



**Community Safety Services
Private Sector Housing
Enforcement**

Houses In Multiple Occupation

Standards For Licensable Houses In Multiple Occupation

Minimum Standards For Amenities And Facilities, Including Space Standards.

Standards for Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation

These are the standards for deciding the suitability for occupation of a house in multiple occupation (HMO) by a particular maximum number of households or individuals.

These Standards should be assessed alongside the Operating Guidance scheduled in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and The Licensing & Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation & Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 - Schedule 3 ⁽¹⁾.

Certain HMOs require planning consent depending on the number of residents and the nature of the works carried out to convert the property. You are strongly advised to contact the Council's Planning Services Division ⁽²⁾ prior to carrying out any improvement works to meet the standards below.

In all cases properties will be required to meet minimum levels of safety and repair and comply with Building Regulations.

	Contents	Page No.
PART 1	Shared Houses	
1.1	Definition Shared Houses	2
1.2	Washing Facilities	2
1.3	Kitchen Facilities	3
PART 2	Bedsit / Non-self contained units	
2.1	Definition Bedsit / Non-self contained units	7
2.2	Shared Bathrooms	7
2.3	Individual Bathrooms	8
2.4	Cooking Facilities	9
PART 3	All Houses in Multiple Occupation	
3.1	Heating	10
3.2	Room Sizes	10
3.3	Stability	12
3.4	Repair	12
3.5	Dampness	12
3.6	Natural & artificial light	12
3.7	Ventilation	13
3.8	Gas Safety	14
3.9	Electrical Safety	14
3.10	Fire Precautions	14
3.11	Testing of Alarms, etc	14
3.12	Furnishings	15
3.13	Landlord & Tenant Obligations	15
3.14	Disposal of Rubbish	16
3.15	General Management	16
PART 4	Advice	17

PART 1 - SHARED HOUSES

1.1. **Definition** - Houses occupied on a shared basis. These would normally be occupied by members of a defined social group eg students or a group of young single adults. The occupiers each enjoy exclusive use of a bedroom but would share other facilities including a communal living space.

1.2. Washing Facilities

Amenity Standards In Relation To Ratio Of Persons To Washing Facilities	
	Preferably, each bedroom should be provided with a suitable wash hand basin together with its own supplies of hot and cold running water. Where this is not practicable, and the room is on the same floor as a bathroom, provision of a wash basin within the bathroom shall be accepted provided it is not shared by more than three persons. Otherwise the following standards are required:-
1-4 persons	At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined) A wash hand basin is required in the bathroom and in separate WC (if provided)
5 persons	1 bathroom AND 1 separate WC with wash hand basin (but the WC can be contained within a second bathroom)
6-10 persons	2 bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with wash hand basins (but one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms)
11-15 persons	3 bathrooms AND 3 separate WCs with wash hand basins (but two of the WCs can be contained within 2 of the bathrooms)

Bathroom means a room containing a bath or shower.

External WCs shall be ignored

All baths must be readily accessible bath of minimum dimensions 1700mm x 760mm in a bathroom,

All showers must be readily accessible of minimum dimensions 800mm x 800mm in a suitable shower room together with adequate drying and changing space where practicable shall be provided not more than one floor distant from any user.

All baths, showers and wash hand basins must be equipped with taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water and be connected to an appropriate drainage system.

All baths, showers and wash hand basins must be equipped with adequate splashbacks (300mm to baths and wash hand basins, full heights for showers or within separate water tight enclosure) with an adequate waterproof seal.

All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated (see heating section at Page 9 below - adequate mechanical ventilation in accordance with Approved Document F of the Building Regulations 2000.⁽³⁾)

All bathrooms and toilets must be of an adequate size and layout.

All bathrooms and toilets must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO

Landlords should ensure the provision of suitable floor covering to WCs, bathrooms and kitchens; these should be slip resistant, impervious and easily cleansable.

No toilet should open directly onto an area of kitchen where food is prepared unless mechanical extract ventilation and a wash hand basin is provided

Personal washing or WC facilities should not normally be more than one floor distant from the living accommodation.

1.3. Kitchen Facilities

Where all or some of the units of accommodation within the HMO do not contain any facilities for the cooking of food –

(a) there must be a kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation and of such layout and size and equipped with such facilities so as to adequately enable those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food;

(b) the kitchen must be equipped with the following equipment, which must be fit for the purpose and supplied in a sufficient quantity for the number of those sharing the facilities

- (1) sinks with draining boards;
- (2) an adequate supply of cold (from rising main) and constant hot water to each sink supplied;
- (3) installations or equipment for the cooking of food;
- (4) electrical sockets;
- (5) adequate worktops for the preparation of food
- (6) cupboards for the storage of food or kitchen and cooking utensils;
- (7) refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment (or, where the freezer compartment is not adequate, adequate separate freezers);
- (8) appropriate refuse disposal facilities;
- (9) appropriate extractor fans, fire blankets and fire doors

There should be suitable dining facilities, either within the kitchen or in a separate room on the same storey.

FACILITY	MINIMUM STANDARD	UP TO & INCLUDING 5 PERSONS	MORE THAN 5 PERSONS – UP TO 9
<p><i>Sinks with draining boards; An adequate supply of cold & constant hot water to each sink supplied;</i></p>	<p>A fixed impervious sink of minimum dimensions 500 x 600 mm with a drainer. It should be provided with an adequate and wholesome supply of cold water and an adequate supply of constant hot water and connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap</p>	<p>1 for up to 5 occupiers</p>	<p>1 per 4 occupiers or part thereafter</p>
<p><i>Installations or equipment for the cooking of food;</i></p>	<p>The primary facility should comprise an electric or gas hob with 4 rings and an oven with a grill. Alternatively a microwave oven may be substituted for one or two of the burner / hobs respectively</p>	<p>1 for up to 5 occupiers</p>	<p>1 per 4 occupiers or part thereafter – a microwave oven may be considered as an alternative to an additional cooker</p>
<p><i>Electrical sockets;</i></p>	<p>30 amp supply for an electric cooker. Points should be set at a convenient height and safe position.</p>	<p>2 twin outlet power sockets set at a convenient height and safe position in addition to dedicated sockets serving major appliances such as cooker, refrigerator and washing machine.</p>	<p>An additional twin outlet power socket for each two persons over 5 sharing. Additional sockets are needed for additional cookers, refrigerators and washing machines.</p>
<p><i>Worktops or tables for the preparation of food;</i></p>	<p>The worktops or tables should be secure, fixed and of an impervious material</p>	<p>1500mm (length) x 500mm (depth)</p>	<p>Additional 500mm length per user.</p>

<i>Cupboards for the storage of food or kitchen & cooking utensils;</i>	Single cupboard (wall or floor mounted) of not less than 0.08m ³ per person. This excludes any cupboard under a sink.		Capacity to be increased proportionately for each additional occupant.
<i>Refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment (or, where the freezer compartment is not adequate, adequate separate freezer);</i>	Not less than 0.075m ³ of refrigerator space per person	A standard sized combined fridge/freezer	Additional fridge/freezer for up to 9 persons
<i>Appropriate refuse disposal facilities;</i>	The refuse facilities should not cause problems of hygiene or attract pests and should not obstruct the means of escape in case of fire.	A sufficient number of refuse receptacles must be provided for the storage of refuse awaiting collection both internally and externally	A sufficient number of refuse receptacles must be provided for the storage of refuse awaiting collection both internally and externally
<i>Appropriate extractor fans;</i>	Electrical extractor fan in accordance with Approved Document F under the Building Regulations 2000. ⁽⁴⁾	As minimum standard	As minimum standard
<i>Appropriate fire blankets;</i>	To be supplied but not to be sited immediately adjacent to or over a cooker	To be supplied but not to be sited immediately adjacent to or over a cooker	To be supplied but not to be sited immediately adjacent to or over a cooker

Kitchen floors should be slip resistant, impervious and easily cleansable. Kitchen walls adjacent to cookers, sinks and food preparation areas should be provided with impervious splash backs.

Kitchen ceilings to be in good repair.
If there are 10 or more occupants a second fully equipped kitchen should be provided.

PART 2 – BEDSIT / NON-SELF CONTAINED UNITS

2.1 Definition - Houses occupied as individual rooms where there is some exclusive occupation (usually bedroom/living room) and some sharing of amenities (bathroom and/or toilet and/or kitchen). Each occupant lives otherwise independently of all others.

2.2 Shared Bathrooms

Amenity Standards In Relation To Ratio Of Persons To Washing Facilities	
1-4 persons	At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined) Wash hand basin required in bathroom and in separate WC (if provided)
5 persons	1 bathroom AND 1 separate WC with wash hand basin (but the WC can be contained within a second bathroom)
6-10 persons	2 bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with wash hand basins (but one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms)
11-15 persons	3 bathrooms AND 3 separate WCs with wash hand basins (but two of the WCs can be contained within 2 of the bathrooms)

Bathroom means a room containing a bath or shower.
External WCs shall be ignored

2.3 Individual Bathrooms

Where there are no adequate shared washing facilities provided for a unit of living accommodation, an enclosed and adequately laid out and ventilated room, with a toilet, wash hand basin and bath or fixed shower supplied with adequate cold & constant hot water must be provided for the exclusive use of the occupiers of that unit either –

- (a) within the living accommodation; or
- (b) within reasonable proximity to the living accommodation.

These amenities should be located not more than one floor distant from the unit of accommodation.

All baths must be readily accessible and of minimum dimensions 1700mm x 760mm in a bathroom,

All showers must be readily accessible of minimum dimensions 800mm x 800mm in a suitable shower room together with adequate drying and changing space where practicable and shall be provided not more than one floor distant from any user.

All baths, showers and wash hand basins must be equipped with taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water and be connected to an appropriate drainage system.

All baths, showers and wash hand basins must be equipped with adequate splashbacks (300mm to baths and wash hand basins, full heights for showers or within separate water tight enclosure) with an adequate waterproof seal.

All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated (see heating section below - adequate mechanical ventilation in accordance with Approved Document F of the Building Regulations 2000.⁽⁵⁾)

All bathrooms and toilets must be of an adequate size and layout.

Landlords should ensure the provision of suitable floor covering to WCs, bathrooms and kitchens; these should be slip resistant, impervious and easily cleansable.

No toilet should open directly onto an area of kitchen where food is prepared unless mechanical extract ventilation and a wash hand basin is provided

2.4 Kitchens

Where a unit of living accommodation contains kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of the individual household, and there are no other kitchen facilities available for that household, that unit must be provided with –

- (a) Adequate appliances and equipment for the cooking of food;
- (b) A sink with an adequate supply of cold (from rising main) and constant hot water;
- (c) A work top for the preparation of food;
- (d) Sufficient electrical sockets;
- (e) A cupboard for the storage of kitchen utensils and crockery;
- (f) A refrigerator

Facility	Minimum Standard	Each Unit
<i>A sink with an adequate supply of cold & constant hot water;</i>	A fixed impervious sink of minimum dimensions 500 x 600 mm with a drainer. It should be provided with an adequate and wholesome supply of cold water and an adequate supply of constant hot water and connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap	Per unit
<i>Adequate appliances & equipment for the cooking of food;</i>	A cooker with at least two burners / rings (four if provided for more than 1 person) with an oven and a grill. Rings must be at a height level with adjacent worktops. Alternatively a microwave oven may be substituted for one or two of the burners / hobs respectively	Per unit
<i>Sufficient electrical sockets;</i>	30 amp supply for an electric cooker. Points should be set at a convenient height and safe position.	4 sockets (2 doubles). Additional dedicated sockets are required for a cooker and refrigerator.
<i>A work top for the preparation of food;</i>	The worktop should be secure, fixed and of an impervious material	Minimum size 1000mm X 500mm (in useable sections)
<i>A cupboard for the storage of kitchen utensils & crockery;</i>	Standard floor or wall mounted cupboard of minimum capacity 0.16m ³ . The space below the sink unit is not acceptable to comply with this standard.	Per unit
<i>A refrigerator</i>	A standard refrigerator	A refrigerator with a minimum capacity of 0.15m ³

PART 3 – ALL HMOS

3.1 Heating

The principal living room of each occupancy shall be provided with a fixed heating appliance capable of heating the room to a temperature of 18 degrees centigrade when the outside temperature is -1 degree centigrade. This provision should be efficient, safely designed and be so sited and guarded as to minimise the risks to health and safety.

All such appliances shall be maintained annually by a competent person.

All additional living rooms shall be provided with suitable number of sockets which could reasonably be dedicated for a fixed heating appliance. Such sockets shall not be positioned on the same wall. Alternatively a suitable supply pipe for gas shall be provided, where it is possible to safely site a gas appliance in the room.

Heating appliances fuelled by gas cylinders (e.g. Calor gas) are not acceptable under any circumstances.

3.2 Room Sizes

- (1) a child will be considered as a separate person/occupant in terms of these standards.
- (2) the minimum room sizes that should be provided, as below, are also subject to each room being of a shape offering adequate useable living space. Areas where the ceiling height is less than 1.53m, such as an attic room shall not be counted as part of the floor area.
- (3) separate kitchens, whether shared or used exclusively in connection with a particular single tenancy shall be of sufficient size for their purpose. Where kitchen facilities are provided within other rooms, as a guide, a minimum additional floor area of 3.7m² should be required.
- (4) the sharing of rooms by persons of the opposite sex over the age of 12 and who do not live as partners shall not be permitted.
- (5) no staircase or landing nor any room which has been appointed as a kitchen or bathroom shall be deemed suitable for sleeping accommodation.

The table on the following page details acceptable minimum room sizes

Shared Houses	No. of Persons	Size
Bedroom (without separate lounge)	1	10m ²
Bedroom (without separate lounge)	2	15m ²
Bedroom (with separate lounge)	1	6.5m ²
Bedroom (with separate lounge)	2	11m ²

Living rooms & dining rooms	1-3	8.5m ²
	4-6	11m ²

Kitchens	1-3	5m ²
	4	6m ²
	5	7m ²
	6	9m ²

Dining / Kitchen	1-3	10m ²
------------------	-----	------------------

Kitchen (without lounge)	4-6	11.5m ²
--------------------------	-----	--------------------

Bedsit Rooms	No. of Persons	Size
One room units with kitchen in room	1	13m ²
One room units with separate shared kitchen	1	10 m ²
Two or more roomed units	1	11m ² for each living room / kitchen 9m ² for each living room 6.5m ² for each bedroom
One room units	2	Not normally suitable for persons who are not couples, in other cases two persons only not less than 15m ² .
Two or more roomed units	2	15m ² for each living room / kitchen 12m ² for each living room 14m ² for each living / bedroom 10m ² for each bedroom

3.3. Stability

The house and every part of it shall be structurally stable.

3.4. Repair

The house shall be free from serious disrepair and otherwise be in a reasonable state of repair having regard to its age, character and the locality in which it is situated.

3.5. Dampness

The house shall be free from dampness which is prejudicial to the health of the occupants.

3.6. Natural and Artificial Lighting

All habitable rooms shall have an adequate level of natural lighting, provided via a clear glazed window or windows and/or door(s), the glazed area to be equivalent to at least one-tenth of the floor area and to extend normally to a point 1.75m above floor level.

Basement rooms used for human habitation should, in addition to the requirement in the first paragraph, have sufficient natural lighting for their purpose.

All staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and water closets are to be provided, where practicable, with natural lighting. Windows to bathrooms and water closets are to be glazed with obscured glass.

Adequate electric lighting points are to be provided to all habitable rooms, staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and water closets. All lighting to common parts to be provided, maintained and paid for by the landlord or their agent. Lighting to staircases, landings and passages may be controlled by time switches or other devices having a similar effect.

3.7. Ventilation

All habitable rooms, kitchens and bathrooms shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.14m, except in the case of existing attic rooms, which shall have a minimum height of 2.14m over an area of the floor equal to not less than three-quarters of the area of the room, measured on a plane 1.5m above the floor.

All habitable rooms shall be ventilated directly to the external air by a window which has an openable area not less than 1/20th of the floor area.

All kitchens, bathrooms and water closet compartments shall be ventilated directly to the external air, either by a window the openable area of which shall be equivalent to at least 1/20th of the floor area of the room or by suitably sited mechanical ventilation providing a minimum of three air changes per hour operated from the lighting circuit of the room and fitted with a 20 minute overrun. For kitchens, mechanical ventilation providing one air change per hour will be deemed sufficient.

Basement rooms used as habitable rooms should be provided with natural ventilation direct to the external air. In addition, there should normally be an unobstructed space immediately outside the window opening which extends the entire width of the window or more and has a depth of not less than 0.6m measured from the external wall or not less than 0.3m in the case of a bay window with side lights.

Suitable and sufficient permanent ventilation shall be provided and maintained in any room in which there is a gas heating appliance.

Suitable and sufficient means of permanent ventilation shall be provided in all kitchens, dining/kitchens, bathrooms, water closet compartments and other rooms containing cooking or washing facilities.

3.8. Gas Safety

If gas is supplied to the property, the licence holder must provide the Council with a copy of the current gas safety certificate(s) to cover the common parts and all rented parts of the property. This certificate should state that the full gas installation, covering the supply pipes, flues and gas appliances, are safe for operation.

The annual inspection should be carried out by a qualified engineer (i.e. CORGI registered). The Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998 ⁽⁶⁾ require an inspection to be carried out annually.

The licence holder will ensure that a gas safety certificate of not more than twelve months old is produced to the Council within seven days of a request being made.

3.9. Electrical Safety

All electrical appliances made available by the licence holder must be in a safe condition. Declarations as to the safety of the appliances must be provided. Operating instructions for the appliances must be given to the occupier / tenant at the start of their tenancy.

The licence holder must provide the Council with a copy of a periodic inspection report based on Appendix 6 of BS 7671 which is used when carrying out routine periodic inspection and testing of existing electrical installations. The report must cover the whole installation. The inspection must be carried out by a competent electrical engineer (preferably N.I.C.E.I.C or E.C.A or N.A.P.I.T) to show that the installation is safe and satisfactory and may have been obtained within the last 5 years or as recommended by the engineer.

3.10. Fire Precautions

Appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided of such type, number and location as are considered necessary. Requirements will be in accordance with relevant British Standards, Building Regulations and other guidance/advice documents for the time being in force.

3.11. Testing Of Fire Alarms And Emergency Lighting

If a fire alarm and emergency lighting system is installed, the licence holder must provide the logbook to show that correct maintenance of the systems has been carried out including annual and periodic checks, in accordance with British Standard 5839 Part 6 and Part 1. The applicant must make provision for future inspections to be carried out and allow the logbook to be inspected by the Council.

3.12. Furnishings

All soft furnishings supplied by the landlord to tenants must comply with the relevant safety tests (as prescribed under the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended)).

All furniture will be labelled to show that it complies with these tests. These labels must not be removed.

Advice on fire safety in respect of furnishings may be sought from the London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service on 020 8937 5555/6 or e-mail trading.standards@brent.gov.uk

3.13. Landlord And Tenant Rights And Obligations

There is a need to ensure that tenants are aware of their rights and also their obligations and that these will be enforced. The licence holder must provide tenants with a written statement of their tenancy rights and obligations, which should include a clause on anti-social behaviour. This may be displayed in a suitable position and be readily visible to residents in the house. Licence holders should require tenants to take reasonable care to avoid causing damage in the property or any nuisance to their neighbours and should advise tenants that if these requirements are disregarded, the licence holder may instigate possession proceedings.

The licence holder should undertake to inform tenants about rubbish collection, causing excessive noise and other potential causes of conflict and about their responsibility to comply with any reasonable arrangements made in respect of the means of escape from fire and anything provided by way of fire precautions. All occupiers regardless of tenure should recognise their responsibility with regard to these matters. The licence holder should be willing to enforce any provisions in the tenancy agreement with respect to anti social behaviour by the tenants.

The manager or licence holder must clearly display a notice in a suitable position in the house containing the name and address and telephone number of the person managing the house. This should include an emergency contact number. The manager or licence holder should ensure that any necessary amendments are made to the notice.

3.14. Disposal Of Rubbish

The control of storage and disposal of refuse is a particular problem in Houses in Multiple Occupation. The council requires that the licence holder or manager of the HMO shall ensure that refuse is not allowed to accumulate in the house except where properly stored pending disposal.

There must be:

- a. Suitable refuse and recycling containers provided which are on a scale adequate to the requirements of the residents;
- b. Supplementary arrangements for the disposal of refuse and recyclable materials from the house as may be necessary having regard to any service provided by the local authority.
- c. If there is no adequate space to store rubbish within the boundaries of the house from week to week and no way of providing extra space, the landlord may have to make arrangements for extra collections
- d. The tenants must be informed in writing at the beginning of their tenancy on which days refuse and recycling collections take place. This information should also be permanently displayed in a prominent position within the property

3.15. General Management Conditions

The license holder must comply with all the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 and relevant regulations which relate to the management of HMOs. They must ensure the common parts of the house are repaired and maintained in a clean condition and in good order and similarly, that the living accommodation, which is let by the person responsible is let in a suitable condition.

In shared properties it is recognised that the cleaning of shared facilities is usually the tenant's responsibility. However, it is the license holder's responsibility to ensure this is monitored and addressed should any problems arise.

Part 4

4.1 Advice

The current regulations relating to the management of HMOs subject to licensing under the Housing Act 2004 are The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 ⁽⁷⁾. For help and advice, telephone the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team on (020) 8863 5611 or email ehealth@harrow.gov.uk.

For help and advice on fire safety in respect of furnishings, telephone the London Boroughs of Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service on 020 8937 5555/6 or e-mail trading.standards@brent.gov.uk

For help and advice on noise or other nuisances, telephone Environmental Protection on (020) 8863 5611 or email ehealth@harrow.gov.uk.

For help and advice about the Special Needs Housing Officer, telephone (01273) 293111.

For help and advice on storage and collection of waste, telephone on (020) 8863 5611 or 0845 225 2600 Email: waste@harrow.gov.uk
