

thirteen

Investing in your home

Home standard



We're constantly improving our homes to make sure they meet modern living standards and are more energy efficient, so they're as comfortable and affordable as possible.

The type of work we carry out on your home depends on a number of things like the age and condition of the fittings such as kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems and wiring. We already have to meet a number of national housing standards to make sure your home is in a safe, sound and secure condition – but the Thirteen homes standard means we aim to exceed these where possible.

Part 1 of this document sets out the full range of improvements we offer and what you may expect to receive from us as part of our Thirteen homes standard when investment work in your home is due.

When work on your homes is due, we'll contact you to talk about it in more detail. Part 2 of this brochure explains what we do to keep you safe and healthy in your home including inspections and servicing, gas safety, smoke detection, electrical safety, asbestos, water hygiene, helping to reduce the risk of fire and preventing mould and condensation.



What to expect from us

We hold a lot of information about repairs carried out at your home and this helps us make sure key parts are replaced when they get to the end of their life.

All homes are different, so there are things we do to understand the condition of your home.

Surveying your home

We aim to carry out surveys every five years to check the condition of the roof, windows, doors, kitchens, bathrooms and electrics. These checks may occur during the lettings process if you are a new resident.

We'll always write to you to let you know if a surveyor is visiting your home. It's really important to allow them into your home, so that it's included in future investment schemes.

Energy efficiency

When the surveyor calls, they'll check how energy efficient your home is and they may recommend improvements such as cavity wall insulation, external wall insulation or loft insulation, and energy efficient lighting to help reduce your energy bills and save you money.

Kitchen

The kitchen is the heart of the home for many people and that's why we offer you several high quality fully fitted kitchen suites to choose from.

When your property is due to receive a new kitchen, your investment liaison advisor will discuss the kitchen choices with you. We only install kitchens produced by a well-known and trusted manufacturer.

To meet the national Decent Homes Standard, kitchens should be replaced every 30 years but we aim to replace them every 20 years. Your kitchen may be replaced before or after the 20 year point depending on the condition and fitness of the kitchen overall.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard, wherever possible, we'll make sure your new kitchen has:

- 8, 10 or 12 kitchen units (or no less than your current number, depending on size) with soft close doors and drawers
- Separate electrical connection sockets for all appliances
- A stainless steel sink unit with a mixer tap
- Utensil tray
- Under-sink drip tray
- Partial tiling above your worktops
- Vinyl flooring
- A low energy extractor fan
- Space for a cooker and washing machine
- Fluorescent tube lighting
- Modern electrics



Bathroom

When we upgrade your bathroom, we'll put in a modern, hard-wearing suite made by a well-known brand. To meet the national Decent Homes Standard, bathrooms should be replaced every 40 years but we aim to replace them every 30 years. Your bathroom may be replaced before or after the 30 year point depending on the condition and fitness of the bathroom overall.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard, we'll make sure your new bathroom has:

- A white ceramic basin, toilet and a steel bath
- Water efficient stainless steel taps
- Partial tiling above the basin and around the bath
- New vinyl flooring
- A low energy extractor fan
- A light fitting
- Ventilation fan
- Modern electrics

We'll also:

- Include a shower over the bath (either electric or mixer)
- Include a shower curtain and pole
- Adjust the design of your bathroom as much as we can, to suit any health needs you've told us about
- Offer sheltered scheme customers a level-access shower

Heating and hot water

We want to help you keep your energy costs as low as possible. That's why we'll replace boilers with an A-rated energy efficient condensing boiler when it's necessary. If you don't have gas, we'll install energy efficient electric heating.

To meet the national Decent Homes Standard, central heating gas boilers should be replaced every 15 years and distribution systems every 40 years. At Thirteen, we aim to replace central heating gas boilers every 15 years and distribution systems every 30 years.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard we will:

- Install a modern, energy efficient boiler to help you save money
- Inspect radiators and controls to see if they need to be renewed because they're old, worn or not working properly
- Give you ways to heat your home more efficiently, by installing controls like room thermostats, thermostatic radiator valves and/or a boiler programmer
- Install a chemical water treatment filter to protect and maintain the heating system
- Talk to you about how we can replace your heating with as little inconvenience and disturbance to your flooring and finishes as possible
- Show you how to best use the system and programs and give you the manufacturer's operating manual.

Roof

We'll replace your roof when it's reached the end of its life or it needs too many repairs.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard when we renew your roof, we'll:

- Replace pitched and flat roofs with materials of a similar type
- Replace things like gutters, usually made from PVCu. Different materials may be used on listed buildings or homes in conservation areas
- Inspect your roof structure before we start work and treat any infestations or rot in the timbers
- Make sure your TV aerial, satellite dish, alarm and telephone services etc. continue to work while we carry out roof work and re-fix them once the work is finished
- Install up to 300mm of loft insulation in your roof space, where we can.

Windows and doors

Modern windows and doors not only improve the appearance of your home but give you better warmth and security.

While we generally replace your windows and doors based on their condition and age, this may not be possible if your home is a listed building or within a conservation area.

To meet the Decent Homes Standard, windows and external doors should be replaced every 40 years for houses and 30 years for flats but we aim to replace windows and doors to all properties every 30 years.

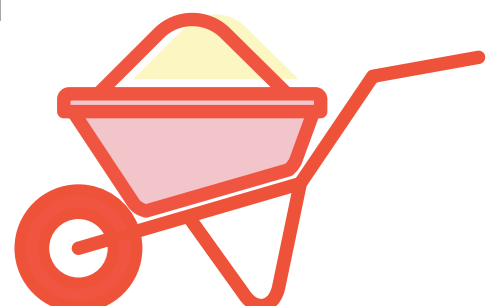
As part of the Thirteen homes standard when replacing your windows and doors:

- All new doors and windows will meet Secured by Design standards and fire regulations. Where possible, we'll put in fire escape windows upstairs
- New windows will be internally beaded to give you even better security
- We'll make sure all new window handles are lockable and, where possible, positioned so they're easy for you to use
- We'll install energy efficient glazing
- All windows will be designed to help you clean them from the inside
- All front doors and frames are low maintenance and include a letter box, spy hole, double glazed panel and are draught proof.

External improvements

As part of the Thirteen homes standard we will aim to:

- Replace or repair existing fences, gates and walls where needed



Neighbourhood and environmental improvements

These are designed to improve the quality of life for our customers, as well as the local community.

These schemes could include:

- Security lighting to walkways and paths
- Enhanced landscaping features around homes
- Improved rubbish storage and disposal systems
- Improved recycling facilities
- Investment in community projects
- Off-street and improved car parking
- New playground and recreation areas.

These improvements will vary and we'll work out what's needed on an individual basis.

Communal areas

As part of the Thirteen homes standard we will:

- Redecorate the walls, ceilings (not suspended tiles), exposed concrete and exposed timber
- Lay new carpet tiles or non-slip flooring (except in store cupboards)
- Include entrance area matting
- Replace any sub-standard railings and panels
- Replace all doors into the communal areas with new and secure fire doors
- Replace all external doors with new stainless-steel security doors
- Upgrade and integrate the door entry system if necessary and link it to the internal flat handset
- Upgrade letterbox units if necessary
- Replace any damaged gas and electricity meter doors with new steel meter boxes
- Upgrade the lighting and incorporate motion detection where possible
- Replace all signage with new, modern signage, which meets the requirements of all current laws
- Include notice boards

Things like colour schemes, patterns and signage will be designed per individual scheme.



Making your own alterations

If you want to make any alterations to your home, please get in touch with us straight away as you may need our permission in writing. Examples include:

- Laying laminate flooring
- Changing the layout of the property
- Putting up fencing
- Creating a driveway
- Installing a shower
- Replacing a kitchen or bathroom yourself.

Keeping you safe in your home

Your health and safety is our top priority and that's why it's important to check your home where necessary. We may need to check for asbestos, as well as fire safety or other issues that could affect your wellbeing.

We'll let you know before we want to carry out any inspection. However please don't hesitate to contact us immediately if there's anything you believe could be damaging your health.

Inspections and servicing

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

If we've fitted any of the following to your home, we'll inspect and maintain it to make sure it meets legal requirements:

- Gas boilers and fires
- Fire alarms and emergency lights
- Lighting conductors
- Door entry systems
- Solar panels and other renewable technologies
- Passenger lifts and lifting equipment such as hoists
- Electrics
- Water systems that need to be checked for legionella
- Communal TV systems
- Other specialist equipment

Not all homes have this equipment but please just contact us if you're unsure about the maintenance or repair of equipment in your home.



Gas safety

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

We will:

- Carry out a gas safety check on connected gas appliances every year to make sure they are safe. We must do this by law to ensure your safety so it's really important that you let us into your home
- Let you know when your gas service is due
- Give you a gas safety certificate once the checks have been carried out
- Service any carbon monoxide detector at your next electrical inspection
- Remove any gas fires and make good.

All our gas engineers are Gas Safe certified, the top rating for gas engineers and we also hold the Gas Safe Certificate.

Smoke detection

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

- If you live in a flat, we'll test your smoke detectors and service the communal fire alarm if it has been fitted by us. Again, it's really important that you let us into your home to carry out these safety checks.
- Where there is no smoke detector in your home, we'll install one as part of the next electrical safety check.

Electrical safety

All electrical installations deteriorate with age and use, and so it's important that they're inspected and tested.

To meet the Decent Homes Standard, electrical systems should be replaced every 30 years and we follow this replacement cycle.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

- We'll inspect the electrics in your home to make sure they meet current regulations
- As part of our inspection we'll test the circuits, check all electrical sockets and give you a certificate which shows future electrical work we may need to carry out
- When the electrical system reaches the end of its life, we'll rewire the full property
- We'll install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector at the time of the visit if your home doesn't have one.



Asbestos

We take asbestos very seriously. In older properties, asbestos can be found but this is perfectly normal and if it's in good condition and isn't going to be disturbed, there's no risk to you or your family.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

Before we carry out any major improvements to your home we may need to carry out a survey to assess the risk of asbestos being present.

If a survey is needed, we'll let you know beforehand and give you feedback once it's complete.

After the survey, we'll decide what we need to do to manage the risk in your home but we'll contact you before we take any action. This may include:

- Monitoring it, where there's no risk to you
- Making some minor alterations to your home to reduce the risk

Removing the asbestos completely.

We will only use licenced asbestos removal contractors in accordance with health and safety laws safety laws.

If you have any concerns about asbestos in your home, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Water hygiene

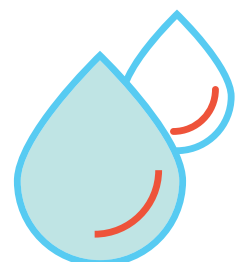
Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia which can affect anyone, but it most commonly affects the elderly, or people with chest, lung or other serious problems.

Not everyone exposed to Legionella bacteria will become ill. It's not contagious and you can't get it from drinking water.

The symptoms of Legionnaires' disease are similar to flu.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

- We monitor water systems in communal areas to ensure the bacteria don't become a problem
- We meet Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines by identifying risks, looking at what needs to be done, and making improvements based on our assessments.



Reducing the risk of fire

We take fire safety very seriously and we're committed to reducing the risk of fire in your home.

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

We will:

- Carry out regular fire risk assessments (FRAs) to all our blocks of flats
- Carry out regular communal area inspections to remove any items that could be a fire hazard or block an escape route
- Make sure escape routes are clear, well lit, signposted and lead everyone to a place of safety
- Ensure a suitable fire detection and alarm system is fitted in the communal area of your block (for those living in flats) and inside your home
- Carry out checks to gas, electrical and fire safety systems in your home

Mould and condensation

Condensation and damp in your home are generally caused by too much moisture in the air.

When the moisture in the air hits something cold like a window, or a warm surface, the moisture in the air turns back to water. If condensation can't dry out it will cause mould on walls, in cupboards and on window sills.

To reduce condensation and damp you should try to:

- Keep your home warm
- Keep your home well ventilated
- Keep doors to kitchens and bathrooms closed when you're cooking or having a bath or shower

As part of the Thirteen homes standard

- If you have a mould and condensation issue that won't go away, please report it to us and we'll send a decorator to clean and treat the area
- If this doesn't solve the problem, one of our surveyors will come to your home and work out the best solution for you. You can find more information about damp and mould on our website at **www.thirteengroup.co.uk/page/damp-mould-condensation**, by calling or visiting Touchpoint **www.thirteengroup.co.uk/page/touchpoint-stores** or by speaking with your housing services co-ordinator.

