

**If you would like this information in a different language, in large print or on CD, please contact us on 01235 515900.**

**Polish** Porządny dom Plus

Jeśli chcesz uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, dużą czcionką lub na płycie CD, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem 01235 515900.

**Portuguese** Casas Decentes Superior (Decent Homes Plus)

Se desejar receber esta informação em outro idioma, num tamanho de letra maior ou em CD, queira contactar-nos através do número 01235 515900.

**Bengali** ডিসেন্ট হোমস প্লাস (Decent Homes Plus)

যদি আপনি এই তথ্য একটি ভিন্ন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরের ছাপায় অথবা সি.ডি'তে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01235 515900 নম্বরে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন।

**Chinese** 「體面住家提升」(Decent Homes Plus) 計劃

若您需要以其他語言撰寫、以大字體顯示或以 CD 方式儲存的此資訊，請致電 01235 515900 聯絡我們。

**Albanian** Shtëpi të Përshtatshme Plus

Nese deshironi kete informacion ne gjuhe te ndryshme, te shtypur apo ne CD, ju lutemi te na kontakton ne numrin 01235 515900.

**Slovakian** Kvalitné domácnosti Plus

Ak požadujete túto informáciu v inom jazyku, vytlačenu s veľkými písmenami alebo na disku CD, kontaktujte nás na čísle 01235 515900.

'Decent Homes Plus' standard

**soha**  
housing



**Soha Housing, Royal Scot House,**  
99 Station Rd, Didcot OX11 7NN

**Tel:** 01235 515900

**Fax:** 01235 515970

**Email:** [housing@soha.co.uk](mailto:housing@soha.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.soha.co.uk](http://www.soha.co.uk)



13 06/09





**The Government has set the ‘Decent Homes’ standard for all landlords like Soha for the quality of the property you are living in. All Soha homes now meet the Decent Homes standard. A percentage of improvements must be met for a property to meet a ‘Decent Homes’ standard.**

At Soha, we have set ourselves a higher standard called the Decent Homes Plus standard. We think it’s important that you have a choice about how your home looks and so, where we can, we will offer you a range of options. Tenants helped us to develop the Decent Homes Plus standard and also help us select our contractors and keep an eye on their performance at site meetings.

We want you to live in a safe home, so we will thoroughly inspect each property as one tenant leaves to prepare it for the next one. Any work we find that needs doing will be added into our planned maintenance programme, or repaired more urgently.

In the following pages, we will set out what the Government wants us to do and how we better that standard, as we do in every case.

Some of the targets for Decent Homes Plus that you will see mentioned in the following pages are targets we are aiming for rather than things we have completed already. If that’s the case, we’ve given you the date we are aiming for so you can hold us to it!

## Asbestos

**The Government’s Decent Homes standard:** As your landlord, Soha must manage asbestos-containing materials found in your home and give you a copy of the inspection report

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** There is a separate leaflet on how we handle asbestos, but you can be sure that we will manage (or remove) asbestos in line with our own careful policies and health and safety guidelines

✓ We do this already

## Bathrooms

### The Government's Decent Homes standard:

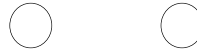
The current standard means your bathroom is replaced every 40 years

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We say that your bathroom should be no more than 30 years old and it should have:

- A low-flush WC
- A fixed bath or shower and wash handbasin (showers will have a shower rail and curtain)
- Adequately tiled splashback
- Direct drainage connections and wall tiling as necessary

→ We're getting there! Our target is to have all our homes up to this standard by 2034

**Your choice!** You can choose your tiling and flooring



## Communal areas

### The Government's Decent Homes standard:

The Government's standard currently doesn't cover communal areas

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure your communal areas (in general needs housing) are:

- Wind and weather-tight
- Free from graffiti

### We will:

- Paint communal areas every 5 years



- Inspect emergency lighting at 6 monthly intervals
- Inspect fire equipment at 6 monthly intervals
- Inspect fire panels (where present) quarterly

✓ We do this already

In sheltered schemes we'll make sure that all communal areas and corridors are in good decorative order. Carpeting will be in good condition, free from tears

✓ We are currently painting every 7 years

**Your choice!** If you live in sheltered accommodation, tenants can choose carpeting and wall colours

## Communal water systems in sheltered accommodation

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** The Government's standard currently doesn't cover this

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure your communal water system:

- Provides clean water
- Is free from Legionella bacteria

### We will:

- Do water temperature monitoring and water sampling fully in accordance with the Health and Safety Council Approved Code of Practice and Guidance

✓ We do both of these monthly already

## Digital aerials

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** This isn't covered by the Government standard

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We have upgraded all existing general needs and sheltered communal aerial systems to receive a digital signal

✓ We've met our target of doing this by 2008

## Doors

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your home will not meet the current standard if any external door (such as the front or back door, rather than an outbuilding door) is old or in poor condition

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We say your doors will be:

- Secure and weathertight
- Double-glazed, usually man-made materials (subject to planning)

and they will have:

- A 5-lever locking system
- Security chain/spy hole on the front door

→ We're getting there! Our target is to have all our homes up to this standard by 2023

**Your choice!** You can choose the colour and style of your front door

## Electrics

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your home will meet the current standard if you have an electrical system that is in reasonable condition and free from major damage or in a bad state of repair

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard: We will:**

- Make sure that all wiring meets the current standards set by the National Inspection Council & Electrical Inspection Council
- Test electrical circuits to all our properties at least every 8 years
- Look at the location of old fuseboards and rewire old and unsuitable electrical systems
- Check any portable electrical appliances every year. (If you live in sheltered accommodation with a warden call system, this will be inspected every 3 months)

✓ We've met all these targets

**Your choice!** You can tell us where you'd like sockets installed

## External decorations

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Redecoration is not specifically covered in the current Decent Homes standard

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** As your landlord, Soha is responsible for painting the external fabric of your home and communal areas in blocks of flats every 5 years. **We will:**

- Make sure that all existing painted surfaces are maintained in good order, including the timberwork and render
- Wash down UPVC windows and composite doors with a weak solution rather than paint them

✓ We do this already

**Your choice!** You can choose the door colours



## External walls

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your home will not meet the current standard if 50% of the wall finishes require re-pointing or renewal

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:**

- We want your walls to be structurally sound and free from water penetration. We will give them adequate damp proofing to prevent rising damp
- If you have timber cladding we'll make sure it's rot-free
- If you have vertical tiles, we'll make sure there are no damaged or slipped tiles
- If you have rendered walls we'll make sure they're undamaged with no missing or loose render

✓ We do this already



## Fencing and paths

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** The Government's standard currently doesn't cover fencing and paths

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure your fencing and paths:

- Mark out your own defined space
- Are reasonably maintained to boundaries and we'll maintain the paths to the front and back doors and make sure that all paths are free from trip hazards

(There is a separate leaflet on boundaries - if you would like a copy, please call Customer Services on 01235 515900)

✓ We do this already

## Guttering and rainwater provision

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** The condition, repair and replacement of gutters and downpipes is not included in the current standard

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure your guttering and downpipes are:

- Watertight and blockage-free
- Will be replaced with black, half-round upvc when necessary to provide new

We'll also provide a water butt where possible in accordance with our Environmental Policy

✓ We do this already

## Heating

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your central heating or warm air system is expected to last 40 years. If you have another form of heating this is expected to last 30 years

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard: We will:**

- Install controllable central heating systems to all our properties and use condensing boilers to save energy and fuel costs when we provide new or replacement gas systems
- Put radiators in every room and, where we can, install room thermostats
- Make sure that new storage heaters are on an energy-efficient tariff
- Make sure that all gas boilers work efficiently with no gas leaks
- Make sure that gas boilers are maintained by us to the standards laid down by the relevant laws at the time

✓ We've met all these targets

**Your choice!** If you have storage heaters that need replacing and would like to swap over to gas central heating (assuming there is a gas supply to the road) we will do that for you

## Insulation

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** If your home has been built with cavity walls, the current standard requires your home to have effective cavity insulation, depending on the heating system you have. If you have gas/oil fired central heating, the current standard means you must have a minimum of 50mm (2") loft insulation or effective cavity insulation. If your home is heated with an electric storage/LPG programmable solid fuel central heating system, the current standard says your home must have both cavity insulation and 200mm (8") of loft insulation

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** In addition to the above, we will:

- Provide 200mm loft insulation irrespective of the kind of heating system you have
- Provide full cavity wall insulation (subject to wall construction) to all properties that have cavity walls

✓ We've met all these targets

## Kitchens

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** The current standard is that your kitchen should be reasonable and no more than 30 years old

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We say that your kitchen will be:

- Durable
- Easily maintained

- No more than 20 years old

And that they will include:

- A sink with integral drainer
- At least 2 double base units and 1 double wall unit
- Space for a cooker, washing machine and fridge
- 3 courses of wall tiles and an extractor fan
- The number of sockets that the National House-Building Council sets as the standard at the time

→ We're getting there! Our target is to have all our homes up to this standard by 2019

Your choice! You can choose the units, worktop, tiles and flooring in your new kitchen

## Lifts

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** The Government's standard currently doesn't cover lifts

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure lifts are in full working order with an annual inspection

**We will:**

- Carry out quarterly servicing of passenger lifts
- Carry out 6 monthly inspections of communal stair lifts

✓ We do this already



## Roads and drainage

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:**

The state of drainage is not covered by the current Government Standard

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** Where Soha owns the road and drainage, we'll make sure that:

- Roads are pothole free and have no trip hazards
- Foul water drainage is in good working order and fit for purpose
- Gullies are free from blockages

✓ We do this already

## Roofing and chimneys

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your home will not meet the current standard if more than 10% of the roof structure needs replacing or 30% of it needs strengthening or 50% or more of the roof covering needs repair or replacement. Your chimney won't pass the Government standard if it's in poor condition or needs to be partially or fully rebuilt

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** In addition to the above, we'll make sure that:

- Existing roofs are wind and weathertight with adequate ventilation
- There are no broken or slipped tiles
- Chimney stacks are structurally stable with effective lead flashing

✓ We do this already

## Warden call systems

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** There are no current Government standards on maintaining call systems which alert the Scheme Manager if you are in difficulty

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll ensure that all sites with these systems are always in full working order

✓ We do this already



## Smoke detectors

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:**

The Government standard doesn't call for any smoke detectors to be installed

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We provide hard-wired smoke detectors to all our properties. Houses typically have two (in the hall and landing) and flats have one in the hall

✓ We do this already



## Windows

**The Government's Decent Homes standard:** Your windows should be in reasonable condition and no more than 40 years old

**The Soha Decent Homes Plus standard:** We'll make sure all your windows are secure and weathertight. We'll use double-glazed units (usually UPVC, subject to planning) with child restrictors to first floor and lockable handles to ground floor. Your windows will be no more than 40 years old

→ We're getting there! Our target is to have all our homes up to this standard by 2015

## Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

All the portable electrical appliances owned by Soha will be tested annually.