



TRAFFORD COUNCIL

HOUSING SERVICES

GUIDANCE ON STANDARDS FOR HOUSES IN
MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

November 2009

Introduction

- 1.1 A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a house or dwelling which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household as defined in Section 258 of the Housing Act 2004. The full definition can be found in Sections 77, 254, 257, 258 – 260 of the Housing Act 2004 ([Housing Act 2004](#)).
- 1.2 The Housing Act 2004 introduced a new method of assessing the conditions in residential accommodation, the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Applying these conditions to the various categories of HMO will help to ensure that the property is of suitable standard to avoid the presence of category 1 or 2 hazards which may otherwise result in legal action being taken by the Council.
- 1.3 These notes are for guidance only, a full inspection will be required to determine appropriate requirements for a particular property. The Housing Standards Team should be consulted before undertaking works.

2 Categories of HMOs covered by these standards

2.1 Category A – Bedsits

- 2.1.1 These are houses occupied as individual rooms, bedsits and flatlets which are considered to have a number of rooms for exclusive occupation, not necessarily behind one door. There will be some sharing of amenities, usually bathrooms and/or toilets. In such a house, each occupancy would be rented separately (on a separate tenancy).

2.2 Category B – Shared houses

- 2.2.1 These are houses occupied on a shared basis. Some would be let to groups of friends on a shared/group tenancy, others will be occupied by individuals on separate tenancies. Each occupant will have their own bedroom, but will share the amenities with the other tenants. This accommodation is typically occupied by groups of students.

2.3 Category C – Lodgings

- 2.3.1 These are houses catering for not more than two lodgers where the owner is living as his/her main residence. This is the traditional house let in lodgings where the lodgers share family facilities and meals are provided from the family kitchen. If a property has more than two lodgers, it will be classed as a shared house for the purposes of this standard.

2.4 Category D – Self contained flats

- 2.4.1 This category includes most houses or buildings which, by erection or conversion, contain dwellings which are self contained and all such dwellings comprise accommodation which is behind one access door off a common area. The dwellings would normally contain all the standard amenities, although it would be possible for some to be unimproved self-contained flats lacking one or more standard amenities. There is no sharing of amenities with occupiers of other dwellings.

- 2.4.2 If the house or building containing the self-contained flats is pre-conventional over to meet modern building regulations, including the provision of appropriate active and passive fire safety measures, then they would not be considered to be within a category of HMO.

2.5 **Category E – Hostels and supported housing**

These types of properties will be dealt with under the most appropriate category of HMO, usually being shared house HMOs.

2.6 **Interpretation**

- 2.6.1 The Council accept that not all properties will fall readily into one of the categories detailed above. Whilst these standards will be applied to all HMOs, the Council accept that it may be appropriate, on occasion, to treat a property as comprising a mix of the different Categories. The classification of individual lettings within an HMO and the interpretation of these standards in their application to a mixed Category property shall be at the discretion of the Housing Services Manager.
- 2.6.2 The Council accept that there cannot be hard and fast demarcation between categories of HMO and that a house might move between categories over a period of time. The classification of a HMO at any particular time will be at the discretion of the Housing Services Manager and the appropriate requirements will be enforced.

3 **Standards Applicable To All Categories**

3.1 **Natural lighting**

- 3.1.1 The HHSRS 'Lighting' hazard covers the threat to physical and mental health associated with inadequate natural and/or artificial light. It also includes the psychological effects associated with the view from the dwelling through glazing. Government guidance suggests that all living rooms (including bedrooms), kitchens and recreation space should allow access to sunlight.
- 3.1.2 All habitable rooms shall be provided with an area of clear glazing, equivalent in total area to at least 1/10th of the floor area of the room. All habitable rooms should have sufficient natural lighting to enable normal domestic activities to be undertaken without strain during the main hours of daylight without requiring artificial light, unless the day is particularly overcast. This is inclusive of both basement and attic rooms.
- 3.1.3 Windows should be of an adequate width to provide for a reasonable view of the immediate surroundings. Cills in living areas should be low enough to allow a seated person a reasonable view and window heads should be above the eye level of someone standing in the room. However, in certain areas, e.g. if the cill height is below 800mm, toughened glass or guarding may be required. Ideally the views should be of open space through the windows of all rooms other than those where privacy is required (bathrooms and WC's). The view should also

provide for supervision of outside recreation space and, for security purposes, of the means of access to the dwelling.

3.1.4 All bathrooms and watercloset compartments shall comply with the requirement of para 3.1.2 above. Where This is not practicable, adequate artificial lighting shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Housing Services Manager.

3.1.5 All staircases, landings and passages shall be provided with an area of clear glazing. Where This is not practicable, adequate artificial lighting shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of para 3.2.2 below, to the satisfaction of the Housing Services Manager.

3.2 Artificial lighting

3.2.1 The HHSRS 'Lighting' hazard covers the threat to physical and mental health associated with inadequate natural and/or artificial light. It also includes the psychological effects associated with the view from the dwelling through glazing. Government guidance suggests that all living rooms (including bedrooms), kitchens and recreation space should allow access to sunlight.

3.2.2 All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, watercloset compartments, staircases, landings and passages shall be adequately lit by electrical lighting. Time switches shall only be allowed to common landings, passages and staircases and should stay on for an adequate time to allow the normal and reasonable use of the areas. There shall be sufficient switches to operate the artificial lighting on each landing, corridor or passage and each switch should allow adequate lengths of corridors, passages and stairways to be illuminated at the same time.

3.2.3 All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms and watercloset compartments should have at least one ceiling or suitably located wall lighting fixture with the capacity to enable normal domestic and recreational activities to be undertaken without eye strain and without creating glare or shadows, after dark. Artificial light is particularly important where domestic tasks require adequate light, for example in the kitchen over worktops, sinks and cookers.

3.2.4 Circulation spaces should also have at least one ceiling or suitably located wall lighting fixture capable of providing adequate and effective illumination. Particular care should be given to the location of lighting fixtures in relation to stairs and changes of level.

3.2.5 Inappropriately positioned artificial lighting within the dwelling which causes glare or shadows can interfere with occupiers identifying other hazards such as changes in the floor surface or level. In addition, care needs to be taken when siting external lighting as This can be annoying and cause sleep disturbance to adjacent occupiers.

3.3 Ventilation

3.3.1 There are a number of HHSRS hazards which are directly affected by ventilation. These include 'damp and mould growth', 'excess cold' and 'excess heat', the members of the hygrothermal conditions sub-group of hazards. The

other main sub-group affected by ventilation are the pollutants (non-microbial), which includes hazards such as carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products, uncombusted fuel gas and volatile organic compounds.

- 3.3.2 Damp and mould growth - Inadequate ventilation can result in high indoor humidity levels and greatly increased house dust mite populations as well as increasing the likelihood of dampness which can lead to mould or fungal growths. This hazard also includes the threats to mental health and social well-being which may be caused by living with the presence of damp, damp staining and/or mould growth.
- 3.3.3 Excess cold – excess ventilation wastes heat and reduces air temperatures. It also causes draughts and discomfort. Excess ventilation may be caused by too large or inappropriately sited permanent openings, or large openable windows. Draughts can also be caused by ill-fitting doors or windows.
- 3.3.4 Excess heat – dwellings in multi-occupied buildings are more likely to be affected by excessively high indoor temperatures, particularly those located immediately beneath an uninsulated roof or those with only a south facing elevation. Of particular importance to the risk to health of occupants is the ability to dissipate heat at night. Ventilation and/or the provision of air-conditioning influence the occupants' ability to control the indoor air temperature.
- 3.3.5 Pollutants (non-microbial) – Adequate and appropriate ventilation will assist in ensuring an adequate air supply for proper combustion of fuels and that the combustion gases can escape easily. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are a diverse group of organic chemicals which includes formaldehyde, that are gaseous at room temperature, and are found in a wide variety of materials in the home including chipboard, plywood, particle board, paints, glues and solvents. Other, non-building sources of VOCs include tobacco smoke, furnishings and wall and floor coverings. Dwellings should be provided with adequate and appropriate means of ventilation to ensure the level of VOCs are kept as low as possible.
- 3.3.6 All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms and watercloset compartments shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.3 m (7'6"), except in the case of existing underground rooms, which will have a minimum height of 2.14m (7'0") and attic rooms, which shall have a minimum height of 2.3m (7'6") over an area of the floor equal to not less than half of the area of the room, measured on a plan 1.52m (5'0") above the floor.
- 3.3.7 Room ventilation will be achieved either by means of ventilation openings direct to the external air, such as the openable parts of a window, a louvre, progressively openable ventilator or an external door, or in the case of non-habitable rooms by means of a mechanical system. Mechanical ventilation will only be permitted in habitable rooms in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Housing Services Manager.
- 3.3.8 Care should be taken when escape windows or other large openings are fitted, to ensure that the occupants can use the window for ventilation during the day or night, without being at risk of compromising security or contributing towards the excess cold hazard. In these instances it may be appropriate to consider fitting an additional, smaller window opening for ventilation purposes. It is also essential that windows and doors are correctly fitted. Particular attention should

be given to louvre openings, which have traditionally been very difficult to exclude draughts.

- 3.3.9 In the case of natural ventilation, the ventilator shall be capable of being opened to such an extent that fresh air will readily circulate to all parts of the room. However, to control the amount of ventilation and avoid prejudicing security, some part of the ventilation shall be provided by means other than by an external side hung door.
- 3.3.10 The total size of ventilation openings in a habitable room and naturally ventilated kitchen, bathroom and watercloset compartment shall not be less than 1/20th of the floor area of the room. In living rooms and kitchens, some part of the opening shall be at least 1.75. (5'9") above floor level.
- 3.3.11 Ventilation by mechanical means shall provide at least one air change per hour in habitable rooms and kitchens and three air changes per hour in bathrooms and watercloset compartments.
- 3.3.12 Fixed heat-producing combustion appliances, (including cookers), taking air from the interior of the dwellings shall have provision for adequate ventilation to ensure complete combustion of fuels and the full discharge of the products of combustion.
- 3.3.13 Permanent means of ventilation in the form of a flue, airbrick, hit and miss ventilator or louvered window shall be provided in all dining/kitchens, bathrooms, watercloset compartments and in any other rooms containing either cooking or washing facilities.

3.4 **Water supply**

- 3.4.1 The HHSRS 'water supply' hazard covers the quality and adequacy of the supply of water within the dwelling for drinking and domestic purposes such as cooking, washing, cleaning and sanitation. As well as adequacy, it includes threats to health from contamination by bacteria, protozoa, parasites, viruses and chemical pollutants.
- 3.4.2 *Legionella* are more likely to be found in the water systems of multi-occupied buildings than in other domestic accommodation. Drinking water should therefore be sampled and analysed regularly, particularly for new installations and where extensive repairs or alterations have been carried out.
- 3.4.3 Each separate occupancy shall be provided with a supply of cold running water, suitable for drinking purposes, either directly off the rising main or by such other means as are acceptable to United Utilities.
- 3.4.4 The water pressure to all fitments shall comply with the minimum requirements laid down by United Utilities at all times.
- 3.4.5 All water supplies shall, where necessary, be protected from frost damage.
- 3.4.6 All water storage tanks shall be covered to prevent access to mice, birds and insects.

- 3.4.7 Care should be taken to ensure that there are no dead-ends in pipework, particularly for the hot water supply, to avoid the water stagnating.
- 3.4.8 Only materials and fittings suitable for the storage and supply of water should be used on the installation.

3.5 Space heating

- 3.5.1 The HHSRS 'excess cold' hazard covers the threats to health from sub-optimal indoor temperatures.
- 3.5.2 Within all rooms intended for general living, there shall be an efficient and controllable space heating system of sufficient capacity to maintain most of the room at a temperature of at least 22°C (16°C in kitchens, bathrooms, hallways etc.).
- 3.5.3 The system shall be safely and properly installed and maintained. It shall be appropriate to the design, layout and construction, such that the whole of the dwelling can be adequately and efficiently heated.
- 3.5.4 The provision for space heating may be centrally controlled, but such systems shall be operated to ensure that occupants are not exposed to cold indoor temperatures and shall be provided with controls to allow occupants to regulate the temperature within their dwelling.
- 3.5.5 Sufficient thermal insulation should be provided to minimise heat loss from the property and maximise the efficiency of the heating system.

3.6 Personal washing facilities, drainage & sanitary conveniences

- 3.6.1 The HHSRS 'personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage' hazard covers threats of infection and threats to mental health associated with personal hygiene, including personal washing and clothes washing facilities, sanitation and drainage.
- 3.6.2 The greatest risks appear to arise from the sharing of facilities and personal hygiene behaviour, rather than design and condition of facilities (however, This obviously does have an impact). Although not a direct cause of illness, odours associated with poor hygiene, the visual appearance of facilities which are difficult to clean or have stained surfaces, damaged decoration and furnishings resulting from splashing or leaking appliances or drainage, can be a cause of stress and depression. This is especially the case with shared facilities, where the occupant may have very little control over the situation.
- 3.6.3 An insufficient number of sanitary closets for the number of occupants will increase the risk of spread of pathogens, particularly if the closets are shared by two or more dwellings when responsibility for cleaning may be confused. There is also an increased risk of infection due to a limited amount of communication between individuals from different households. If one household has an infectious illness of which the other households are unaware, sharing of facilities will increase the likelihood of the illness spreading.

3.6.4 Self-containment of units of accommodation is therefore much more desirable than shared facilities. However, where This is not possible, adequate numbers of facilities along with regular cleansing/maintenance and management, should help to reduce the risks.

3.6.5 The minimum standard of washing facilities varies depending on the number of people sharing them. The following table gives the facilities required for 1 – 10 people sharing facilities. If you have a greater number of people, please contact the Housing Standards Team for further information.

Number of persons	Washing & WC facilities required
1 – 4 persons	Wash hand basins (WHB) not required in each sleeping room. At least 1 bathroom required with a fixed bath or shower and WHB. At least 1 WC required with WHB, to be separate from the bathroom (can be contained within the bathroom of self-contained flats or within a 2 nd bathroom in all other cases).
5 persons	WHB required in each sleeping room, unless there is a bathroom/WC with WHB on the same floor. At least 1 bathroom required with a fixed bath or shower and WHB. At least 1 WC required with WHB, to be separate from the bathroom (can be contained within a 2 nd bathroom).
6 – 10 persons	WHB required in each sleeping room, unless there is a bathroom/WC with WHB on the same floor. At least 2 bathrooms required with fixed baths or showers and WHBs. At least 2 WC's required with WHB, (1 of which can be contained within a bathroom).

3.6.6 External WC's or WC's located within bathrooms or shower rooms will not be taken into account in determining compliance with the above requirements.

3.6.7 Wash hand basins, baths and showers shall be of adequate size and must be provided with their own continuous supply of hot and cold running water.

3.6.8 Each unit of accommodation must not be more than one floor distant from a bathroom containing a fixed bath or shower.

3.6.9 Each unit of accommodation must not be more than one floor distant from a WC with a WHB.

3.6.10 No bath or shower shall be provided in a kitchen.

3.7 Refuse storage and disposal

- 3.7.1 The HHSRS 'domestic hygiene, pests and refuse' hazard covers hazards which can result from inadequate and unhygienic provision for storing and disposal of household waste.
- 3.7.2 Refuse containers shall be provided for the storage of refuse awaiting collection or disposal outside the dwelling, which are sufficient for the needs of the house and shall be of a type acceptable to the Council. There should also be suitable and sufficient provision for the storage of household refuse within the dwelling. The storage provisions should be readily accessible to the occupants, but sited so as not to create a danger to children. The refuse facilities should not cause problems of hygiene, nor attract and allow access to pests.
- 3.7.3 All containers shall be located on a hardstanding with suitable access for cleansing of the area and the removal of the containers.
- 3.7.4 Arrangements should be made for the removal of refuse at (at least) weekly intervals.

3.8 Overcrowding

- 3.8.1 The HHSRS 'crowding and space' hazard covers hazards associated with lack of space within the dwelling for living, sleeping and normal family/household life.
- 3.8.2 Overcrowding can increase the risks associated with a number of other hazards. The risk of domestic accidents is greater where there is insufficient space for occupants. Small kitchens also increase the risk of accidents. Where people and their belongings and furniture are crowded together, it may not be possible to keep circulation space or functional space around appliances clear. Beds can be placed too close to fixed heating appliances, increasing the risk of burns and fire. Crowded conditions can also result in moisture levels much higher than that which the dwelling is designed to safely deal with, which can lead to problems with condensation and high humidities, which in turn have their own health risks.
- 3.8.3 The number of persons permitted to occupy each unit of accommodation will be determined by the Council in accordance with current standards.
- 3.8.4 Notwithstanding the above, a room shall not be used as sleeping accommodation by persons of the opposite sex over the age of ten, who are not living together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex).
- 3.8.5 A room must not be used for sleeping persons in excess of the permitted number in relation to the floor area.
- 3.8.6 As well as sufficient sleeping space, there shall be a living area of sufficient size for the household. Indoor and outdoor play and recreation space is necessary in accommodation housing children. Outdoor play space should be readily visible from within the dwelling and safely separated from public and neighbouring areas.

3.8.7 The Council has adopted the space standards shown in the table below.

Room Use	Minimum Floor Area		Permitted Number
	(sq. ft)	(sq. m)	
Living/sleeping/cooking	150	13.95	1
	220	20.46	2
Living room/bedroom	110	10.23	1
	150	13.95	2
Living room/kitchen	120	11.15	1
	160	14.88	2
Dining room/kitchen	125	11.61	Up to 5
Bedroom	70	6.51	1
	110	10.23	2
Kitchen	50	4.65	1
	75	6.97	Up to 5
Living room	110	10.23	1
	140	13.02	2 - 4
Living rooms & dining rooms (within a shared house)	120	11.15	Up to 5

3.9 Basement Accommodation

3.9.1 The Council are mindful of the need to pay specific attention to the difficulties posed by the occupation of underground rooms, particularly with respect to dampness, inadequate ventilation and natural lighting. Any scheme for the occupation of underground rooms shall be submitted to the Housing Services Manager for approval and shall make specific reference to the ways in which these problems will be addressed.

3.9.2 Natural lighting shall be provided by a glazed opening of not less than 1/10th of the floor area in habitable rooms, and some part of the window shall be 1.75m (5'9") above floor level. Where there is a continuous, solid obstruction within 3.0m (9' 10") of the window of a habitable basement room, there shall be a glazed area totalling not less than 1/10th of the floor area of the room above the point on the window from which a line can be drawn upwards at a vertical angle of 30° with the horizontal to pass the top of the obstruction. A bay window with side lights will be treated as if it were a flat window of a size equalling the sum of the front and side lights.

3.9.3 There shall be an unobstructed space immediately outside any window opening, which shall extend for at least the entire width of the window and have a depth of not less than 0.6m ('3 3") measured from the external wall or not less than 0.3m (12") in the case of bay windows with side lights.

3.9.4 NB. In all cases of basement accommodation, it is preferable to fit escape windows in habitable rooms. However, care should be taken when escape windows are fitted, to ensure that the occupants can use the window for ventilation during the day or night, without being at risk of compromising security

or contributing towards the excess cold hazard. In these instances it may be appropriate to consider fitting an additional, smaller window opening for ventilation purposes.

3.10 Adequate means of escape from fire and other safety issues

3.10.1 Introduction - Escape from fire

3.10.2 The HHSRS hazard of 'fire' covers threats from exposure to uncontrolled fire and associated smoke at a dwelling. It includes injuries from clothing catching alight on exposure to an uncontrolled fire, which appears to be common when people attempt to extinguish such a fire.

3.10.3 There is a greater risk of a fire occurring in flats than in single occupancy houses. Flats in buildings constructed before 1920 have the greatest likelihood of causing death and injury from fire. The increased risk is related to the number of storeys, such that the risks for flat and bedsit occupiers escalate when they live in accommodation of over two storeys in height. An adult living in either a self-contained flat or bedsit accommodation in a building of three storeys or more is roughly 10 times more likely to die in a fire than an adult living in a two storey singly occupied house.

3.10.4 HHSRS operating guidance also states that for any form of multi-occupied building, there should be adequate fire protection to the means of escape and between each unit of accommodation, appropriate fire detection and alarm system(s), and, as appropriate, emergency lighting, sprinkler systems or other fire fighting equipment.

3.10.5 The nature and arrangement of installations to provide adequate means of escape and adequate other fire precautions to meet the requirements of the relevant British Standards is dependant on an individual property and consultation with the relevant Officers is recommended. To avoid unnecessary or additional works, it is advisable to submit drawings and obtain approval for schemes and design and layout of systems from the Housing Services Manager prior to installation.

3.10.6 The Council will have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by Government in respect of adequate means of escape and other fire precautions. At the time of preparing these standards, the Lacors guidance on fire safety provisions had been published. The Council's 'Guidance on Fire Safety Requirements for Houses in Multiple Occupation' takes account of the Lacors Guidance and all other relevant information, in order to ensure the safety of the occupants is preserved.

3.10.7 The guide is used by Officers to establish adequate methods of passive and active controls in any particular property, it is not designed to be a 'how to' guide for landlords or installers. The guide has been used to develop general advice notes on the basic fire safety requirements required for the main types of HMO. However, each property needs to be assessed in order to take account of unique factors which may increase or decrease the risk from fire. It is therefore always advisable to obtain approval for schemes from the Housing Services Manager prior to installation.

3.11 General information on fire safety

3.11.1 The Council will work to the principle that all occupants of an HMO should be able to leave the premises safely in the event of a fire. This will be achieved by a combination of measure to prevent the spread of products of combustion to occupancies or escape routes before the occupants have made good their escape, and/or measures such as fire warning systems, which can help to ensure that occupants receive warning of a fire in sufficient time to make their escape before escape routes become impassable (known as active and passive systems).

3.11.2 In determining the specific measures appropriate to any individual HMO, the Council will have regard to:

- The adequacy of the means by which individual occupancies and the escape routes are protected from the spread of products of combustion;
- The distances of travel involved in escaping from each room to a final exit from the HMO;
- The nature of the means of escape and their suitability for the number and types of occupants. Regard will be had to the steepness of stairways and the width of doorways and corridors. Regard will be had to the need for emergency lighting and adequate signposting of the means of escape;
- The need for fire precautions such as fire warning systems, fire sensors and fire fighting equipment.

3.11.3 All smoke alarms and other active and passive fire control measures installed within the house shall be maintained in proper working order in accordance with what is considered necessary.

3.11.4 A copy of the latest fire alarm commissioning/testing certificate, emergency lighting commissioning/testing certificate and fire extinguisher servicing certificate must be submitted to the Council, for inspection by the Housing Services Manager, when a request in writing is received from the Council.

3.11.5 Travel within a unit of accommodation - Bedrooms and living rooms shall not be entered through a living room or kitchen.

3.11.6 Bedroom doors are to be nearer to the letting exit than the kitchen or living room doors.

3.12 The need for good management to ensure fire safety in HMOs

3.12.1 Adequate means of escape and other fire precautions are only sufficient if there are also adequate arrangements to ensure that the HMO is managed in such a way that the standard of fire safety is maintained. Managers of HMOs are reminded that they must maintain all means of escape from fire and all equipment provided by way of fire precautions, and to keep means of escape free from obstruction at all times.

3.13 Fire routines in certain premises

3.13.1 It is recommended that practice fire drills should be carried out at least twice a year in certain premises.

3.14 Furniture safety

3.14.1 All of the furniture in the HMO that is provided under the terms of any tenancy or licence must meet all safety requirements contained in current enactments. This includes upholstered articles such as beds, sofas, armchairs etc.

3.14.2 Please refer to the following web site for more information on [The Furniture and Furnishings \(Fire\) \(Safety\) Regulations 1988](#) relating to the provision of furniture in rented accommodation, alternatively, contact Public Protection on 0161 912 4916 and request a copy of the leaflet - [A Guide to the Furniture and Furnishings \(Fire\) \(Safety\) Regulations](#).

3.14.3 Website address: [Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform](#)

3.15 Electrical safety / provision

3.15.1 The electrical installation shall be kept in a safe condition and testing should be carried out at a minimum of five yearly intervals in compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations. [The Building \(Amendment\) \(No.2\) Regulations 2004](#)

3.15.2 In certain cases it is advisable to check the installation when there is a change in occupants.

3.15.3 All portable appliances, e.g. fridges, kettles and vacuum cleaners, provided under the terms of any tenancy or licence must be kept and maintained in a safe working condition. These should be tested at regular intervals (annually and when tenants change) to ensure they are safe to use.

3.15.4 Copies of all electrical installation inspection certificates and portable appliance testing certificates should be kept by the property manager.

3.15.5 The minimum number of electrical sockets required in all rooms is two double sockets. In addition, kitchens/kitchen areas must have two double sockets in addition to those required for cooking and refrigeration appliances. At least one of the double sockets must be above the work surface in the kitchen area. In shared houses, the minimum number of sockets in the kitchen is three double sockets in addition to those required for cooking and refrigeration appliances. At least two of the double sockets must be above the work surface in the kitchen area.

3.16 Gas safety

3.16.1 The Health and Safety Executive are the enforcing authority for issues relating to gas safety. Under the Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998, where a gas installation is present, an annual safety check must be carried out

on each appliance/flue and the installation pipe-work, appliances, and flues must be kept in a safe condition. All maintenance and safety checks must be carried out by a GAS Safe registered installer and the records kept for two years. A copy of the certificate must be issued to the tenants within twenty eight days of the check being completed. A copy of the latest certificate must also be issued to any new tenants before they move in.

3.16.2 Further information can be found on the following website:
http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/gas_law.htm#Responsibilities-Landlords

3.16.3 Alternatively, a leaflet is available on the main requirements of landlords under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, from Public Protection or the HSE.

3.17 Smokefree Legislation

3.17.1 Smokefree England's guidance relating to HMOs is that all internal common parts need to be smokefree. Common parts include common entrance lobbies, stairwells, lifts, corridors plus any facilities/areas shared by occupants of more than one household, including kitchens, bathrooms and living/dining areas.

3.17.2 Further information and guidance can be obtained from [Smokefree England](#)

4 Standards applicable to Category A HMOs – Bedsits

4.1 Facilities for the storage, preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water.

4.1.1 Each occupancy shall have its own separate kitchen. Where this is not practicable, each occupancy shall have its own kitchen facilities within the unit of accommodation.

4.1.2 Each separate occupancy shall be provided with a sink with its own supplies of hot and cold running water.

4.1.3 Each occupancy shall be provided with a proper food storage cupboard unit and refrigerator of adequate size, within the unit of accommodation.

4.1.4 The space below a sink will not be accepted as complying with the above requirement.

4.1.5 Each separate occupancy shall be provided with a suitable worktop for the preparation of food, arrangement in a convenient, workable layout, of not less than 0.55 sq.m (6 sq. ft.). Worktop occupied by the cooking appliances will be discounted from this measurement.

4.1.6 Each occupancy shall be provided with a proper cooking appliance. The minimum acceptable shall be:

- For a one person unit of accommodation, two rings or hot plates, together with a grill and conventional oven.
- For a two person unit of accommodation, a cooker with three or four rings, together with a grill and an conventional oven.

4.1.7 Two double electric socket in addition to those dedicated to cooking and re Fridgeration appliances, at least one of which shall be provided over the worktops.

4.1.8 All work surfaces shall be faced with heat-resistant, impervious material/finish.

4.1.9 The kitchen should be ergonomically and safely laid out to the satisfaction of the Housing Services Manager.

5 Standards applicable to Category B HMOs – Shared Houses

5.1 Facilities for the storage, preparation & cooking of food & for the disposal of waste water

- 5.1.1 Proper food storage of adequate and appropriate size and a suitable fridge shall be provided. One separate food storage cupboard shall be made available per person (minimum size of one 600mm width base unit per person).
- 5.1.2 The space below a sink will not be accepted as complying with the above requirement, whether ventilated or not.
- 5.1.3 A suitable worktop for the preparation of food shall be provided in the kitchen, arranged in a convenient, workable layout, of not less than 0.55 sq. m (6 sq. ft) per occupant.
- 5.1.4 Two double electric sockets in addition to those dedicated to cooking and refrigeration application, at least one of which shall be provided over the worktops.
- 5.1.5 Where there are between 2 and 5 people sharing, the kitchen shall be provided with a proper cooking appliance, consisting of four rings or hot plates, together with a grill and an conventional oven.
- 5.1.6 Where there are between 2 and 5 people sharing, the kitchen shall be provided with a sink, complete with drainer and base unit, with its own continuous supply of hot and cold running water.
- 5.1.7 Where there are between 6 and 10 people sharing, the cooking and sink facilities must be doubled.
- 5.1.8 If you have a greater number of people sharing, please contact the Housing Standards Team for further information.
- 5.1.9 All work surfaces shall be faced with heat-resistant, impervious material/finish.
- 5.1.10 The kitchen should be ergonomically and safely laid out to the satisfaction of the Housing Services Manager.
- 5.1.11 Each property shall contain a separate living room which is not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room.

6 Category C – Lodgings

- 6.1 These are houses catering for not more than two lodgers where the owner is living as his/her main residence. This is the traditional house let in lodgings where the lodgers share family facilities and meals are provided from the family kitchen. Providing the property has no category 1 hazards, and is not overcrowded in accordance with the present standards, there will not be any further requirements. If a property has more than two lodgers, it will be classed as a shared house (Category B HMO) for the purposes of this standard.

7 Standards applicable to Category D HMOs – Self Contained Flats

7.1 If the house or building containing the self-contained flats is proven to meet modern building regulations, including the provision of appropriate active and passive fire safety measures, then they would not be considered to be within a category of HMO.

7.1.1 All bedrooms, living rooms and bathrooms are to be directly accessible from a common access lobby and not from another room, with the exception of bathrooms in one bedroom flats, which may be an inner room.

7.1.2 In all cases, the floor area will be determined by the useable floor area of any room used as a bedroom, living room or kitchen and does not include any part of any bathroom, staircase, passageway, landing or access lobby.

7.2 Facilities for the storage, preparation & cooking of food & for the disposal of waste water

7.2.1 Proper food storage of adequate and appropriate size shall be provided.

7.2.2 A suitable worktop for the preparation of food shall be provided in the kitchen arranged in a convenient, workable layout, of not less than 0.55sq. m (6 sq. ft) per occupant.

7.2.3 Two double electric sockets in addition to those dedicated to cooking and refrigeration appliances, at least one of which shall be provided over the worktops.

7.2.4 The kitchen shall be provided with a suitably sited cooker point with adequate space for a cooker.

7.2.5 Fixed worktop shall be provided either side of and abutting to the cooker position (minimum 300mm each side).

7.2.6 A fixed worktop shall be provided, adjoining the sink unit on the side opposite to the drainer.

7.2.7 The kitchen shall be provided with a suitable fixed sink with a drainer and fitted with trap, overflow and waste-pipe.

7.2.8 All work surfaces shall be faced with heat-resistant, impervious material/finish.

7.2.9 The kitchen should be ergonomically and safely laid out to the satisfaction of the Housing Services Manager.

Contact details:

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