minimum standards, and also that all non-licensable properties meet with Leeds City Council's advisory standards which are generally available on www.leeds.gov.uk (type HMO into the search engine);

Overcrowding

3.01

Properties are not knowingly overcrowded;

The clause on overcrowding above (currently 4.11) is to be moved to this section:

Ensuring Possession

Owners will ensure that:

3.01 (Now 3.02)

All statutory notices seeking possession are served on incumbent tenants in order to mitigate any delay and hardship caused to the owner and incoming tenants that may be caused where existing tenants refuse to give up possession at the end of their contractual tenancy.

Promoting the Code of Standards

Owners will ensure that:

3.02

A copy of the Code of Standards is provided to all tenants.

The above clause (3.02) is to be replaced with a new clause and title which reads:

Informing Tenants of the Unipol Code

3.03

A copy of the Unipol Code will be made available to all tenants. This can be done through a link on the owners' website, by giving the tenant information about where the Code is on Unipol's website or a paper copy of the Code can be given to the tenant/s. Any web links must display the Unipol Code logo in a clear manner. Unipol will make available free of charge to Code members: an A5 leaflet informing tenants where the Code is displayed on Unipol's website and copies of the full Code for each tenant;

First Refusal

Owners will ensure that:

3.03 (now 3.04)

(Subject to reasonable performance by tenants of their obligations under the terms of the preceding tenancy) the incumbent tenant/s are offered first refusal for any subsequent letting of property.

Access

Owners will ensure that:

3.04 (now 3.05)

Where access is required for routine inspection/s, the tenants receive notification of the date time and purpose of the visit not less than 24 hours in advance, save in circumstances where issuance of such notice is impractical and that tenant privacy and entitlement to freedom from unnecessary intrusion is respected;

3.05 (now 3.06)

Business is pursued by him/her in a professional, courteous and diligent manner at all times.

Repairs and Maintenance

Owners will ensure that:

3.06 (now 3.07)

All properties are maintained in a satisfactory state of repair and in full compliance with the provisions of section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1984.

3.07 (now 3.08)

Under normal circumstances the following repairs completion performance standards should be achieved:-

Priority One – Emergency Repairs: Any repairs required in order to avoid a danger to health, risk to the safety and security of residents or serious damage to buildings or residents' belongings. Within 24 hours of report of defect.

Priority Two – Urgent Repairs: Repairs to defects which materially affect the comfort or convenience of the residents. Within five working days of report of the defect.

Priority Three – Non Urgent day-to-day repairs: Reactive repairs not falling within the above categories. Within 28 days of report of defect.

Priority Three has been amended slightly to read:

Priority Three – Non Urgent day-to-day repairs: Reactive repairs not falling within the above categories. Within 28 days of report of defect or by arrangements with the occupiers after that time

3.08 (now 3.09)

Tenants are provided with a point of contact in case of emergencies.

3.09 (now 3.10)

Planned Programmes of Repair/Improvement and Cyclical Repairs Programmes. Maintenance and Servicing tasks which can be carried out in a planned and cyclical manner such as gas appliance servicing, gutter and window cleaning, exterior and interior painting are carried out with due regard to the convenience of occupants;

3.10 (now 3.11)

Where a dispute occurs between the owner and tenant/s as to when a repair has been reported then the date on which the repair was reported to the owner in writing shall be the accepted date;

3.11 (now 3.12)

Where reasonable and practical, to provide notification to occupants prior to attendance by contractors to undertake repairs;

3.12 (now 3.13)

That contractors and trades persons will remove all redundant components and debris from site on completion of works in a reasonable time and will behave in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

Furniture and Storage Space

Owners will ensure that:

3.13 (now 3.14)

All study bedrooms contain a bed, adequate clothes storage space, a desk, chair and curtains which are properly hung;

3.14 (now 3.15)

All furnishings and furniture are clean and in reasonable condition at the commencement of the tenancy and comply, as appropriate, with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations.

Kitchen Facilities

Owners will ensure that:

3.15 (now 3.16)

Kitchens should meet with Leeds City Council's advisory standards, especially in respect of the provision of cooking facilities, sinks, electrical sockets, worktops and cupboards. Full details are available from LCC's website.

Toilet & Personal Washing Facilities

Owners will ensure that:

3.16 (now 3.17)

Where amenities are shared an adequate number of suitably located baths and/or showers and wash hand basins are provided with constant hot and cold running water supplies and in a ratio of amenities to occupants that does not exceed 1:5

3.17 (now 3.18)

Where amenities are shared an adequate number of suitably located WC's are provided and in a ratio of amenities to occupants that does not exceed 1:5. Where a WC is located in a separate compartment then a wash hand basin with hot and cold running water should also be provided within the same compartment.

New clauses 3.19 to 3.21 have been added which read:

3.19

Where there are up to four occupants sharing facilities, the WC may be located within the bathroom. Where five or more occupants are sharing, a WC must be located separate from the bathroom for every five occupants, however where a WC located within an additional bathroom it is satisfactory as a 'separate WC' provided that the bathroom is shared by no more than four people

Occupiers	Shared WCs	Shared Baths or Showers
Up to 4	1	1
5	1	1
6	2	2
7	2	2
8	2	2
9	2	2
10	2	2
11	3	3
12	3	3
13	3	3
14	3	3
15	3	3

3.20

Where a WC is located in a separate compartment then a wash hand basin with hot and cold running water should also be provided within the same compartment;

3.21

Properties should meet this standard for sections 3.17, 3.18, 3.19 and 3.20 for all tenancies commencing after 1st August 2010;

3.18 (now 3.22)

Where one or more showers are provided, they will be fitted with a waterproof surround and a screen (which could be a curtain). Where a shower is provided a suitable electrically operated extractor fan shall be fitted in accordance with Building Regulations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Owner will ensure that:

4.00

The property and boundary is maintained, as reasonably practicable, free of any avoidable or unnecessary hazards as defined in the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (see schedule attached to this Code). Particular attention should be paid to hazards such as excess cold, damp and mould, noise, falls on stairs or between levels, fire and entry by intruders. A Landlord's Guide on how to undertake a risk assessment is downloadable from Leeds City Council's website for landlords who wish to conduct risk assessments of their own properties.

Gas Appliances and Supply

Owners will ensure that:

4.01

All means of use and supply of mains gas and alterations and repairs to gas installations shall comply with the current Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations;

4.02

All gas appliances will be serviced annually by a **CORGI registered engineer**. Verification of the gas safety check will be provided to all new tenants at the start of the tenancy, and copies of the gas safety check record for any subsequent safety checks undertaken during the period of the tenancy will be supplied to tenants within 28 days of that safety check being conducted;

4.03

All repairs to gas supply pipe work and appliances will be carried out by registered **Confederation of Registered Gas Installation (CORGI) fitters**;

Clauses 4.02 and 4.03 have been amended slightly by replacing references to CORGI with Gas Safe Register.

A new Clause 4.04 has been added which reads:

4.04

Where a working gas fire is situated in a bedroom, a carbon monoxide (CO) detector conforming to BSEN50291 should be fitted in that bedroom;

4.04 (now 4.05)

Clear written instructions for the safe use of all central heating and hot water systems will be given.

Liquefied Gas/Paraffin Heaters and Appliances.

Owners will ensure that:

4.05

No form of bottled gas or paraffin heaters will be provided by the owner as a heating source.

Clause 4.05 above has been slightly modified to read:

4.06

No form of bottled gas or paraffin heaters will be provided by the owner or tenants as a heating source.

Electrical Installations and Appliances.

Owners will ensure that:

4.06

All electrical installations provided by the owner are certified as safe by a professionally competent electrician in accordance with the current relevant Electrical Regulations. A document of verification shall be obtained every five years showing the electrical wiring of properties is in a safe and satisfactory condition

Clause 4.06 has been amended to read:

4.07

All electrical installations provided by the owner are certified as safe by a professionally competent electrician, preferably one that is registered with NICEIC – A 'competent person' is a firm that has been approved by a government-approved scheme as sufficiently competent to self-certify that its work complies with the Building Regulations Part P (Design and Installation of Electrical Installations) and is designed, installed, inspected and tested to the standard required by BS7671 - in accordance with the current relevant Electrical Regulations. A document of verification shall be obtained every five years showing the electrical wiring of properties is in a safe and satisfactory condition

4.07 (now 4.08)

All repairs and improvements in electrical installations comply with the current Institute of Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations;

4.08 (now 4.09)

All components used in electrical wiring installations and repairs comply with the International Standard and all appliances will be installed in accordance with Manufacturers' instructions;

4.09 (now 4.10)

All electrical appliances provided by the owner are functioning in accordance with manufacturers' operational limits and are capable of being operated in a safe manner. Appliances are regularly visually inspected for wear and tear and any defects remedied;

Two new clauses have been added which read:

4.11

Residual current device (RCD) protection should be provided to all consumer units by August 1st 2010;

4.12

An emergency light should be installed next to any consumer unit by August 1st 2010

4.10 (now 4.13)

Instructions for the safe use of all electrical appliances (including cookers, space and water heaters, fridges and freezers) will be given on request.

Overcrowding

Owners will ensure that

4.11

Properties are not knowingly overcrowded.

The sub-heading on overcrowding has been moved to section 3

Energy Efficiency

Owners will ensure that:

4.12 (now 4.14)

Central heating (or electrical heating) is provided. The central heating system should be adequate, controllable and programmable

4.13 (now 4.15)

An electrical panel heater in a building designed to comply with Part L of the Building Regulations 2002 as a minimum, is fitted with an on/off switch and 24 hour timer or a timed booster in a system that allows a preset period of use will be satisfactory.

4.14

All properties are provided with a minimum level of energy efficiency measures to include hot water tank, where present, pipe lagging and adequate insulation to roof void areas..

4.15

Energy efficiency improvements are incorporated, where practical, into refurbishment schemes and such schemes should comply with current Building Regulations where applicable . Leeds City Council's Energy Efficiency Unit (telephone freephone 0800 512 012) is able to provide advice on how these might be achieved.

4.16

Tenants are given advice, upon request, on how best to heat their accommodation and use hot water in an energy efficient way using the facilities provided.

Clauses 4.14 – 4.16 have been incorporated into a new energy efficiency section (see 5.04-5.06)

Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

Owners will ensure that

4.17

All properties are provided with Automatic Fire Detection which meets with Leeds City Council's current advisory Design Principles for Fire Safety Schemes for Rented Houses for properties of their type. The minimum requirements of which is the provision of a mains interlinked fire detection system throughout the common areas, which should include a heat detector in the kitchen.

Clause 4.17 has been replaced with a more comprehensive explanation of what sort of fire detection mechanisms and procedures are required. However, although this means that the section on Fire Detection and Alarm Systems has been expanded in terms of the number of clauses it contains, the standards required are only significantly different in respect of properties consisting of three to four storeys and with up to 6 occupants.

Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (requirements that appear in italics will be complied with by August 1st 2012)

4.16 Small Shared Property - Up to Two Storeys & Up to 6 Occupants

Means of Escape - 30 min fire door/s required in the kitchen (with an effective overhead hydraulic self closer and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals);

Detection - A minimum requirement of LD3 Grade D (smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space including stairwells, corridors and lobbies) that form part of the escape route, the lounge and any cellar and interlinked heat detection in the kitchen.

4.17 Medium Sized Shared Property - Three to Four Storeys, Up to 6 Occupants

Means of Escape – Up to 4 occupants: 30 min fire door/s required in the kitchen (with an effective overhead hydraulic self closer and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals), and in the living room;

Means of Escape – 5 to 6 occupants: A 30 minute protected route of escape with FD30 (fire) doors to all bedrooms opening onto the route of escape plus FD30S (fire and smoke) doors to kitchen and living room (with an effective overhead hydraulic self closer and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals);

Detection - Up to 4 occupants: A minimum requirement of LD3 Grade D AFD system (smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space including stairwells, corridors and lobbies) that form part of the escape route, the lounge and any cellar and interlinked heat detection in the kitchen;

Detection – 5 to 6 occupants: A minimum requirement of LD2 Grade D AFD system (smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space including stairwells, corridors and lobbies that form part of the escape route, all bedrooms and the lounge and any cellar) and interlinked heat detection in the kitchen, monitored by a control panel.

4.18 Large Shared House - Three to Four Storeys, 7+ Occupants

Means of Escape - A 30 minute protected route of escape with FD30S (fire and smoke) doors with self closing devices to all risk rooms opening onto the route of escape. Travel distance must not be excessive.

Detection - A minimum requirement of LD2 Grade C AFD system (smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space including stairwells, corridors and lobbies that form part of the escape route, all bedrooms and the lounge and any cellar) and interlinked heat detection in the kitchen, monitored by a control panel.

4.19

All properties are provided as a minimum with fire safety measures that meet with Sections 4.16, 4.17 and 4.18 above, for other property types not covered above Leeds City Council's current advisory Fire Safety Principles for properties of their type (individually determined by LCC for properties not covered by those principles) will apply. The minimum requirements of which is the provision of a mains interlinked fire detection system throughout the common areas, which should include a heat detector in the kitchen (an enhanced LD3 Grade D system);

4.20

All properties with cellars should have a smoke detector fitted in the cellar (or a heat detector if already installed in an unoccupied cellar), linked into the fire detection system. A closely fitting FD30S (fire and smoke) door with an effective overhead hydraulic self closer and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals should be fitted at the top of the cellar stairs if the cellar opens on to the means of escape. For low risk two storey properties the cellar door could be a closely fitting timber or panelled door of solid construction with overhead hydraulic self closer;

4.18 (now 4.21)

Each kitchen will be fitted with a fire blanket, situated a sufficient distance away from the cooker so as to be safely removed from its housing in the event of a fire on the cooker.

4.19

All exit routes within a property, such as hallways, landings and staircases (so far as they are under the control of the owner and agent, as far as reasonably practical), will be maintained safe, unobstructed and free of fixtures and fittings to enable evacuation of the property in the event of fire;

Clause 4.19 has been amended to read:

4.22

All exit routes within a property, such as hallways, landings and staircases (so far as they are under the control of the owner/agent and as far as reasonably practical), will be maintained safe, unobstructed and free of fixtures and fittings to enable evacuation of the property in the event of fire.

The primary escape route should not pass through bedrooms or kitchens. If there is no alternative to this then escape windows should be fitted on ground floor, first floor and basement.

Escape windows and doors should be capable of being opened from the inside of the property without the use of a key. This includes bedroom doors from the inside of the room.

4.20

Each kitchen shall be provided with quality assured, closely fitting half hour fire doors fitted with an effective overhead hydraulic self closer. Each kitchen door shall be fitted with intumescent strips and/or cold seal smoke seals.

Clause 4.20 has been deleted as the same requirements appear in the revised clauses.

Two new clauses have been added which read:

4.23

Owners should undertake a risk assessment to determine whether emergency lighting should be installed on escape routes but normally this will not be required. Emergency lighting would be required if the escape route is long and complex or where there is no effective borrowed light;

4.24

Owners should ensure that Fire Alarm Systems and equipment are properly checked and maintained by a competent person annually as a minimum.

Security Measures

Owners will ensure that:

4.21

External doors are of solid core timber or metal framed UPVC construction, or specialist laminated security doors in which all glazing is either wired or toughened laminated glass. The door frames should be strong and well secured to the jambs

Clause 4.21 has been slightly modified to read:

4.25

External doors are of solid core timber, metal framed UPVC construction or specialist security doors. All glazing in doors must be either wired or laminated glass. The door frames should be strong and well secured to the jambs. If you replace a door it is recommended to replace the full door set and ensure that this meets with BS: PAS24-1 'doors of enhanced security' – as a minimum;

4.22

In HMOs with five or more tenants, the external doors should be fitted with a five lever mortise deadlock conforming to BS EN 12209 Security Grade 3 (minimum) and cylinder conforming to BS EN 1303 Security Grade 3 (minimum), allowing escape from the building without use of a key.

In HMOs with three or four tenants, by January 1st 2009 all deadlocks on final exit doors should be operated by a thumb turn release fitted with a lock case conforming to BS EN 12209 Security Grade 3 (minimum) and cylinder conforming to BS EN 1303 Security Grade 3 (minimum).

Clause 4.22 has been revised to read:

4.26

All external doors should be fitted with a mortise lock with internal thumb turn allowing escape from the building without the use of a key, either using a five lever mortise lock conforming to BS:3621 or a euro profile mortise lock with cylinder. In the case of double glazed doors alternative locking methods may be acceptable on a case by case basis when drawn to the attention of Unipol. All door sets conforming to BS: PAS24-1 are designed with an acceptable level of lock security. If a door set of this type requires replacement locks, ensure these are replaced with locks conforming to BS EN 1303 Security Grade 3 (minimum).

A new clause has been added which reads:

4.27

All existing letter boxes are fitted with a device on the inside to prevent thieves from putting their hands or gadgets through the letterbox and trying the latches from the inside. These should be fitted by 1st August 2010. New door sets meeting BS: PAS24-1 are designed with acceptable letter box restriction;

4.23

Ground floor and upper storey windows accessible from ground levels are of sound and secure construction. Where key operated locks are fitted owners should ensure that tenants are provided with keys;

Clause 4.23 has been revised to read:

4.28

Ground floor and upper storey windows accessible from ground level or over a roof are of sound and secure construction and if replaced should meet BS:7950 'windows of enhanced security' and on ground floor and accessible windows, locks should be fitted. Consideration should be given to using laminated glass. Where key operated locks are fitted owners should ensure that tenants are provided with keys. All escape windows/doors will allow escape from the building without the use of a key;

4.24

Security grilles on exit doors should allow escape from the building without the use of a key conforming with the timescales relating to exit doors on properties as in 4.22. Security grilles on doors should be used responsibly and in consideration of fire safety, appearance and the need for their use at all.

Security grilles on ground floor windows should only be fitted internally and, where they form part of the protected route of escape from fire, must be easily removable (via a foot plate or other device);

Clause 4.24 has been revised to read:

4.29

Security grilles are not necessary if good quality doors and windows are fitted and their use is strongly discouraged. Any security grilles fitted to exit doors must allow escape from the building without the use of a key. Security grilles on ground floor windows should only be fitted internally and, where they form part of the protected route of escape from fire, must be easily removable. If security grilles are newly fitted it is recommended that they meet the LPS1175 SR1 standard.

Three new clauses have been added which read:

4.30

Tenants are provided with crime prevention information on moving in. Information for landlords for their tenants is available from the Unipol Office. Landlords should advise tenants on the correct operation of all security measures provided and check from time to time that this advice is being conformed with.

4.31

Landlords are required to conduct a visit to their properties at least once every 3 months;

4.32

It is recommended that a notice board is fixed solidly to a wall within a communal area of the property for the display of relevant information;

4.25

Where burglar alarms are fitted they should be fitted with an automatic cut out device that prevents the alarm from ringing for more than 20 minutes. Equipment which has proved to be unreliable or ineffective should be replaced. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least 2 key alarm holders should be notified in writing to Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Services.

Clause 4.25 has been slightly amended to read:

4.33

Where burglar alarms are fitted the alarm should be prevented from ringing for more than 20 minutes. Equipment which has proved to be unreliable or ineffective should be replaced. It is recommended that burglar alarms are fitted by NACOSS or SSAIB approved contractors;

4.26

Contractors and tenants must be supplied with the code numbers of alarms, *especially when the property is un-tenanted or during vacation periods.*

Clause 4.26 has been slightly amended by removing the shaded wording and is to be renumbered 4.34

4.27

Operating instructions are displayed on, or adjacent to the control equipment, and given to all persons who need to operate them.

Clause 4.27 has been deleted

4.28

Hedges around external doors and windows are kept trimmed low wherever practical to avoid providing screening for burglars.

Clause 4.28 has been slightly amended to read:

4.35

Hedges around external doors and windows are best kept trimmed low (usually no higher than 1m) wherever practical to avoid providing screening for burglars. Plants and shrubs shall not be allowed to obstruct the pavements or other public areas surrounding the property;

Two new clauses have been added which read:

4.36

Dusk to dawn low energy white lighting, evenly spread covering high risk areas (areas around ground floor windows or windows accessible from roofs), is recommended. This should not cause light pollution, annoy neighbours or blind occupiers from identifying callers;

4.37

All drainpipes close to a vulnerable upper floor window should be painted with anti-climb paint above 2 metres with associated notice. This should be done by July 2010.

Hygiene

Owners will ensure that:

4.29 (now 4.38)

All facilities for the storage, preparation and cooking of food will be capable of cleansing and being maintained in a clean and hygienic state by the occupants;

4.30 (now 4.39)

All properties will be provided with an efficient and serviceable vacuum cleaner at the commencement of the tenancy;

4.31 (now 4.40)

All floor coverings in kitchens, bathrooms and WC's are capable of being clean with suitable domestic disinfectant products.

Communal Areas

Owners will ensure that:

4.32 (now 4.41)

Tenants are made aware of who is responsible for the cleaning of communal areas, including common staircases and landings outside of the dwelling, and that these are kept free from rubbish and any obstruction;

4.33 (now 4.42)

A handrail should be fitted on all staircases, internal and external, which consist of three or more steps.

Lighting and Ventilation

Owners will ensure that:

4.34 (now 4.43)

All properties are provided with adequate lighting, particularly the communal areas, especially on internal staircases. Properties must also be sufficiently well ventilated.

The Environment

Owners will ensure that

This section of the Code had been re-titled The Environment and Sustainability and has been re-written to read:

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)

5.00

A copy of the relevant EPC will be made available for prospective tenants to view;

Electrical Appliances

5.01

When renewing electrical appliances, particularly white goods, only high energy efficient appliances (grade A and B) should be chosen as replacements;

Low Energy Lighting

5.02

Wherever possible low energy bulbs are either provided in properties or tenants are encouraged to supply their own low energy light bulbs in compatible fittings;

Thermostatic Radiator Valves

5.03

Any new wet central heating system installed will include thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) on all radiators (except one). Note: Although outside of the timescale of this Code, in a future code it is intended that TRVs will be fitted to all existing systems by August 2013;

Energy Efficiency

5.04

All properties are provided with a minimum level of energy efficiency measures to include hot water tank and pipe lagging and adequate insulation to roof void areas where appropriate;

5.05

Energy efficiency improvements are incorporated, where practical, into refurbishment schemes and such schemes should comply with current Building Regulations where applicable. Landlords are advised to concentrate on improving roof insulation (ideally 250mm depth if using conventional materials) and wall insulation with cavity wall insulation or internal insulation (dry lining). Replacing older boilers with condensing type boilers can also be effective. Leeds City Council's 'fuelsavers' team (telephone 0113 395 7159) is able to provide advice on how these might be achieved;

5.06

Tenants are given advice, upon request, on how best to heat their accommodation and use hot water in an energy efficient way using the facilities provided;

Recycling

5.07

Owners will ensure that they inform their tenants of the need for proper refuse management and any available recycling scheme operating in their area. A separate leaflet for tenants is available on request from Unipol.

Another new Section entitled Community Relations has also been added, some clauses of which are the same as the previous Code in respect of requirements for gardens. The Section reads:

Community Relations

Owner will ensure that:

Anti Social Behaviour

6.00

In the event of any anti social behaviour (defined as "behaviour likely to cause alarm, harassment, inconvenience or distress to members of the public not of the same household as the perpetrator") by tenants and/or visitors, landlords will use reasonable endeavours to intervene with a view to ending that behaviour and ensure that the occupants are treating the property and its environs in a tenant-like manner. It is accepted that not all intervention will be successful and, in this case assistance will be requested from a number of statutory and non statutory agencies who may be able to intervene. Landlords will receive from Unipol a manual detailing: the services and agencies available to them, including help from the educational establishments and Unipol in dealing with problem tenants. For more information, visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk/anti-socialbehaviour;

6.01

In respect of matters that can be regarded as anti-social behaviour neighbouring residents and representative organisations shall have access to and be eligible to use the complaints procedure. A neighbour shall be defined as a resident living within 400 metres of the property.

4.35

All properties will be provided with refuse disposal facilities sufficient for the number of occupants as defined by Leeds City Council Cleansing Department.

4.36

Owners will ensure that they inform their tenants of the need for proper refuse management and recycling. A separate leaflet for tenants is available on request

Both of these clauses (4.35 and 4.36) have been deleted

Gardens and Yards

4.37 (now 6.02)

All boundary walls will be maintained stable and in good repair;

4.38 (now 6.03)

Where a garden exists, the path to and from the external door(s) to the house will be kept in good repair and free from obstruction;

4.39

Where a garden or paved area exists this shall be kept in good order and free of waste and litter, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Owners, so far as is reasonably practicable, shall have responsibility to enforce a requirement that their tenants keep the garden free of litter;

This clause (4.39) has been amended to read:

6.04

Where a garden or paved area exists this shall be kept in good order and free of waste and litter, so far as is reasonably practicable. The landlord, so far as is reasonably practicable, shall have responsibility to enforce a requirement that their tenants keep the garden free of litter and the garden area should not be used to store old or unwanted furniture or fittings more than 14 working days prior to its removal;

Five new clauses have been added which read:

6.05

Where a front garden already exists, it is not converted, in accordance with Local Authority recommendations and planning policies, into a hard standing area and, where possible where a garden already exists this shall be retained as a soft planted area (this includes low maintenance gravelling with planting);

6.06

Where a property has its own external bins, the house number and street initials of the property should be marked clearly on these. Where possible, wheelie bins should be located at the rear of the property and tenants should be informed of the need to return them to that location as soon as possible after they have been emptied. The guideline currently set out by Leeds City Council for this is that the bins should be put out by 7am on the day of collection. For more information visit www.leeds.gov.uk

6.07

The landlord will co-operate fully with an annual garden check to be undertaken by Unipol and/or its agents as part of their obligations under this Code to ensure compliance with matters relating to the external environment of the property, its care, tidiness and adherence to security requirements. Landlords will receive at least two week's notification of when the survey is to be conducted and will rectify any aspects of non-compliance that is identified to them within 10 working days of such notification;

6.08

If they make use of 'To Let' boards when advertising their properties then they should comply fully with Leeds City Council's Code relating to these boards;

6.09

Any alterations to the physical appearance of properties should be made in accordance with any existing Neighbourhood Design Statement.

4.40

Where a garden already exists this shall be retained as a soft planted are (this includes low maintenance gravelling with planting), although paths to the property may be added.

Plants and shrubs shall be properly maintained and shall not be allowed to obstruct the pavements or other public areas surrounding the property;

4.41

In respect of sections 4.37 to 4.40, neighbouring residents shall have access to and be eligible to use the complaints procedure under 7.00 and 7.01 and the same conditions shall apply, as would to a tenant as outlined in 7.00. A neighbour shall be defined as a resident within the same or adjacent street within 200 metres of the property.

Clauses 4.40 and 4.41 have been incorporated into other sections of the Code.

AT THE END OF THE TENANCY

DEPOSITS

Owners will ensure that:

5.00 (now 7.00)

Deposits are administered efficiently and reasonably by the owner or nominee and are not withheld for any purpose other than for which they were levied;

5.01 (now 7.01)

Tenants are issued with clear written guidelines regarding the standard of cleaning and other arrangements for bringing the tenancy to an end so as to avoid misunderstandings regarding the standard of cleanliness and condition of the property expected at the end of the tenancy;

5.02

All deposits (or balances on deposits) be returned to former tenants within 6 weeks of the end of the tenancy or, if the tenancy commenced after the introduction of the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme, then in accordance with those requirements;

5.03

Where monies from a deposit have been retained to off set owners reasonably incurred costs, such balances that are remaining shall be returned within the time scales given in paragraph 5.02 above, together with a written statement of account providing reasonable details of any and all deductions to the former tenant.

Clauses 5.02 and 5.03 have been revised and amended to read:

7.02

All deposits (or balances on deposits) will be returned to former tenants within 28 days of the end of the tenancy or, if the deposit is protected by the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme, then in accordance with those requirements. In the event that a deposit is not to be returned within 28 days then the tenant will be sent reasons for that delay, in writing within 28 days together with a statement of account providing reasonable details of any and all deductions to the former tenant.

OTHER PROVISIONS

Management of Disputes

Owners will ensure that

6.00 (now 8.00)

Where disputes between owners and tenants occur, reasonableness and promptness in dealing with the issues by both parties is the key to the amicable and effective resolution of problems. Owners therefore undertake to:

6.01 (now 8.01)

Respond reasonably and promptly to tenants or tenant representatives in regard to any complaints or difficulties raised by tenants;

6.02 (now 8.02)

Make written response to correspondence from tenants or their chosen representative within three weeks;

6.03 (now 8.03)

Ensure that all settlements and agreements reached are honoured within three weeks of being agreed;

6.04 (now 8.04)

Maintain courteous professional relations with tenants during any dispute.

Marketing Your Property

Owners will ensure that

6.05

When marketing owners should use the phrase “Unipol Code of Standards” or “Unipol Code of Standards Owner” or “Member of the Unipol Code of Standards” to describe themselves, and “Unipol Code of Standards Property” or “Property meets the Unipol Code of Standards” to describe a property. Where a member is also a member of Leeds City Council LLAS by virtue of their Unipol Code of Standards membership then any marketing should include a similar phrase to the effect that the property also meets the standards of the LLAS.

6.06

Owners may use the Unipol Code of Standards ‘rosette’ logo and ‘star’ logos (only for the properties to which they relate) in promotional materials, and electronic versions of these logos can be supplied.

6.07

If they make use of “To Let” boards when advertising their properties then they should comply fully with Leeds City Council’s “To Let” board code in those areas where the code applies. This places restrictions on the size and positioning of such boards.

Clauses 6.05 – 6.07 have been incorporated into Section 2 of the revised Code.

COMPLAINTS

Owners will ensure that:

7.00

Within four weeks of receipt of any written complaint from a tenant or a local resident (in respect of sections 4.26-4.30 only) or their representative, rectify any breach of this Code of Standards or, where such an allegation is contested, enter into correspondence with any tenants or their representative where such an allegation is contested;

Clause 7.00 has been slightly amended to read:

9.00

Within four weeks of receipt of any written complaint from a tenant or a local resident, their representative, will rectify any breach of this Code or, where such an allegation is contested, will enter into relevant correspondence with any tenants or their representative addressing the matters raised;

7.01

Where such a breach is contested, or where rectification is not made in accordance with 7.00 above, then the owner shall recognise the authority of a Tribunal, which s/he recognises under the Code to determine whether the Code, agreed by them, has been breached and to make recommendation/s to the owner in accordance with its views.

In the event that such recommendations are not followed by the owner then the owner will be deemed in breach of the Code and this fact will be made public to prospective tenants.

The tribunal will have the authority to exclude any owner from the Code for a period as determined.

Clause 7.01 has been divided into three separate ones

9.01

Where such a breach is contested, or where rectification is not made, then the owner shall recognise the authority of a Tribunal, which s/he recognises under the Code to determine whether the Code, agreed by them, has been breached and to make recommendation/s to the owner in accordance with its views;

9.02

In the event that such recommendations are not followed by the owner then the owner will be deemed in breach of the Code and this fact will be made public to prospective tenants;

9.03

The Tribunal will have the authority to exclude any owner from the Code for a period as determined.

Appendix 1
Fire Detection and Alarm Systems in Grid Format

Leeds Unipol Code	1-2 storeys with up to 6 occupants	3-4 storeys with up to 4 occupants	3-4 storeys with 5-6 occupants	3-4 storeys with 7 or more occupants
Automatic Fire Detection				
LD2 Grade C				√
LD2 Grade D			√	
LD3 Grade D	√	√		
Fire alarm control panel			√ (by 2012)	√
Smoke detection and sounders in all bedrooms			√ (by 2012)	√
Smoke detection and sounders in lounge	√	√	√	√
Heat detection in kitchen	√	√	√	√
Smoke detector fitted in cellar (or a heat detector if already installed) linked into the fire detection system	√	√	√	√
Smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space (including stairwells, corridors and lobbies)	√	√	√	√
Fire alarm systems and equipment are properly checked and maintained by a competent person on an annual basis	√	√	√	√
Means of Escape and Separation				
30 min fire door/s on kitchen with effective overhead hydraulic self closer/s and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals	√	√	√	√
30 min fire door/s on lounge with effective overhead hydraulic self closer/s and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals		√ (by 2012, but no need for closer, strips and seals)	√ (by 2012, with closer, strips and seals)	√
30 min fire doors on all bedrooms with effective overhead hydraulic self closer/s and			√ (by 2012, but no need for closer, strips and seals)	√

with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals				
30 min fire door at top of cellar stairs (if this exists), if the cellar opens on to the means of escape, with effective overhead hydraulic self closer/s and with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals		√	√	√
Escape windows and doors should be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key. This includes bedroom doors	√	√	√	√
The primary escape route should not pass through bedrooms or kitchens. If there is no alternative to this then escape windows should be fitted on ground, first floor and basement	√	√	√	√
All exit routes within the property, such as hallways, landings and staircases will be maintained safe, unobstructed and free of fixtures and fittings	√	√	√	√
Equipment				
Fire blanket in all kitchens	√	√	√	√
Lighting				
Emergency lighting	Risk Assess	Risk Assess	Risk Assess	Risk Assess

NB: For other property types not covered above Leeds City Council's current advisory Fire Safety Principles for properties of their type (individually determined by LCC for properties not covered by those principles) will apply. The minimum requirements of which is the provision of a mains interlinked fire detection system throughout the common areas, which should include a heat detector in the kitchen (an enhanced LD3 Grade D system);

Appendix 2: Timescales for Requirements to be Phased in

Although it is intended that the revised Code should become operational from August 1st 2009, a number of elements could be phased in over a period of time.

By July 1st 2010

- Drainpipes close to vulnerable upper floor windows to be painted with anti-climb paint.

By 1st August 2010

- All properties to meet with the standards on toilet and personal washing facilities;
- Residual current device (RCD) protection should be provided to all consumer units;
- Emergency lighting should be installed next to any consumer unit;
- Letter boxes to be fitted with a device on the inside to prevent thieves from putting hands or gadgets through them

By 1st August 2012

- All of the Fire Detection and Alarm Systems requirements to be met.

By 1st August 2013

- Thermostatic radiator valves to be fitted all central heating systems

Appendix 3: New Code Requirements that could be Optional and included into a revised Starred Property Standard

The Review Group suggested that some of the proposed changes to the Leeds Code might be made optional rather than compulsory, with compliant owners being awarded additional points in a revised starred property standard.

People taking part in the consultation process on the revised Code will therefore be asked whether one or more of the following proposed new clauses should be optional.

- [1]** 4.04. Where a working gas fire is situated in a bedroom, a carbon monoxide (CO) detector conforming to BSEN50291 should be fitted in that bedroom;
- [2]** 4.11. Residual current device (RCD) protection should be provided to all consumer units by August 1st 2010;
- [3]** 4.12. An emergency light should be installed next to any consumer unit by August 1st 2010;
- [4]** 4.27. All existing letter boxes are fitted with a device on the inside to prevent thieves from putting their hands or gadgets through the letterbox and trying the latches from the inside. These should be fitted by 1st August 2010. New door sets meeting BS: PAS24-1 are designed with acceptable letter box restriction;
- [5]** 4.36. Dusk to dawn low energy white lighting, evenly spread covering high risk areas (areas around ground floor windows or windows accessible from roofs), is recommended. This should not cause light pollution, annoy neighbours or blind occupiers from identifying callers;
- [6]** 4.37. All drainpipes close to a vulnerable upper floor window should be painted with anti-climb paint above 2 metres with associated notice. This should be done by July 2010;
- [7]** 5.01. When renewing electrical appliances, particularly white goods, only high energy efficient appliances (grade A and B) should be chosen as replacements;
- [8]** 5.03. Any new wet central heating system installed will include thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) on all radiators (except one). Note: Although outside of the timescale of this Code, in a future code it is intended that TRVs will be fitted to all existing systems by August 2013;

