

Nottingham Code Review Summary for the 2026-2029 Cycle

Review Process

The current Unipol Code for shared student houses in Nottingham expires on 31st July 2026. To ensure it remains in step with changes to legislation, local authority standards and best practice, the Code is reviewed every 3 years and then landlords are asked to re-join to affirm commitment to the new standards.

The review process included an open consultation of stakeholders and a review panel established to consider any proposed changes. Although Unipol will produce a reviewed set of standards based on its knowledge of changes in these areas, it places some reliance on the expertise of the Review Panel to raise any pertinent points for inclusion.

The review panel consisted of representatives of landlords, students, universities, the local authority, Code Verifiers and community groups. In this particular review, Unipol sought to simplify the wording of some clauses to improve clarity and to change the format of the document. It is not the intention to alter the meaning or requirement, but to improve the legibility of the document for both students and landlords.

Principles of this Review

- Standards may exceed legal minimums and should reflect members going above and beyond what is required under the law.
- The standards must be consistent with, but can exceed, those set by the local authority.
- The standards must be simple and secondary references, although unavoidable, should not proliferate – although web links can be added.
- The standards should not reflect very detailed operational procedures or refer to costs that will become outdated across the three-year life of the Code.
- Wherever possible the Code should be clear about what standards it requires or, if this is not possible, clear guidance can be issued (as part of the Code's secondary documentation) that says what needs to be done.
- The Code must meet the four ANUK principles of Declaration, Verification, Continual Improvement and be able to respond to Complaints.
- It is important to maintain a focus on management standards (the main cause of complaints from students) as well as initial physical standards.
- This is a specific Code for off street student houses and must relate to the needs and risks inherent in this part of the housing market.

Compromise and Consultation

Putting together a new Code is a complex and difficult matter. It is easy for a "wish list" of standards to accumulate from those who do not have to meet them. It is also easy for disagreeing parties within a review process to negotiate between themselves to find a solution that can be difficult to achieve from those being asked to meet the standards.

It is essential to remember that accreditation is voluntary and that whatever standards are set, members have to be willing to meet those standards voluntarily. This sets boundaries about what can and cannot be achieved. It is important to be conscious of the current market context too.

As new standards come in, it is normal to have "feed-in" times that allow owners periods of time to meet specific standards where works or changes are likely to be required. These feed in periods are usually based on an assessment of the practicalities of doing works and an assessment of where risks are highest.

Summary of changes to the Code document

- New Design
- Improved wording/formatting throughout
- New supporting introduction which will provide more detail on the operations of the Code, Audit Panel, Tribunal etc. and give background to its conception
- Updated references to British Standards and legislation to ensure that most recent documents are referred to.
- New guidance introduced on the appropriate use of the Unipol Code logo in advertising and promotional materials.
- Addition of clauses pertaining to the Renters Rights Act 2025
- Some clauses consolidated under a new section titled "At the start of the tenancy"
- Additional clause in "During the tenancy" section:

"At suitable intervals throughout the tenancy, Members/agents should conduct visits to properties to ensure that they are free from hazards and disrepair"

- Bathroom ratio table updated to include a key to provide better clarity
- Damp to be included as a stand-alone clause (rather than part of HHSRS):

"Reasonable steps are taken to comply with the government's guidance on 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home'"

- Update to Clause on Fire Detection and Alarm Systems: Shared HMO's

"Shared HMOs (with 3-4 storeys and up to 4 tenants)

An interlinked LD2 Grade D1 AFD system is required as a minimum, with smoke detection and sounders on every level of circulation space (including stairwells, corridors and lobbies that form part of the escape route), in basements and in the living room(s), plus a heat detector in the kitchen;

FD30S fire door required to the kitchen (with an effective overhead hydraulic selfcloser, intumescentstrips and cold smoke seals) and FD30 fire doors to any risk rooms which open onto the route of escape (including living rooms) plus a 30 minute protected route of escape with all bedrooms fitted with FD30 fire doors (with an effective overhead hydraulic selfcloser and intumescent strips)."

- Fire Detection and Alarm Systems section now has a specific clause relating to flats in purpose built residential blocks
- Wording relating to the build-up of combustible materials in kitchen appliances updated to include air fryers.
- New clause relating to e-bikes:

"Members should ensure that e-bikes and e-scooters are not stored on the route of escape. Members should take reasonable steps to inform tenants of associated fire risks and promote safe storage and charging practices where relevant."

- Doorbell clause updated to clarify that keyless entry systems should be kept in working order where these are provided.
- Community Relations Section includes a new clause to ensure that changes to the physical appearance of properties are made in accordance with any existing Neighbourhood Design Statement
- Community Relations section now includes a waste management subsection with the addition of the following two clauses:

"Tenants are informed of the need for proper refuse management and about any available recycling scheme operating in their area, particularly at the end of tenancies. Tenants are provided with up-to-date information about the waste and recycling service provided by the relevant local authority"

"All properties are provided with adequate bins for both waste disposal and recycling (where this is available)."

- New clause added relating to Alley Gate keys:

"If the property is adjacent to an alleyway with an alley gate, members should take reasonable steps to obtain a key for the alleyway and make this available to tenants."

- Additional clause regarding deposits added:

“Deposits are administered efficiently and deposit deductions are not made unreasonably”

- Complaints/dispute section has been updated for clarity and better readability.
- HHSRS guidance updated to reflect 2026 changes
- Fire Safety Guidance Matrix updated
- Review of Code fees/package for members

Code Fees

Membership of the Codes provides significant benefits and cash savings. Unipol fully supports the student landlord community and remains committed to providing a voice for the sector and championing good practice. For the new Code cycle Code Members will no longer have to become members of the hub on an annual basis, and all those additional benefits will now be merged with Code membership. Benefits of joining the Code include:

- Discounts on local authority housing licences
- Free online training which meets licensing criteria
- Free training events to boost your skills
- Ability to advertise properties on the Unipol website for an additional fee
- Member briefings, so you can understand the market and network with other landlords
- Special briefings on proposed new legislation and have your say
- Free advice from our accreditation team and the benefit of inspections, where our experts give a view on your property
- Access to the Landlord Clinic and specialist help to resolve tenancy issues and use our mediation services
- Code Membership promotion via the Universities and the Nottingham Rental Standard
- A more “self-regulatory” approach from the local authority, with complaints first directed to Unipol for resolution
- Discounted deposit protection from TDS
- Access to the free online tenancy agreement generator

The review focused on ensuring that the ‘Code package’ continues to provide members with a package of support, market intelligence and networking opportunities.



The fees for the new Code cycle have been set as follows:

Number of Properties	Fee (ex. VAT)	Fee (inc. Vat)
1	£102	£122.40
2	£182	£218.40
3-5	£252	£302.40
6-10	£329	£394.80
11-20	£486	£583.20
21-40	£695	£834.00
41-60	£794	£952.80
61-120	£1041	£1249.20
Unlimited	£1395	£1674.00

Code Renewal Process

The new Nottingham Code cycle will begin on 1st August 2026. Members will be given a 'grace period' until mid-August 2026 to renew accreditation, after which the online Directory of Code members will be updated and continuous membership/Golden Owner Status removed. Details on how to renew membership will be circulated to existing Code members, as soon as the new Code publication is available.