

The purpose of the Code is to enable Owners and Tenants to agree a set of undertakings about how they wish to do business with one another.

The criteria in the Code have been chosen to reflect a balance of common sense obligations and responsibilities between owners and tenants and set standards which are achievable by owners and tenants without significant expenditure of time and money and without prejudice to their respective legal rights.

This Code compliments and extends the Leeds City Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) and has particular reference to the shared student housing market. Those joining the Unipol Code will (unless the owner decides otherwise) automatically be put forward for membership of the LLAS (at no additional cost).

Compliance with the Code will ensure that:

Both owners and tenants enjoy the benefit of good standards of housing management and practice.

Misunderstandings and disputes are reduced.

Where problems do occur they are promptly resolved.

Unipol will ensure that the fact that an owner has agreed to comply with the Code will be made explicit on property advertisements and the Code will be actively promoted amongst students searching for housing. It is the policy of the two Universities and their students' unions in Leeds to advise their students only to rent a property where the owner has signed the Unipol Code of Standards.

Adoption of the code by an owner is voluntary. Making a commitment to abide by the Code is a serious matter and a failure to meet such a commitment is a breach of faith. Unipol tests owners annually for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with the Code and tenants can complain where they feel a breach has occurred. Information showing that owners are not complying with the Code is in the public domain and will remain accessible for three years even if the owners leaves, or is removed from the Code.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Licensed HMOs

In the case of licensed HMOs, where an HMO licence includes a particular condition that is different to a requirement of this Code of Standards, then compliance with the HMO licence condition will take precedence.

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;

2.05

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

Rent Liability:

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 :

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)

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;

2.09

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 :

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.

State of Repair :

2.11

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;

2.12

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;

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;

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.

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

Owners will ensure that:

HMO Licensing

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;

Ensuring Possession

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;

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:

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 :

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;

3.06

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

Repairs and Maintenance

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.

3.08

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 or by arrangements with the occupiers after that time

3.09

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

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;

3.11

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;

3.12

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

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 :

3.14

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

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 :

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 :

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;

3.18

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;

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;

3.22

Where a shower/s is/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

Owner will ensure that:

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

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

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 an engineer endorsed by Gas Safe Register. 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 a Gas Safe Register fitter;

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;

4.05

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

Liquefied Gas/Paraffin Heaters and Appliances. :

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. :

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

4.08

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

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;

4.10

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;

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

4.13

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

Energy Efficiency :

4.14

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

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.

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;

4.21

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;

4.22

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.

4.23

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 :

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;

4.26

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).

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;

4.28

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;

4.29

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.

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;

4.33

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;

4.34

Contractors and tenants should be supplied with the code numbers of alarms;

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;

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 :

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;

4.39

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

4.40

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

Communal Areas :

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;

4.42

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

Lighting and Ventilation

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 AND SUSTAINABILITY

Owners will ensure that:

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.

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.

Gardens and Yards

6.02

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

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;

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;

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.

AT THE END OF THE TENANCY

Owners will ensure that:

DEPOSITS

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;

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;

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

Owners will ensure that

Management of Disputes

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:

8.01

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

8.02

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

8.03

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

8.04

Maintain courteous professional relations with tenants during any dispute.

COMPLAINTS

Owners will ensure that:

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;

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.

Notes for tenants:

The principle aim of the Code of Standards complaints procedure is to resolve complaints efficiently. Before commencing the procedure, it is recommended that tenants attempt to resolve any problems by contacting their landlord or letting agent in the first instance. Completed complaint forms should be submitted only after all lines of negotiation have been exhausted. This judgement will be in the first instance made by the Code of Standards Administrator, who is charged with operating the system. In the event of a dispute, this will be a matter for a ruling by the Chair of the Tribunal.

If you are a parent or relative of a tenant you must attach written authority from the tenant concerned stating that you are authorised to make a complaint on their behalf.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Schedule One – Housing Health and Safety Rating System

The condition of all housing is now subject to Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 and the evidence based risk assessment process of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), on which local authorities must now base enforcement decisions. This applies to all types of residential premises, whether or not any amenities are shared.

Following a complaint, or for any other reason, a local authority may arrange to inspect premises to determine whether a category 1 or 2 hazard exists.

HHSRS assesses twenty-nine categories of housing hazard – Damp & mould growth; Excess cold; Excess heat; Asbestos (and MMF); Biocides; Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products; Lead; Radiation; Uncombusted fuel gas; Volatile Organic Compounds; Crowding and space; Entry by intruders; Lighting; Noise; Domestic hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage; Water supply; Falls associated with baths etc; Falling on level surfaces etc; Falling on stairs etc; Falls between levels; Electrical hazards; Fire; Flames, hot surfaces etc; Collision and entrapment; Explosions; Position and operability of amenities etc; Structural collapse and falling elements. Technical assessment is a two-stage process, addressing first the likelihood of an occurrence and then the range of probable harm outcomes. These two factors are combined using a standard method to give a score in respect of each hazard. HHSRS does not provide a single score for the dwelling as a whole or, in the case of multiply occupied dwellings, for the building as a whole.

The scores from different hazards cannot be meaningfully aggregated. There is no strong evidential basis for aggregating hazard scores, and to attempt to do this would make far more difficult the assessment of likelihood and spread of harm of hazards. However, the presence of a number of individual category 2 hazards may be a factor in an authority's decision to take action.

Hazards are scored in bands, from band A, the most severe, to band J. The relationship between these bands and category 1 and category 2 is prescribed in Regulations made under the Act. Category 1 hazards are those rated in bands A-C. Category 2 hazards are those rated band D and lower. Category 1 hazards trigger a local authority's duty under section 5 to take the appropriate enforcement action. Category 2 hazards can be dealt with under the authority's discretionary powers, which are set out in section 7.

The 2004 Act gives local authorities powers to intervene where they consider housing conditions to be unacceptable, on the basis of the impact of health and safety hazards on the most vulnerable potential occupant. The 2004 Act puts authorities under a general duty to take appropriate action in relation to a category 1 hazard. Where they have a general duty to act, they must take the most appropriate of the following courses of action:

- serve an improvement notice in accordance with section 11
- make a prohibition order in accordance with section 20
- serve a hazard awareness notice in accordance with section 28
- take emergency remedial action under section 40 or make an emergency prohibition order under section 43
- make a demolition order under section 265 of the Housing Act 1985 as amended
- declare a clearance area by virtue of section 289 of the 1985 Act as amended.

UNIPOL STUDENT HOMES CODE OF STANDARDS FOR SHARED STUDENT HOUSING IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN LEEDS

DECLARATION FOR 2007 – 2008

I/We (name)

Owner Registration No.

Home Address

Trading as

declare that all my properties and all the properties I manage meet the terms and conditions of the 2007/2008 Code of Standards for Shared Student Housing in the Student Private Rented Sector. I further declare that my conduct will be in line with that outlined in the Code. I enclose the relevant fee (see schedule of fees on owner registration form)

I understand that information about my Code of Standards status is in the public domain and will be accessible to all those using Unipol's web system and will remain accessible for up to three years regardless of my future membership of the Code

I wish to be included in the starred property category

Yes No
(please tick appropriate box)

Signed

Date -----

Leeds City Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme

When you sign to be a member of Unipol's Code of Standards it is possible to apply to be a member of the Leeds City Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) at no additional cost (joining this scheme if you are not a member of the Unipol Code requires the payment of a fee). The conditions required by Unipol's Code cover most of the requirements of the LLAS. If you have any queries about joining the Council's scheme then ring 0113 247 6135.

If you are already a member of the LLAS, please give your LLAS Membership number -----

If you wish to join LLAS, please sign the declaration below:

I declare that I have read and understood the Unipol Code and all the properties under my ownership which are let to tenants whilst I hold membership of the Leeds City Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) will meet the terms and conditions of the Code. I further declare that my conduct will be in accord with the provisions of the Code and I will recognise the authority of a Review Panel. I acknowledge the Council's rights over the use of the Code logo and the Council's Coat of Arms and for my part acknowledge and authorise the public disclosure of details relating to my membership of the Leeds City Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme.

I further declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information in this application is correct

Signed

Date

STARRED PROPERTY STANDARD FOR CODE OF STANDARDS PROPERTIES

It is possible for shared student houses to be awarded a rating of between 1 and 5 stars. The purpose of this starred property standards is to assist students differentiate between Code properties on the basis of the level of amenities that are being provided – the greater the provision the higher the star rating will be.

How to get a one 'star' rating

A one 'star' rating will indicate the minimum amenity level that would be acceptable for a property to be included in the starred property standard. In order to be awarded one 'star', owners will be required to ensure that their properties meet the following conditions:

Energy Efficiency

Central Heating in accordance with sections 4.12 and 4.13. From 1st September 2008, all heaters or radiators in rooms must be able to be individually thermostatically controlled.

Washing Facilities

A shower is provided in accordance with section 3.16.

Laundry Facilities

Plumbing and appropriately sited electrical supply is provided to enable a washing machine or washer/dryer to be fitted. The washing machine must not be sited in an unused area (e.g. an unconverted cellar) or a bathroom.

Security

Properties must comply with Unipol's essential security standards:

- All the external doors must be fitted with a five lever mortice lock;
- All external doors should be of solid construction and where there is glazing in the external door this should consist of wired glass, a double glazed unit or be toughened laminated glass;
- Ground floor windows should have locks (with keys provided), apart from where this is prohibited by the fire officer.

In addition to these standards, any property that is not an upper floor flat should be fitted with a burglar alarm.

Getting more than one 'star'

One of the main aims of this star rating system is to encourage owners to enhance amenity levels. Properties that exceed the conditions necessary for a one 'star' rating might be awarded an additional number of 'stars'. The formula that calculates the property standard awards a set of points for a range of additional facilities, which include:

- Enhanced security measures
- Provision of living space
- Additional bathroom and laundry facilities
- Installation of telephone/TV points
- Access to a garden

Further details of the starred property standards are available on request.

All properties with a 'star' rating of between 1 and 5 are displayed on Unipol's website, with the number of 'stars' awarded clearly shown. The website also includes a quick search facility to help find which properties have been awarded 'stars'.

Complaints

The existing complaints procedure and Tribunal, as outlined in section 7.00 of the Unipol Code of Standards, shall apply. Whilst a complaint about the non-provision of an amenity that an owner declared as being present is pending, Unipol reserves the right to suspend starred status from all properties belonging to that owner whilst an investigation is undertaken and a conclusion is reached.