

Consultation on a reformed Decent Homes Standard for social and privately rented homes

L&Q resident response

September 2025

At L&Q we want to make sure that residents' voices are heard and amplified, especially when it comes to how we help residents maintain their homes. This is why, in addition to providing our corporate response, we engaged a group of L&Q residents to share their views on the Government proposals for a reformed Decent Homes Standard.

General feedback

- Residents generally expressed support for the proposed new requirements.
- However, some proposals were more popular than others. Safety features like child-resistant window restrictors and secure doors and windows were seen as non-negotiable. Residents want these to be part of the basic offer, not something they have to fight for. They also want regular checks to make sure these features are working properly. Controllable, whole-house heating and ensuring that homes are free from damp and mould were also viewed as essential.
- Other proposals like provision of floor coverings at the start of new tenancies and making the condition of building components take precedence over age were still agreed upon by the majority, but less unanimously.
- Residents highlighted the importance of ensuring the regulations are inclusive, particularly in addressing the needs of people with disabilities.
- Residents emphasised the importance of climate change adaptations, such as solar and heat pumps and emphasised the need to be forward thinking rather than choosing quick fixes.
- One resident felt that avoiding social housing stigma is essential. They believe that the design and decoration of rented homes, including elements like windows, doors, and fixtures, should be approached with sensitivity. This means that, when possible, resident preferences are considered. This helps empower new residents, encouraging them to care for and enjoy their homes.

Comments on how to update the definition of disrepair

A majority of respondents – all respondents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 60% of respondents from L&Q and You! – believe that building components should be judged by the condition rather than their age. They shared examples of older fittings working better than newer ones and stressed the need for regular inspections and repairs rather than relying on age alone. Some also mentioned that some things are used more frequently so may need replacing sooner.

- When asked to elaborate, most residents emphasised that well-maintained older components often outperform newer but poorly installed ones. Several shared personal stories of long-lasting, high-quality installations. They stated that we should focus more on resolving issues and carrying out regular inspections to extend the life of components rather than relying on age.
- Residents also mentioned that this depends on the type of repair. For instance, a roof can last a long time without problems, but a kitchen may require updates to accommodate new appliances and power points. Both should be taken into consideration. Some mentioned that bathrooms are used

more frequently and that poor-quality materials may not last 15 years. Others noted that something may appear to be in good condition, but the parts may be old and no longer available.

- Residents noted that it is a waste of time and resources if components are replaced simply because of age and are still in good condition.

Comments on core facilities

A vast majority of respondents – all respondents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 91% of respondents from L&Q and You! – agreed that landlords should provide at least three of four of the following facilities: a kitchen with adequate space and layout; an appropriately located bathroom and WC; adequate external noise insulation; adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats.

- The kitchen and bathroom/WC were most frequently prioritised due to their direct impact on daily comfort and hygiene. Residents suggested the kitchen should have adequate space for appliances and good storage cupboards. There was emphasis on regular repairs and these areas being prone to dampness.
- Some noted that noise reduction should be prioritised as this can influence the health and wellbeing of residents.
- Entrance areas were mentioned less often but were still recognised as being important. It was also noted that this requirement could favour homes in blocks.

Comments on window restrictors

A vast majority of respondents – all respondents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 88% of residents from L&Q and You! – agreed that child resistant window restrictors are essential with most from L&Q and You! strongly agreeing (72%). Respondents mentioned this is because landlords should be responsible for safeguarding the home from hazards to ensure the health and safety of residents.

- Some residents stated that it is essential to also ensure that override mechanisms are working so residents can escape to the fire escape or balcony in case of an emergency.
- They also emphasised that these windows should be aesthetically designed.

Comments on home security measures

A vast majority of respondents – all respondents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 90% of residents from L&Q and You! – agreed that secure external doors and windows should be added to the list of essential facilities.

- All residents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 90% of residents from L&Q and You! agreed that landlords need to ensure secure external doors and windows.

- Anti-social behaviour among communities was seen as a reason that this is necessary and a reason to as to why it would improve mental health.

Comments on floor coverings

There were **mixed views on whether landlords should provide floor coverings** at the start of new tenancies. Some in the Involved Residents opportunity said yes to whether landlords should provide floor coverings, some said no, and some said it depended on the context. **54% of respondents** from L&Q and You! supported the proposals. Some saw it as essential for safety and comfort, while others felt it should be a personal choice. Many suggested an opt-in model or additional cost added to rent if flooring is provided.

- Some raised concerns that in social rent tenancies, which are usually longer and can last decades, it could deprive residents from making their own choices as some have personal preferences on colour and type of flooring. Some also said it should only be required on request. If the proposal is implemented, respondents believe residents should be able to choose the colour and quality of the flooring.
- Those who supported the proposal saw it as beneficial for noise insulation and health and safety. They noted that moving into a home with bare concrete floors can be dangerous, cold, damp, and contribute to poor indoor air quality. Proper coverings would reduce slip hazards, especially for children, elderly tenants, and those with mobility issues.

Comments on thermal comfort requirements

A vast majority of respondents – All residents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 94% of residents from L&Q and You! – agreed that every home should have heating that can be controlled and can warm the whole house, with 74% from L&Q and You! strongly agreeing. They mentioned this is essential so they can control the temperature in accordance with their specific needs at all times and can adjust each room's temperature individually. They linked thermal comfort to better health, lower costs and fairer treatment, especially for low-income households. There were also calls to move away from outdated systems like storage heaters and to consider cooling options as summers get hotter.

- Respondents highlighted how this proposal would improve their lives. As controlled heating would allow them to manage how they heat their homes, reduce waste and lower costs. It would promote inclusion and equity, as inconsistent or partial heating systems disproportionately affect low-income renters.
- Residents stressed the various health benefits this proposal would offer, as cold homes can be linked to respiratory illness, cardiovascular strain, mental health challenges, and damp and mould. Controlled heating would help maintain safe indoor temperatures, especially for children, older adults, and those with chronic conditions.
- Residents suggested removing storage heaters and offering better ventilation and cooling systems, as heat is also becoming a problem.

- Residents emphasised that having a timer or thermostat-controlled heating system is essential as many are affected by the cost of living crisis.

Comments on damp and mould

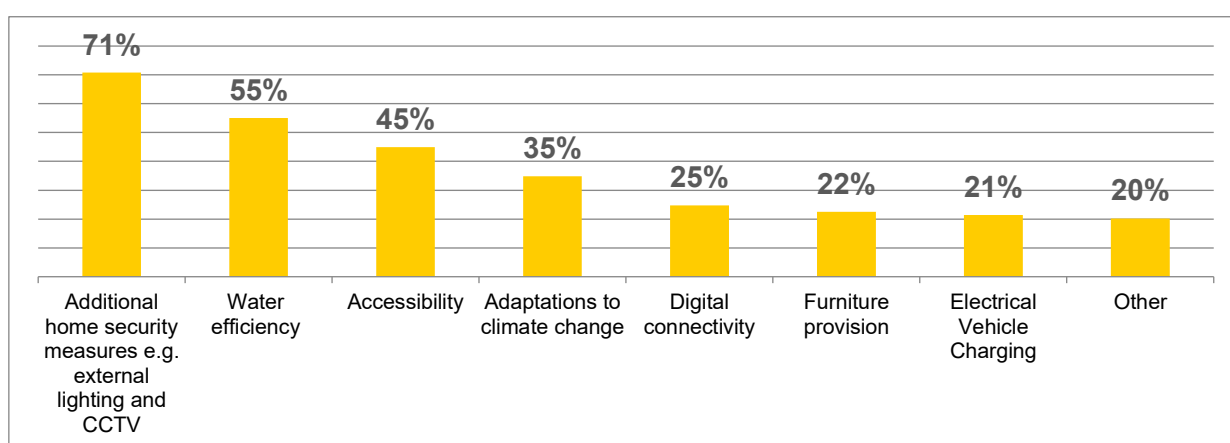
A vast majority of respondents – All residents from the Involved Residents opportunity and 94% of residents from L&Q and You! – agreed that landlords should ensure homes are free from damp and mould with 83% from L&Q and You! strongly agreeing. They called for clear accountability and better support when issues arise as damp and mould issues affect health and damage belongings.

- When asked to elaborate, they stressed the negative impact long-term exposure can have on health, particularly for children, older adults, and those with pre-existing conditions.
- Residents felt the proposal would ensure everyone receives the same level of service when experiencing these issues, including those less likely to demand repairs. Some suggested the issue may be more common in older properties or caused by hard-to-detect leaks. There were also mentions of the need to review how residents are compensated for damage to furniture caused by damp and mould.

Comments on additional best practice guidance

Additional home security, accessibility, and water efficiency were the most frequently chosen topics that residents would like to see in best practice guidance.

- Respondents to the Involved Residents Opportunity were most likely to select accessibility and home security as most important. Out of the L&Q and You! survey respondents, top selected options included Additional home security (71%), Water efficiency (55%), and Accessibility (45%). Below is a graph of what percentage of respondents selected each topic.



- Residents expressed that CCTV and lighting would help reduce vandalism and improve overall safety. Several noted that feeling secure in their homes is fundamental to wellbeing.
- Others spoke about the urgent need for air conditioning and energy-efficient systems, linking this to climate change and the increasing discomfort during warmer months. There was also concern about

the lack of reliable repairs and maintenance, with some residents stating they had given up seeking help due to poor service.

- There were various comments around damp, mould, and noise pollution with residents stating these were serious health risks, not just maintenance problems. They called for improvements in housing standards that reflect the world we are living in.

Methodology

We collected data from two different sources:

- Responses to a questionnaire form sent to our database of 837 Involved Residents. A role profile describing the responsibilities and expected outcomes of the opportunity was advertised and 16 residents signed up. Those who signed up were sent a presentation explaining what the proposals were, how they may impact L&Q, and why we want to hear from residents, accompanied by a questionnaire form. We received a total of 11 responses.
- Responses from a survey sent out to L&Q and You! which included the same presentation and questions. In addition to a free text response option, we also asked respondents to select “Strongly Agree / Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree” for each of the proposals. We received 89 responses.

In total we received feedback from 100 residents which have been summarised in the above response.

Resident Involvement at L&Q

To create a culture of accountability and transparency and ensure there’s a pathway for residents to influence L&Q and Government decisions, we aim to make resident involvement embedded into every part of our organisation. Resident involvement opportunities provide a variety of flexible volunteering opportunities for residents to get involved, shape services, and work in partnership. Being an involved resident offers the opportunity to scrutinise performance, help create new policies and provide feedback on new and existing services. Involved Residents also have access to training courses through our Peer Learning project. To become a involved resident, residents can either complete our [online form](#) or email rinvolvement@lqgroup.org.uk to highlight their interest. They will receive monthly emails highlighting the range of involvement opportunities that are available, focusing on business areas across L&Q.

To gain an understanding of residents’ views we also use the L&Q and you! online community, which is made up of around 3,000 L&Q residents who regularly take part in online research activities. The residents on the community are representative of our overall customer base in terms of demographics.