

Floored 3:

A snapshot report investigating the impact of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) requirement to provide flooring in social housing.

**What we
heard**

**Why it
matters**

**What landlords
could do next**

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Foreword from our sponsors



At Tapi Carpets & Floors, we believe that a home should be ready for people to live in. Flooring is an important part of that. It can make a home feel warmer, more comfortable and more welcoming, while also providing a practical and durable foundation for everyday life.

The inclusion of flooring within the Welsh Housing Quality Standard was an important recognition of this. Now, several years into its implementation, there is a valuable opportunity to step back and understand what has worked well, what has proved challenging and what can be learned for the future.

We are pleased to support this research by TPAS Cymru. Through our work with housing providers, we have seen first-hand both the benefits of providing flooring and the practical challenges involved in delivering it across different types of homes and housing stock. Specification, cost, procurement, availability, installation, durability and resident expectations all have a part to play. There are also important questions around how flooring is delivered alongside wider void and maintenance programmes, and how housing providers can achieve the best outcomes for residents while managing significant financial and operational pressures.

This research provides an opportunity to bring those experiences together and look honestly at what has worked, where improvements can be made and what good practice looks like.

We hope the findings will help housing providers, policymakers and their partners continue to improve the way flooring is delivered across Wales, ensuring that the ambition behind its inclusion in the Standard translates into positive outcomes for residents



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Section 1: Context & Background

Context

The provision of flooring in social homes has become an important focus within the sector, particularly following the 2024 update to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). In the past, most tenants moved into properties without flooring being provided in all rooms. This meant that tenants had to find the money to fit flooring themselves or simply go without. Previous Floored reports by TPAS Cymru and Tai Pawb in 2020 and 2023 highlighted the scale of the problem analysing tenant experiences and operational challenges faced by landlords.

As the new WHQS requirement has been in place since April 2024, this report aims to provide an update on the experiences of tenants and landlords of flooring provisions in homes. Drawing on our snapshot survey findings, we present the experiences of tenants and landlords to promote sector wide learning. The report will discuss the context of the change, what landlords and tenants told us about impact of the flooring requirement flooring and will conclude with some ideas for how the sector can move forward.

Thank you to the tenants and social landlords who participated in the survey. Your experiences are an essential contribution to our understanding of flooring in social homes as presented in this report.

Aims of the report

The aims of this report are to:

- Share the impact of the WHQS flooring requirement on social housing tenants and landlord organisations in Wales
- Identify key issues that landlords may want to investigate further with their tenants.
- Provide some key considerations for social landlords to explore further.

Background

Adequate flooring in all rooms was implemented as part of the WHQS in April 2024, following a consultation by Welsh Government. The change was motivated by growing recognition that tenants moving into a new social housing property were often unable to afford new flooring alongside other moving expenses. Some tenants lived without flooring for years creating safety risks and prevented tenants feeling settled in their homes.

The issue was brought to attention through our TPAS Cymru and Tai Pawb's Floored report in 2020 which documented the experiences of tenants moving into properties without flooring in living areas and bedrooms. Tenants told us that they had to choose between essentials and flooring, take out loans to afford carpets and felt embarrassed to invite guests into their homes. These findings highlighted that a lack of adequate flooring at the point of re-let is a real barrier to tenants being able to build lives in their new home.

Following the publication of Floored, the Welsh Government began reviewing the WHQS framework. A consultation was opened and from the responses it was clear how important providing flooring was for social tenants. Attention was also drawn to how some landlords' current practices: forcing an existing tenant to dispose of all their flooring upon moving out was wasteful and disadvantaged incoming tenants. In 2023, the Welsh Government confirmed that the updated WHQS would include a requirement for adequate flooring in all rooms at the point of re-let. The requirement came into place in April 2024, marking a significant change for the sector.

The requirement has been in place for over two years and the sector has heard very little about how the changes are going. As a result, TPAS Cymru decided to revisit the issue as part of our ongoing commitment to amplifying tenant voices. We aimed to understand how landlords have implemented the change, how tenants have experienced it and what challenges and opportunities for improvement remain.

Methodology

We designed two short surveys to collect the views of landlords and tenants. Both surveys were translated into Welsh and were available online, through the platform QuestionPro.



Landlord Survey

The landlord survey contained ten questions, five of which were open questions that required a written response. We invited all social landlords in Wales, housing associations and local authorities, to complete the survey once per organisation. We received 24 responses, giving a response rate of 59%. Housing associations made up 77% of respondents, slightly higher than their proportion in the sector (71%).

Although not all respondents disclosed their organisation, those who did represented a broad geographical spread across Wales, including both rural and urban areas.

Tenant Survey

The tenant survey contained nine questions, three of which related to contact details and the prize draw. Of the six flooring questions, four were open and two were closed. We undertook a sample of 50 tenant households who had moved into their home since April 2024.

We asked respondents whether they had moved into a home with brand new or existing flooring to help provide context to our analysis. We found that 48% of tenants had brand new flooring, 24% had existing and 18% had a mix of both. 10% of tenants were not sure what flooring their home came with.

How responses were analysed

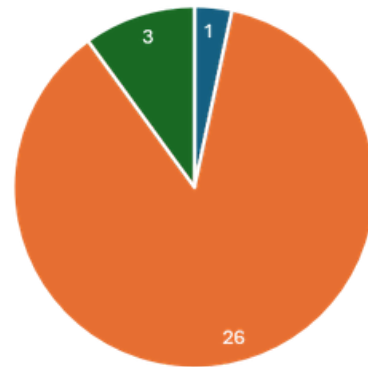
Closed questions were analysed quantitatively and are presented in graphs. Responses to open questions were analysed thematically. Each response was reviewed and categorised according to the key themes it expressed. These themes were then grouped to identify common patterns across each question. This approach allowed us to capture the frequency of particular issues and the depth of tenant' and landlords' experience that can only be revealed in qualitative data.

Section 2: Snapshot of Findings

How landlords are implementing the WHQS flooring requirement

How do you approach flooring in re-lets?

Survey responses show that social landlords have largely adopted a mixed approach to flooring provision balancing the reuse of existing flooring and replacing with new when necessary. Only one organisation stated that they always install new flooring.



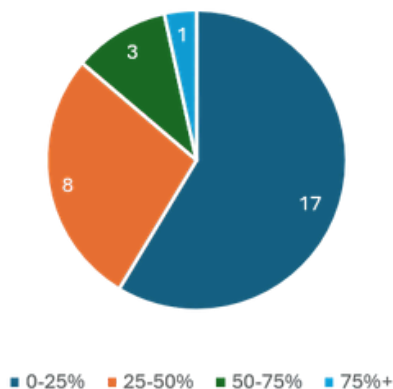
■ Always new ■ Mix of new and keeping existing flooring ■ Other (please explain)

This mixed approach is shaped by practical considerations.

One landlord explained that decisions are tailored to the needs of the incoming tenant, noting that ‘we have a very small number of voids, as a majority of our properties are adapted, wheelchair users would require vinyl not carpet.’ Another highlighted that although they technically operate a mixed model, ‘new massively outweighs keeping existing (flooring)’ potentially indicating that reuse is rare.

Reuse of existing flooring

If your organisation sometimes keeps existing flooring, please roughly estimate the percentage of re-lets where existing flooring is kept:



■ 0-25% ■ 25-50% ■ 50-75% ■ 75%+

When asked to estimate how often existing flooring is retained, most landlords reported that flooring is kept in 0–25% of re-lets. This confirms what one landlord suggested: only a very small amount of flooring is kept during the void process. The majority of landlords are keeping existing flooring in less than a quarter of re-lets. Only one landlord estimated reuse in more than 75% of cases. These findings highlight the operational

challenges of reusing existing flooring in the relet process.

Examples of reasons for replacing existing flooring included:

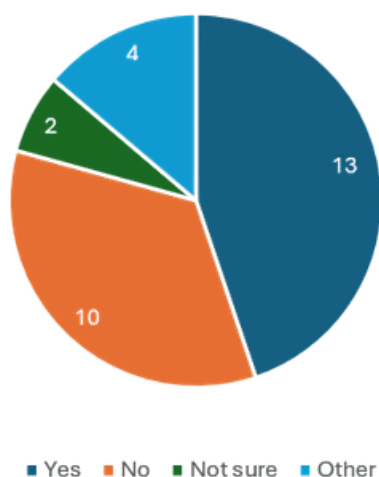
- Flooring left by outgoing tenants can be in poor condition or require expensive professional cleaning
- Major works during void periods can damage flooring or require its removal
- Assessing flooring suitability is time and resource intensive, meaning that replacing flooring can be more cost-effective than inspection
- Landlords preferring to always replace to ensure all their properties are let at the same standard and maintain consistent policy

Sourcing Flooring

All landlords reported they sourced flooring brand new from suppliers 100% of the time. Although some expressed interest in exploring recycled or reused flooring, they highlighted significant barriers, including void turnaround times, quality assurance and the lack of organisations providing this service.

Flooring Policies and Guidance

Do you have a written policy or guidance that defines when flooring is suitable for being reused?



A notable shift was observed since our last report in 2023. In 2023, only 11.1% of landlords reported having a written policy defining when flooring is suitable for reuse. In this most recent survey, 45% of landlords now do. This demonstrates that the WHQS has prompted organisations to revisit how they approach flooring and create consistency and fairness through policy.

Having a policy benefits both tenants and social landlords. A good policy will cover how landlords assess flooring and clarify when flooring may be able to be cleaned and reused. In larger void teams, policies are particularly important to ensure a consistent organisational approach by all individual staff members. Policies help tackle decision fatigue by setting clear parameters and rules to follow. In turn, this ensures that all properties are treated the same and makes sure that no tenant is unfairly advantaged over another.

Landlords who responded 'other' told us that the decision about when flooring is replaced is part of their void relet standard or made during an end of tenancy inspection where staff members assess the condition of the existing flooring.

Social and Environmental value of the flooring requirement

We asked landlords whether they have seen any social or environmental value of the new flooring requirement. For example, this could be working with local contractors, using reclaimed flooring or working with a social enterprise. Most landlords told us they did not see any social or environmental value and viewed the requirement as increasing waste due to flooring being replaced. However, whilst the landlord is seeing more waste management costs as they are removing the flooring themselves, the flooring was previously being removed by the outgoing tenant so there is unlikely to be a net increase in overall waste.

Of the landlords who did respond positively the most common answers were that it financially benefits the tenant. Some landlords were able to employ local contractors to fit the new flooring whilst those from rural areas had difficulties finding provision in their local area. One landlord pointed out that: 'There does not seem to be a supplier of recycled flooring suitable for the delivery required to our properties'. This demonstrates that some landlords would be interested in pursuing more sustainable flooring options but there is currently no option for them to consider. Perhaps as time goes on and the requirement becomes more integrated within landlord organisations responses to this question will change in future years.



Section 3: The outcomes of the WHQS Flooring requirement - Two Perspectives

Tenants and landlords both identified clear benefits of the flooring requirement. Tenant's responses were consistently positive, with many describing flooring as essential to affordability, dignity, comfort and safety. Landlords expressed similar sentiments, noting improvements in tenant satisfaction.

Outcomes for Tenants

Whole Home Affordability

Tenants repeatedly emphasised the financial relief provided by flooring. One explained "It was such a bonus and really helped me as I would not have been able to afford flooring as well as moving costs.". Another said: "I could focus on buying essentials like food and beds instead."

Moving into a home involves significant upfront costs, and flooring is one of the most expensive parts. Without the WHQS requirement many tenants would have faced difficult trade-offs between essential items like white goods, furniture and creating a safe, comfortable living environment with flooring. Flooring provision helps prevent financial hardship during the move-in period setting tenants up for a successful tenancy.

Landlords also echo this sentiment highlighting that moving into homes with flooring meant 'significant saving for the tenant at the start of the tenancy'. Another social landlord told us that the removal of flooring costs for tenants has meant that their hardship fund can support more tenants.

Cost of Living Support

In the context of rising living costs, flooring provision has had a substantial impact on tenant's finances. One tenant stated: "If I had to pay for carpets, I wouldn't have been able to pay the rent!". Others reported that without flooring they would have needed to take out loans or save up money for months, even years. One tenant emphasised how unaffordable fitting flooring is, particularly in larger homes: *"It saved my family having to live with concrete floors as we'd never have been able to afford to carpet a 3 bedrooms house. We work on low salary so struggle even for essentials"*.

The requirement ensures that tenants do not begin their tenancy in debt or on bare floors, reducing stress and supporting long-term financial wellbeing.

Sense of Home

Flooring significantly shapes tenants' first impressions of their new home. Presenting tenants with a well-presented property shows that their social landlord cares. One tenant noted: *"It gave me confidence that the property had been properly prepared for new tenants."*

Pride and comfort of homes was regularly discussed in responses by social landlords. One landlord said that providing flooring: *"creates a greater sense of pride and ownership in the home"*. Others echoed this response and landlords reported a sense of home and belonging at a much higher rate than tenants that we surveyed.

Warm Homes

Tenants highlighted the insulating benefits of flooring. One respondent explained: *"The carpets definitely kept the house warmer and made it much more comfortable for me and my family."* Quality flooring reduces heat loss and contributes to a more energy efficient home. This is particularly important in creating homes with lower environmental impacts and running costs.

This was another theme that was discussed more often by landlords than tenants. This could be due to surveying tenants during the hottest summer on record! One landlord stated that: *"providing carpets supports keeping the property warmer during winter months and improves overall comfort"*. Another said that: *"floor is warm and safe and minimises risk of cold"*. Social landlords may see these benefits reflected in the winter months as less tenants may be coming forward for assistance with energy bills. In addition, warmer homes help to prevent damp and mould, both a health and property hazard.

Safety

Safety was a prominent theme, especially for families with young children. One tenant shared: *"It was much safer for my children. We had to move in straight away as fleeing violence, The kids could play on the floor from day one, and I didn't have to worry about them getting hurt on bare floors."* Whether wooden or concrete, bare floors can both hazards such as splinters, dust and hard surfaces that increase injury risk. Flooring provides immediate safety for all tenants, particularly young families who can allow their children to play worry free.

Accessibility

Tenants with mobility issues reported significant improvements to their living conditions after being provided with accessible flooring. One wrote: *"Now I have wood laminate flooring which has made my life so much better that words cannot describe the emotional feelings I have now".* Carpets can impede mobility aids meaning that the choice of flooring a landlord makes on behalf of their tenant can make a massive difference in their lives. Another tenant told us that having flooring provided means they can cover the extra costs associated with a disability more easily: *"It meant that our savings we spent a long time scraping together could be spent on essential accessible appliances rather than flooring".*

Dignity

For tenants, the provision of flooring was not simply about practicality or financial support; it was also about dignity. Moving into a new home with clean, finished floors means tenants are not expected to live on bare concrete or unfinished surfaces while they find the money to make the property habitable. This was particularly important for tenants already facing financial hardship or moving in difficult circumstances.

For tenants moving following homelessness, domestic abuse, financial hardship or other difficult circumstances, this can be particularly significant. Being given a home that is warm, safe and properly finished can help provide a sense of stability at what may otherwise be a very uncertain time.

One tenant described the difference this made: *"It made me feel like I was moving into a proper home rather than just a house with four walls".*

This feedback reflects a wider principle of treating tenants with dignity and respect. Providing flooring removes one of the most visible signs of an unfinished or inadequate home and ensures that tenants can move in with a sense of comfort, pride and self-worth.

Installation and Move in Experience

Many tenants emphasised the importance of flooring being fitted before they moved in. This prevented the disruption of having to clear rooms after unpacking. One tenant noted: *"The flooring was modern and well fitted"*, while another praised the preparation of the carpets which had been 'cleaned before I moved in'.

Timely, quality installation shaped tenants first impressions of their landlord. A well presented home signalled care and professionalism, helping tenants feel welcomed and valued. This first impression may help create a positive relationship throughout the tenancy and increase a tenant's trust in their landlord.

Choice and Personalisation

Although not reported by every tenant, some tenants were offered a choice of flooring type or colour. This was particularly valued by tenants with specific needs, such as those with mobility issues or sensory needs. One tenant told us: *"they listen to what type of flooring best suited my needs"*. Offering choice was appreciated by tenants and helped give them agency over their home environment.

Quality, Durability and Practicality

Tenants frequently commented on the quality and robustness of the flooring provided. Grey carpets and lino were appreciated for their practicality, one tenant mentioned: *"I am glad they provided a dark grey colour, it minimises stains and marks being noticed"*.

Durable flooring was seen as a long-term benefit, reducing the likelihood of early wear and tear and helping tenants feel confident that their home would remain in good condition. Durable flooring is particularly important for families with children, pets or mobility aids that may scratch fragile flooring.

Outcomes for Landlord Organisations

The majority of surveyed tenants feel that the provision of flooring has had a positive impact on their move in experience and life. We were curious to ask landlords if they have felt any positive impacts of the change on their organisations. On the whole, landlords observed higher rates of tenant satisfaction and reduced complaints.

Tenant Satisfaction

Landlords reported improvements in tenant satisfaction since the introduction of mandatory flooring. Several organisations noted higher scores in internal satisfaction surveys, alongside positive verbal feedback from tenants during sign-ups and early tenancy visits.

Comments from landlords:

- 'Tenant satisfaction with the standard of their allocated home are reflected in our tenant satisfaction results.'
- 'Providing flooring has helped us improve the overall standard and consistency of homes at the point of letting'
- 'The main area is customer satisfaction feedback where we have seen a positive increase percentage wise.'

It is clear that whilst the primary aim of the flooring requirement is to improve tenant experiences, landlords are seeing benefits as a result of the change.

Reduced Noise

A smaller but notable number of landlords reported reductions in noise complaints and instances of anti-social behaviour, particularly in multi-storey buildings such as flats. Properly fitted flooring with underlay, particularly carpets help absorb sound and reduce noise transfer between flats.

Landlords have told us that this has led to:

- 'Fewer noise complaints'
- 'Reduced noise transfer and reduced ASB'

Although flooring is not a catch all solution to all noise complaints, some landlords have seen measurable benefits to these issues.

Tenancy Sustainment

Many landlords speculated that flooring has contributed to longer, more stable tenancies. Landlords told us that they believed tenancy sustainment increased for these reasons:

- Better first impressions
- Reduced financial strain
- Improved comfort and safety

Reduced tenancy turnover minimises re-let costs and save a landlord organisation money over time. It is also a general indicator that tenants are more satisfied with their homes and the service their landlord is providing.

One landlord told us that they: *“operates a Hardship Fund to support new and existing tenants facing financial hardship. During 2023/24, around c. £80k was spent on supporting tenants to obtain suitable floor coverings. Since implementation of WHQS2023, this had reduced, Hardship Fund expenditure for floor coverings for existing tenants during 2025/26 reduced to c.£10k, resulting in more financial assistance being able to be administered to more tenants.”* This means that more tenants can be supported by social landlords therefore increasing the likely length of tenancy.



Section 4: Challenges of flooring provision

Challenges of providing flooring for social landlords.

Finance and Budgets

The most frequently reported challenge was the financial impact of providing flooring in every re-let. One landlord told us they: 'have had to add £600,000 to our budget', highlighting the scale of investment required. Others explained that the requirement had reduced operating margins or forced them to reallocate funds from other areas of the organisation. However, no landlord told us that they have been unable to meet the requirement due to financial challenges.

Re-let times and void management

Flooring installation can complicate void management. While fitting flooring itself is relatively quick, coordinating installation within wider void works is more challenging. One landlord explained: *"Programming the flooring installation can be difficult, as it has to happen at the right time of voids works, and requires the property to be empty of contractors or in-house DLO."*

Key issues included:

- Organising flooring correctly, ensuring that flooring is installed after messy jobs but before tenant handover
- Preventing increased key to key times, which affect an organisations rental income and delay a new tenant moving in
- Managing unpredictable void schedules, which can make contractor coordination difficult.

Contractor availability and capacity

Several landlords reported difficulties securing reliable contractors, especially in rural or geographically dispersed areas.

Challenges included:

- Limited contractor availability
- Scheduling Conflicts
- Sourcing flooring at short notice, especially felt in rural areas
- Supply vs Demand, struggling to find enough flooring fitters in the local area.

Environmental and Sustainability Barriers

We asked landlords if they think there has been any social or environmental value from the new requirement to provide flooring. We were curious to learn if any landlords have been able to reduce flooring going to landfill or work with a social enterprise to reclaim recycled flooring.

In responses to this question, it was clear that there are considerable challenges present in using recycled flooring. Participants told us that reclaimed flooring is hard to obtain and raised concerns over low quality. For this reason, many social landlords felt that the new requirement created more waste. However, if tenants had to dispose of their flooring upon move out previously yet now a landlord assesses and removes it if necessary, the net amount of waste is the same.

Challenges experienced by Tenants

Although most tenants reported positive experiences, a significant minority described challenges related to flooring provision. These issues highlight areas where implementation is inconsistent and where improvements could strengthen the impact of the WHQS requirement. This section combines the responses we had from tenants when we asked them what their landlord could do better as well as any concerns expressed by tenants throughout the whole survey.

Challenges reported by tenants fell into four main themes: choice, communication, quality and installation.

Appropriateness of flooring

Tenants raised concerns about whether the flooring provided was appropriate for their individual needs, circumstances and the practical demands of the home. While some tenants had little or no choice over the type or colour of flooring installed, the issue went beyond personal preference. For some tenants, the flooring provided was perceived as unsuitable for their needs or as evidence that insufficient consideration had been given to the individual circumstances of the household.

Whilst providing tenants with a choice of flooring is not a specific requirement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), tenants felt that social landlords should nevertheless consider whether the flooring selected was fit for purpose and appropriate for the people living in the property. This was particularly important for tenants with mobility issues, who often preferred laminate or vinyl flooring, which they felt was easier to move across and maintain. Other tenants highlighted practical considerations such as darker colours being less likely to show marks and signs of everyday use.

These experiences suggest that a one-size-fits-all approach to flooring may not always result in the most appropriate outcome for tenants. Flooring needs to take account of factors such as mobility, ease of cleaning and maintenance, durability, household circumstances and the likely use of different rooms. What is suitable for one household may not necessarily be suitable for another.

Tenants also reported inconsistencies between properties, with neighbouring households receiving different types of flooring without being given a clear explanation as to why. This contributed to a perception that flooring decisions could be arbitrary or dependent on 'potluck', rather than being based on clear and transparent criteria. As one tenant told us, they wished their landlord had: *"Given prospective tenants a choice. Some neighbours given carpets, others given vinyl so potluck as to which you would get"*.

Appropriateness should therefore be considered alongside cost and value for money when landlords make decisions about flooring. While landlords will need to balance tenant needs with cost, durability, procurement arrangements and WHQS requirements, there is scope for greater consideration of individual circumstances when determining what flooring is most suitable.

Even where a full range of choices cannot be offered, applying clear criteria for when different types of flooring will be provided, could help ensure that flooring is better matched to tenants' needs. This would move away from a purely standardised approach and demonstrate that landlords are considering not only whether flooring has been provided, but whether it is genuinely appropriate, practical and fit for purpose for the tenant and their home.

Communication about flooring

Communication emerged as a recurring challenge for tenants throughout the flooring process. Tenants expressed uncertainty about:

- Whether flooring would be provided before they moved into their home
- When flooring would be installed
- What type and standard of flooring would be provided
- Whether flooring would be provided throughout the property or only in certain areas
- Who was responsible for the ongoing maintenance, repair or replacement of flooring
- How to properly care for and maintain the flooring once it had been installed.
- Who is responsible for future flooring repairs or replacement.

These uncertainties can create unnecessary stress for tenants, particularly at the point of moving into a new home when they may already be facing significant financial and practical pressures. Clear and timely communication from landlords, ideally from the earliest stage of the letting process, would help to establish expectations and prevent tenants from making unnecessary financial commitments.

For example, one tenant told us that they wished their landlord had informed them earlier that carpets would be provided. Had they known this in advance, they would not have spent time worrying about how they would find the money to purchase carpets themselves. This illustrates how a lack of information can have a direct impact on tenants' financial wellbeing and cause avoidable anxiety.

Communication should not end once flooring has been installed. Tenants should also be given clear and practical information about how to care for their flooring, including appropriate cleaning methods, products to use or avoid, and how to report damage, defects or problems with the installation. This is particularly important where tenants are unfamiliar with the type of flooring provided or where particular materials require specific methods of care. Providing this information could help tenants maintain the condition and lifespan of their flooring and reduce avoidable damage or disputes about responsibility for repairs and replacement.

Providing this information consistently and in accessible formats would help to reduce uncertainty, avoid unnecessary expenditure by tenants, support tenants to look after their flooring appropriately, and create clearer expectations between landlords and tenants. It would also provide tenants with greater confidence that they understand what they are entitled to and what they can expect from their landlord when moving into a new home.

Quality of flooring

A number of tenants expressed concerns about the quality of flooring provided, including dissatisfaction with both the standard of materials used and the quality of fitting. Importantly, tenants were not only concerned about the impact on themselves and their homes, but also about whether their landlord was receiving value for money for the flooring services it was commissioning.

Several tenants questioned whether their landlord was being overcharged or receiving poor value from flooring contractors and suppliers, particularly where work appeared to have been completed below the expected standard. There was a perception among some tenants that contractors and suppliers were being paid for a level of service that was not consistently being delivered. Tenants therefore raised concerns that their landlord could effectively be 'ripped off' by carpet fitters and flooring suppliers, particularly where inadequate installation or missing components were not identified through quality assurance processes.

Tenants reported that contractors did not always take sufficient time to 'lay the flooring properly' and, in some cases, appeared to have skipped key components such as underlay, with flooring being fitted 'directly over concrete'. Multiple tenants reported that their carpet had been laid without underlay. This raised concerns not only about the quality and durability of the flooring, but also about whether the landlord was paying for materials or installation standards that were not actually being provided.

There was also concern about the apparent lack of oversight of completed works by social landlords. Tenants questioned whether installations were being routinely inspected to ensure that the landlord had received the service it had paid for and that work met appropriate standards. One tenant commented: *"Please quality check after completion to make sure it's done to a satisfactory and safe standard. Suggest the fitter walks bare footed up the stairs to check carpet holder pins not sticking out. Yes, really".*

Overall, these concerns point to a wider issue of contract management and value for money, rather than simply tenant dissatisfaction with the provision of flooring. Tenants wanted greater assurance that their landlord was monitoring contractors effectively, checking the quality of completed work, and ensuring that public or rental income was not being wasted on work that was incomplete, poorly fitted or below the standard commissioned.

Section 5: Looking forward - Key considerations

The introduction of the requirement to provide flooring in social homes has evidently delivered benefits for tenants and landlords. Whilst the feedback around outcomes of flooring is clearly positive, there are areas relating to implementing the flooring requirement where further work could strengthen outcomes for tenants and landlords. The following key considerations are informed by the insight gathered from our survey of tenants and landlords. We hope that they provide practical areas landlord organisations to think about and promote continuous improvement. Landlords may benefit from surveying their own tenants to understand how their tenants are experiencing the requirement.

Review supplier value and quality

Landlords experienced limited availability and high costs from flooring suppliers and fitters. At the same time, higher costs did not always translate into a quality of flooring or installation that tenants recognised or valued.

Social landlords should have open discussions with suppliers and contractors about value for money, quality and performance. This could include reviewing whether the materials and installation provided are delivering the expected standard, particularly where landlords are experiencing increased costs or limited supplier availability. This should sit alongside stronger quality control and monitoring.

Enhance quality control

One of the most common pieces of feedback from tenants was around the quality and fitting standards of flooring provided and a perception that the contractor wasn't proving value for money and the landlord had been ripped off. Tenants may also be reluctant to report concerns because they are grateful that flooring has been provided and recognise the cost to their landlord.

Social landlords could consider introducing simple quality checks to identify installation issues before a property is handed over, while also giving new tenants an opportunity to raise concerns once they have moved in. This could include checking that carpets have been fitted correctly and that appropriate underlay has been provided where required.

Practical actions could include:

- Introduce post-installation checks and resolve issues before property handover.
- Check in with new tenants shortly after they move in and give them a clear opportunity to raise concerns.
- Provide contractors with clear specifications, including minimum material standards and appropriate-quality underlay.
- Monitor recurring installation issues and use this information to improve contractor performance.

Improve communication with tenants

It was clear that tenants often experienced uncertainty around the moving-in process, particularly about how the new flooring requirement would work in practice. Providing clear information at the start of the process could help manage expectations and reduce uncertainty. Information should be available across different channels and formats to ensure it is accessible to tenants with different communication and access needs.

Practical actions could include:

- Provide clear information before sign-up explaining what flooring will be provided.
- Clarify maintenance responsibilities, including what tenants should do if flooring is damaged.
- Provide simple guidance on caring for flooring and prolonging its lifespan.

Close the feedback loop

Tenants provided valuable insight into what their social landlord was doing well and where improvements could be made. Landlords could strengthen this feedback loop by creating simple opportunities for tenants to comment on their experience after moving into a property.

Practical actions could include:

- Introduce a short post-move-in survey that includes questions about flooring.
- Share relevant feedback with contractors and use it to inform future procurement and performance discussions.
- Track recurring issues to identify opportunities for improvement.

It is important that landlords act on the feedback they receive. This helps ensure that the time tenants spend sharing their experiences leads to meaningful improvements for current and future tenants.

Consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our survey showed that the type and suitability of flooring can be particularly important for tenants with mobility, sensory or cultural needs. Social landlords should continue to consider these different requirements when planning and providing flooring.

Having a conversation with incoming tenants can help landlords understand individual needs and avoid taking a one-size-fits-all approach. The most satisfied tenants in our survey were often those who felt their social landlord had genuinely listened to them rather than simply completing a standard process or 'ticking a box'.

Practical actions could include:

- Ask incoming tenants whether they have any flooring requirements linked to mobility, sensory, cultural or other needs.
- Consider individual needs when selecting the type and specification of flooring.
- Ensure staff and contractors understand when adaptations or alternative flooring solutions may be appropriate.
- Record and use tenant preferences and feedback to improve future practice.



Conclusion

The introduction of the WHQS flooring requirement in April 2024 has had a clear and positive impact on tenants across Wales. The findings of this report show that providing adequate flooring at the point of re-let has improved affordability, dignity, comfort, safety, and accessibility for new tenants, while also contributing to a stronger sense of home and a more dignified move-in experience. For many households, flooring has removed a major financial barrier and reduced the stress associated with moving in and setting up a home.

Landlords have also experienced benefits. Improved tenant satisfaction, fewer noise complaints, and indications of stronger tenancy sustainment suggest that flooring provision supports more stable and positive landlord–tenant relationships. At the same time, the requirement has prompted organisations to strengthen void processes, develop clearer policies, and improve internal coordination.

However, the change has not been without challenges. Landlords face increased financial pressures, contractor shortages, and the need to balance void turnaround times with quality installation. Tenants' experiences also highlight areas for improvement, particularly around communication, installation standards, and consistency of quality. These challenges do not undermine the value of the requirement, but they do demonstrate the importance of continued refinement and sector-wide learning.

Looking ahead, social landlords and suppliers have an opportunity to work together to build on the progress already made and ensure that tenants voices and experiences are listened to.

For further information, please reach out to enquires@tpas.cymru

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