

2035 - 2037: Decent Homes Standard

Landlord FAQ

Q: What is the Decent Homes Standard, and does it apply to me?

A: It's a set of minimum property condition standards that has applied to social housing since 2001. For the first time, a reformed version will extend to the private rented sector, meaning your properties will need to meet it too.

Q: When does this come into force?

A: The government has proposed implementing it in either 2035 or 2037, giving landlords a long lead-in time. This is partly to allow the sector to work through other changes first, including new minimum energy efficiency standards expected by 2030.

Q: What will the standard actually require?

A: Properties will need to be safe, well-maintained, and free from serious hazards. A new element specifically requires homes to be free from damp and mould beyond the mildest traces - a notably stricter bar than many landlords currently apply, so it's worth reviewing how you currently handle damp and mould reports.

Q: What is Awaab's Law, and how does it affect me?

A: Awaab's Law introduces legally binding time limits for landlords to investigate and fix serious hazards, particularly damp and mould. It already applies in social housing and is being extended to the private rented sector, though the exact timescales for private landlords are still being finalised through consultation.

Q: Do I need to wait until 2035 to start taking this seriously?

A: No. Even though full enforcement is years away, government guidance is already clear that a proactive approach - investigating the cause of damp and mould rather than treating it as a surface issue and responding to tenant reports promptly - is expected well before the formal deadline.

Q: What happens if I don't comply once the standard is in force?

A: Local authorities will enforce the standard. Where the most serious hazards are found, councils will have a duty to act and can issue on-the-spot penalties of up to £7,000; for less serious failures, they'll have broader powers to take enforcement action.

Q: What should I do to prepare?

A: Get ahead of it now rather than closer to the deadline: have your properties inspected for damp, mould, and other hazards, address the underlying cause rather than just the symptom, and keep clear records of any tenant reports and how you responded. Speak to your local Winkworth office if you'd like help assessing where a property currently stands.