

The definition of what is a decent home has been updated to reflect the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) which replaced the Housing Fitness Standard on 6th April 2006.

A decent home meets the following four criteria:

1) It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing

Dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those containing one or more hazards assessed as being serious ('Category 1') under the HHSRS.

2) It is in a reasonable state of repair

Dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those where either:

- one or more of the key building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair;

or

- two or more of the other building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair.

3) It has reasonably modern facilities and services

Dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those which lack three or more of the following:

- a reasonably modern kitchen (20 years old or less)
- a kitchen with adequate space and layout
- a reasonably modern bathroom (30 years old or less)
- an appropriately located bathroom and WC
- adequate insulation against external noise (where external noise is a problem)
- adequate size and layout of common areas for blocks of flats.

A home lacking two or fewer of the above is still classed as decent, therefore it is not necessary to modernise kitchens and bathrooms if a home meets the remaining criteria.

4) It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

This criterion requires dwellings to have both effective insulation and efficient heating.

It should be noted that, whilst dwellings meeting criteria 2, 3 and 4 are likely also to meet criterion 1, some HHSRS Category 1 hazards may remain to be addressed. For example, a dwelling meeting criterion 4 may still contain a Category 1 damp or cold hazard.