

gentoo



Our Customer Safety Standard

www.gentoogroup.com

Our

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At Gentoo, your safety and wellbeing are our top priority. This standard explains the steps we take to make sure every home we manage is safe, secure, and meets all standards upheld under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing's Standards, and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

From yearly gas and electrical checks to managing things like asbestos, radon, and water hygiene, we're committed to keeping your living environment safe.

By working together, we can make sure your home stays a safe and comfortable place to live.

Access to your home

- To keep your home safe and well-maintained, we may need access to carry out checks or repairs. We'll always try to arrange a time that works for you and give you plenty of notice.
- Always ask to see a tradesperson's identification. Please be aware to also ask contractors working on behalf of Gentoo to see ID. Call us on 0191 525 5000 and select option 2 if you would like to confirm someone's identity.
- If we can't get access and the work is essential for your safety or the safety of others, we may need to take legal steps to enter your home.

Gas

- To help keep you, your family, and your neighbours safe, we carry out a gas safety check once a year in every home with a gas meter or gas pipework.
- We'll send you a letter with the date of your appointment. Someone aged 18 or over must be home to let us in.
- After the check, you can view your gas safety record online within 28 days at: <https://tenancydocuments.gentoo.com>.

Solid fuel

If your home has a solid fuel appliance (like a wood-burning stove or coal fire), we'll help keep it safe by:

- Carrying out a safety check and service every six months.
- Sweeping the flue or chimney to make sure there's enough ventilation and everything is working safely.

Radon gas

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that can sometimes build up indoors. To help keep you safe:

- We assess the risk of radon exposure in affected areas and put control measures in place, if needed.
- We use a risk-based approach to test radon levels in certain homes and, if necessary, work to reduce radon gas to a safe level.

For more information on Radon Gas, scan the QR code below.



Carbon monoxide

We take carbon monoxide safety seriously to protect you and your home:

- If your home has gas or solid fuel heating, we'll make sure it has a carbon monoxide detector and appropriate ventilation.
- We'll inspect and test your detector during your annual gas or six-monthly solid fuel safety check. If it's not working properly, we'll replace it with a new one.
- If your carbon monoxide alarm goes off, we treat it as an emergency and respond quickly.

Electrical

We carry out regular checks to make sure your home's electrics are safe and up to standard:

- Every five years, we'll inspect the electrical system in your home and in any shared (communal) areas.
- If a home becomes empty, we'll check and fix any electrical issues before a new customer moves in.
- If we find anything that needs attention during these checks, we'll put it right as soon as possible.

Fire safety

- We will carry out a fire risk assessment of:
 - communal areas of blocks of flats, sheltered schemes and extra care schemes
 - homes of multiple occupation (HMO's)
 - and community buildings.
- We will check and service fire extinguishers and fire blankets in communal areas every year.
- We make sure that all flat entrance doors in enclosed communal blocks are fitted with an approved fire door and inspect them every year.
- We make sure necessary doors in communal areas are approved fire doors and inspect them regularly:
 - every 3 months for blocks over 11 metres high
 - every year for blocks under 11 metres
- We will carry out any necessary repairs to fire doors, promptly following inspection.
- We will carry out regular visual inspections of all communal blocks to identify and remove fire safety hazards.



Smoke alarms

- Every home will have smoke and heat alarms that suit the property and your needs.
- These alarms are tested every year.
- If you live in a building with shared spaces, we also regularly service communal fire alarm systems.

Sprinkler systems

- We inspect and maintain sprinkler systems in homes and communal areas every year.

Person centered fire risk assessments

If you're at greater risk from fire, we'll work with you to carry out a person-centred fire risk assessment to help reduce the chance of a fire starting and make sure you know how to evacuate safely.

With your permission, we'll share the findings with the Fire and Rescue Service so they can support you too.

If needed, we can also refer you for a 'Safe and Well' visit, a free service from the Fire and Rescue team that offers extra advice and help.

When does a customer need a PCFRA?

A customer will need a PCFRA if they are vulnerable to a fire within their home, or would struggle to evacuate the building. A customer may need a PCFRA if they:

- would not be able to use the stairs to evacuate the building
- have a history of fires within their flat
- cannot hear the fire alarm
- have any cognitive impairments e.g. dementia
- have any hoarding issues
- use oxygen cylinders e.g. oxygen therapy for COPD

There are many other reasons customers may need a PCFRA. If you are unsure, please contact the Fire and Building Safety Team on 0191 525 5050 or fireandbuildingsafety@gentoogroup.com.

Asbestos

Asbestos can be dangerous if it's disturbed, so we take extra care to manage it safely:

- We inspect communal areas in blocks regularly to check for asbestos and make sure it's in a safe condition.
- We check empty homes for asbestos before new customers move in.
- Before starting any work, we'll identify and manage any asbestos to keep you safe.
- If asbestos is found in your home, we'll let you know and explain how to keep it safe.

Water hygiene

We take steps to help keep your water system safe and reduce the risk of issues like legionella:

- We'll give you clear information about the potential risk of exposure to legionella and how to keep your water system safe.
- We carry out water hygiene risk assessments in communal water systems at least every two years.
- We also assess the water system in your home using a risk-based approach to decide when checks are needed.
- If we find anything that needs fixing, we'll complete the work within a set timescale to keep everything safe.

Lifts

We regularly check and maintain lifts and home mobility equipment to keep you safe:

Passenger lifts (in communal buildings) are:

- inspected and serviced every six months
- taken out of use immediately if any safety issues are found
- repaired promptly if faults are identified
- clearly marked with their safe working load

We respond quickly to any breakdowns, including if someone is trapped.

Lifting equipment (in your home)

- Equipment like stairlifts and hoists are checked every six months
- If a fault is found, the equipment will be taken out of use until it's safe
- We'll carry out repairs as soon as possible

Damp and mould

We are committed to tackling damp and mould quickly and effectively:

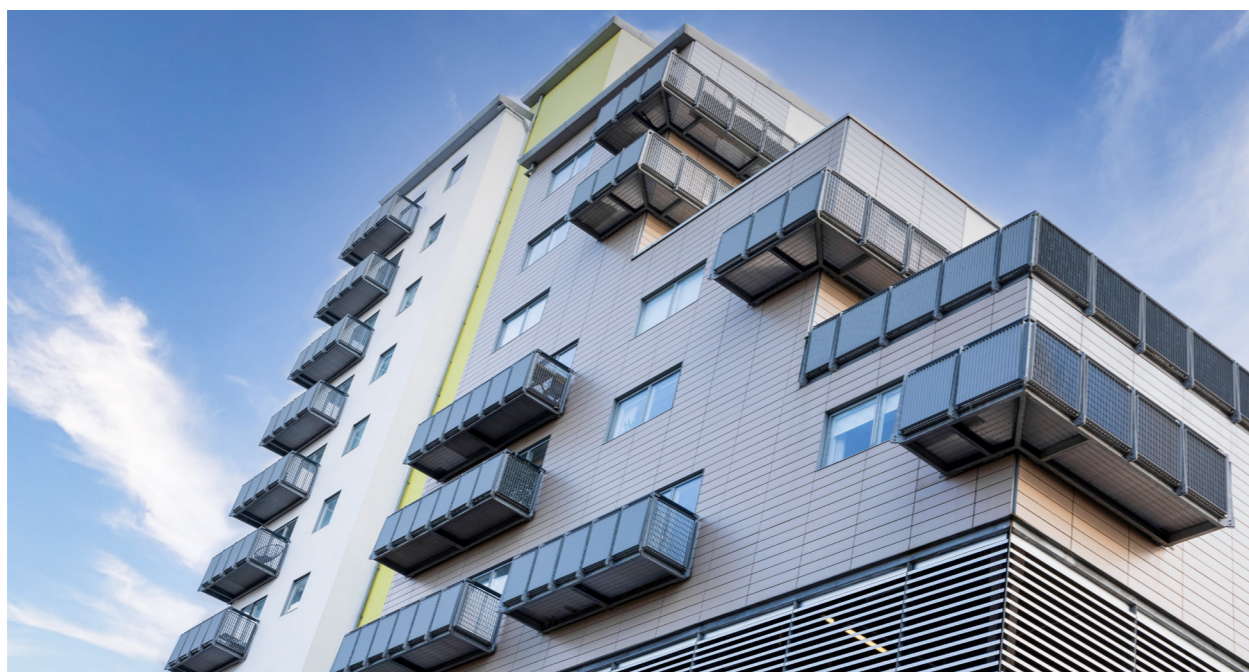
- As part of our 5-year stock condition survey, we'll inspect your home to check for any signs of damp or mould.
- We'll make sure empty homes are clear of damp and mould before anyone moves in.
- Our colleagues and contractors are trained to spot signs of damp and mould during visits and take action if needed.
- If you report a problem, we'll respond promptly and prioritise repairs based on how serious the issue is.

Awaab's Law

Awaab's Law is a new legislation coming into effect on 27 October 2025. It means that landlords like us need to take action on specific health and safety hazards within a new time limit. It's designed to protect your health and make sure problems are sorted quickly and properly.

We're committed to meeting the requirements of Awaab's Law and ensuring your home is safe:

- We'll make safe all emergency hazards (including severe cases of damp and mould) within 24 hours of being notified.
- We'll investigate significant hazards issues like damp, mould, and other hazards within 10 working days of them being reported.
- If the issue is significant, we'll begin repairs within a further 5 working days but if major works are required to start within 12 weeks.
- We'll provide a written report where necessary, outlining what we've found and what action we're taking.
- If your home can't be made safe quickly, we'll arrange and pay for alternative accommodation.
- We'll keep detailed records of all actions taken to resolve the issue.



Pests and vermin

- Pest control is your responsibility, but we're here to help if you're dealing with serious infestations like rats, mice, bees, or cockroaches. Please speak to your Neighbourhood Coordinator for advice or support.
- Sunderland City Council provides a free pest control service for common household pests such as mice, rats, wasps, and bedbugs. If they visit your home, they'll send us a report with any follow-up actions needed and we'll make sure those are completed quickly.
- Bats and their roosts are protected by law in the UK, so it's important not to disturb or harm them.
- If a bat is roosting in your home or has flown inside, don't try to catch it. Instead, contact the Bat Conservation Trust on **0345 1300 228** for advice.

Flooding

If your home is affected by flooding, we're here to help:

- We can provide items like sandbags and work with local agencies, including Sunderland City Council, to make sure you get the support you need.
- After a flood, we'll carry out a flood resilience survey to help reduce the risk of future exposure and damage.
- Sunderland City Council also offers guidance on what to do and who to contact during a flood. You can find more information at: www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/17439/Report-flooding-blockages-and-water-pollution

Balconies

We regularly check balconies to make sure they're safe for use:

- Regular inspections help us spot any issues early.
- If we find a problem that could affect your safety, access to the balcony will be restricted until it's fixed.
- We'll carry out repairs promptly so you can get back to using your space safely.

Contractors working in your home

If a contractor is attending your home to carry out a repair on our behalf, you will be notified in advance of their visit. Please ensure you have received notification from Gentoo Group before allowing access.

If you have any questions about this document, you can contact us on **0191 525 5000**.