



Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
standards for shared houses, flats, self-
contained flats, hostels and bedsits

Guidance document

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Introduction and contact details

HMO standards for shared houses/flats, self-contained flats, hostels and bedsits

This guidance is intended to assist in the provision of accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), which contributes to a safe and healthy environment for the occupants and any visitors.

On inspection, a risk assessment may determine that it is necessary to take other measures to ensure that the housing standards are satisfactory for each individual unit of living accommodation or that variation from these standards is appropriate.

Email: psh@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Phone: 01732 227000 (Ask for the Private Sector Housing team)

HMO minimum room sizes

Accommodation with facilities shared by occupiers		
<p>These standards apply where there is sharing of some or all facilities i.e. HMOs where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupiers live independently of others e.g. single room lettings or bedsit • Accommodation (kitchen facilities within own room); • Occupiers forming a group e.g. students, professional persons and others who interact socially. 		
Room description - where the room is in the unit of accommodation	Minimums	
	1 person unit	2 person unit
Combined bedroom , living room and kitchen	13m ²	20.5m ²
Combined bedroom and living room	10m ²	14m ²
Combined living room and kitchen	12m ²	15m ²
Kitchen	4.5m ²	4.5m ²
Living Room	9m ²	12m ²
Bedroom	6.51m ²	10.22m ²

Number of persons					
Where the room is shared by occupiers	3	4	5	6	7-10
Kitchen area (minimum)	5m ²	6 m ²	7 m ²	9 m ²	11m ²
Communal living room (not required if the individual combined bedroom and living room meet the standard above)	12m ²	12m ²	12m ²	12m ²	17m ²
Dining room	2m ² per person is recommended				

Hostels

Including Guest House and Bed & Breakfast accommodation where board is provided as part of the occupancy

Room description	Number of occupants				
	1	2	3	4+	
Bedroom only	6.51m ²	10.22m ²	15 m ²	Add 4.5 m ² per each person over 3 occupants	
Combined Bedroom & Living Room	10m ²	14m ²	18.5 m ²	Add 4.5 m ² per each person over 3 occupants	
For shared use of occupants	Number of persons				
	1-3	4	5	6	7-10
Kitchen (all main meals* not provided)	5m ²	6m ²	7m ²	9m ²	11 m ²
Kitchen (all main meals* provided)	5m ²	5m ²	5m ²	5m ²	7m ²
Communal living room (not required if individual bedroom & living room meet the standard above)	8.5m ²	11m ²	11m ²	11m ²	16.5m ²

* Three meals a day (provided each day of the week)

Personal washing and toilet facilities

1. Personal washing and toilet facilities		
<p>HMO standards for shared houses/flats, self-contained flats, hostels and bedsits</p> <p>On inspection, a risk assessment may determine that it is necessary to take other measures to ensure that the housing standards are satisfactory for each individual unit of living accommodation or that variation from these standards is appropriate.</p>		
<p>1.1</p> <p>Location, size and condition</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>All facilities should be located in rooms of an adequate size and layout no more than 1 floor distant of any bedroom and accessible from communal areas unless provided as en-suite facilities for the exclusive use of that occupant.</p> <p>All baths or showers, toilets and wash hand basins (WHB) should be of an adequate size and be provided with an adequate water supply, necessary fittings, drainage and be in a satisfactory condition to enable thorough cleaning. Constant hot water at a suitable temperature to be provided to bath/showers and wash basins. Each WHB and bath/shower is to be provided with an appropriate splash back.</p> <p>Walls and floors should be reasonably smooth and non absorbent and capable of being readily cleansed.</p>
<p>1.2</p> <p>Personal washing and toilet facilities in relation to number of persons</p>	<p>1 - 4 persons</p>	<p>Where practicable wash hand basins to be provided in each unit of accommodation or within each shared bathroom and compartment containing a WC.</p> <p>At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined).</p>
<p>(Applies to all accommodations)</p>	<p>5 persons</p>	<p>Where practicable wash hand basins to be provided in each unit of accommodation or within each shared bathroom and compartment containing a WC.</p>

<p>1.2 Continued</p> <p>Personal washing and toilet facilities in relation to number of persons</p> <p>(Applies to all accommodations)</p>		<p>At least</p> <p>1 bathroom AND</p> <p>1 separate WC with WHB (but the WC can be contained within a second bathroom)</p>
	<p>6 - 10 persons</p>	<p>1 WHB required in each sleeping room plus</p> <p>At least</p> <p>2 bathrooms AND</p> <p>2 separate WCs with WHBs (but one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms.)</p>
	<p>11 - 15 persons</p>	<p>1 WHB required in each sleeping room plus</p> <p>At least</p> <p>3 bathrooms AND</p> <p>3 separate WCs with WHBs (but two of the WCs can be contained within two of the bathrooms).</p>
<p>1.3</p> <p>Ventilation</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>Bathrooms to have mechanical ventilation extracting 15 litres/second to the outside air in addition to any window(s).</p> <p>Each toilet in a separate compartment is required to have a window equivalent to 1/20th (5%) of the floor area or mechanical ventilation extracting at 6 litres/second to the outside air.</p> <p>Ventilation should not be obstructed externally.</p>

Kitchens

2. Kitchens		
<p>2.1</p> <p>Location, size and condition</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>If hostels have a commercial kitchen where access is not available at all times and breakfast and a further main meal is provided every day a reduced standard may be agreed, contact the Local Housing Authority to determine.</p> <p>All facilities must be fit for purpose. Each sink is to be provided with an appropriate splash back.</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>Sinks</p>	<p>Shared Use</p>	<p>A sink with constant hot and cold water and a draining board per 5 occupants (a dishwasher will be acceptable as a second sink).</p>
	<p>Exclusive Use</p>	<p>A sink with constant hot and cold water and a draining board.</p>
<p>2.3</p> <p>Cookers</p>	<p>Shared Use</p>	<p>A cooker with a 4 ring hob, an oven and a grill per 5 occupants (a 27 litre microwave with an oven and grill will be acceptable as a second cooker).</p>
	<p>Exclusive Use</p>	<p>A cooker with a 4 ring hob, an oven and a grill for a 2 person unit of accommodation OR a 2 ring hob, an oven and a grill will be acceptable in units of accommodation occupied by 1 individual.</p>
<p>2.4</p> <p>Electric Sockets</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>A minimum of two double electrical sockets are required at worktop height plus one per major appliance (i.e. a cooker microwave, refrigerator/freezer, washing machine etc.).</p>

<p>2.5</p> <p>Worktops</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>Fixed worktop(s) with a smooth impervious surface for food preparation, minimum size 600mm x 1000mm (1-3 persons)</p> <p>600mm x 2000mm (4-6 persons)</p> <p>600mm x 3000mm (7-10 persons)</p>
<p>2.6</p> <p>Storage</p>	<p>Shared Use</p>	<p>A 0.3m³ dry goods storage cupboard other than a sink base unit per occupant either in each occupant's room or in a shared kitchen.</p>
	<p>Exclusive Use</p>	<p>A 0.3m³ dry goods storage cupboard other than a sink base unit per occupancy either within the bedsit or in a shared kitchen.</p>
<p>2.7</p> <p>Refrigerators</p>	<p>Shared Use</p>	<p>Two worktop height refrigerators with freezer compartments or 1 worktop height fridge and 1 worktop height freezer per 5 occupiers or a worktop height refrigerator with a freezer compartment within each individual unit of accommodation.</p>
	<p>Exclusive Use</p>	<p>A worktop height refrigerator with a freezer compartment.</p>
<p>2.8</p> <p>Refuse</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>Suitable and sufficient provision for household waste and recycling disposal both within the unit of accommodation and outside in accordance with the Council waste disposal arrangements.</p>
<p>2.9</p> <p>Ventilation</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>In addition to any windows, mechanical ventilation extracting 60 litres/second to the outside air or 30 litres/second if sited within 300mm of the centre line of the hob.</p>

Heating

3. Heating		
3.1 Fixed heating	All accommodations	<p>A risk assessment approach will be taken but in general, an adequate, controllable and affordable form of central heating or storage heaters should be installed in compliance with the Government's Decent Homes Standard.</p> <p>Heating appliances should be capable of maintaining a temperature of 21⁰C with an outside temperature of -1⁰C in each unit of living accommodation. Heating should be available at all times and be under the control of the occupier.</p>

Gas and electric

4. Gas and electric		
4.1 Electrical installation	All accommodations	Electrical Installation to be tested every 5 years by a competent electrical engineer and to be in a satisfactory condition with no class 1 or 2 hazards.
4.2 Electrical appliances	All accommodations	All items of portable electrical equipment to be subject of a PAT Test, in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice issued by the Institution of Electrical Engineers.
4.3 Gas	All accommodations	All gas appliances to be tested by a suitably qualified Gas Safe registered contractor on an annual basis and a copy provided to the tenants. All gas appliances to be in a satisfactory condition.

Furniture

5. Furniture		
5.1 Furniture	All accommodations	All furniture should comply with current regulations - 'The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993)'

Fire precautions

6. Fire precautions		
<p>Provide fire precaution facilities and equipment to reduce fire risk and to ensure the safety of people in the premises as far as is practicable in accordance with the LaCoRS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) publication “Housing – Fire Safety, Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing”.</p>		
<p>6.1</p> <p>Fire risk assessment</p>	<p>Premises comprising of common Parts</p>	<p>Where parts of premises are shared in common by residents or they are available to paying guests, the premises will require a fire risk assessment to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order). This should be available for inspection by Kent Fire and Rescue Service Inspectors (FRS) who enforce the provisions of the Order.</p> <p>The Order does not apply to areas of single private domestic use.</p> <p>Guidance is available on-line or in hard copy, the relevant guide is Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation</p>
<p>6.2</p> <p>Fire detection</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>Fire detection to comply with the current relevant British Standard in consultation with the Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>An automatic fire detection and alarm system will be required and the type of system installed should be in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5839: Part 6.</p>
<p>6.3</p> <p>Emergency lighting</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>An emergency lighting system to comply with BS5266 in consultation with Local Housing Authority.</p>
<p>6.4</p> <p>Fire blankets</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869:1997 in each shared kitchen.</p>

<p>6.5</p> <p>Fire doors</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>All fire doors specified by the Local Housing Authority to meet the following requirements, conform to BS476 Part 22 (FD30 type) or to BS EN 1634-1.</p> <p>The specification, installation and maintenance of fire doors should comply with BS 8214:2008</p> <p>Each fire door to be hung on three 100mm mild steel butt hinges, and provided with an approved intumescent strip incorporating a cold smoke seal to the top edge, lock and hinge sides of the door.</p> <p><u>(Alternatively the intumescent strip and cold smoke seal may be inserted into the identical position of the door frame/lining).</u></p> <p>Each fire door must be provided with an approved self closing device to ensure that the door closes firmly onto the latch.</p> <p>All doors are to be well fitted within the frame. Any gap between the top edge, lock and hinge sides of the door and the frame must not exceed 4mm.</p> <p>All fire doors required for escape purposes must be fitted with furniture, including hinges having a melting point of not less than 800°C. Those fitted with key operable locks must be capable of being operated from the inside in the direction of escape without the use of a key.</p>
<p>6.6</p> <p>Fire separation</p>	<p>All areas</p>	<p>All separating structures (walls, floors, ceilings etc.) between separate lettings, common parts and kitchens etc. should be constructed to meet an appropriate fire resisting standard to the approval of the local Housing Authority in consultation with the FRS.</p> <p>This will be a minimum of 30minute Fire resistance and in some circumstances may be required to provide 60 minute fire resistance.</p>

<p>6.7</p> <p>Extinguishers</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>Subject to your Local Housing Authority requirements and your own fire risk assessment you may have to provide:-</p> <p>a) a multi purpose dry powder content fire extinguisher, which has a capacity of not less than 2kg (13A / 70B rating) in each shared kitchen;</p> <p>b) An appropriate extinguisher on each landing.</p>
<p>6.8</p> <p>Sprinkler systems</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>The installation of a certified British Standard sprinkler system may allow for some relaxation of requirements in respect of physical protection e.g. doors and intumescent seals, together with a lesser standard of alarm devices. All consultations with the Local Housing Authority will be carried out in conjunction with Kent Fire & Rescue Service.</p>
<p>6.9</p> <p>Maintenance of fire warning/detection systems</p> <p>Emergency lighting and fire extinguishers</p>	<p>All accommodations</p>	<p>The manager/responsible person must ensure that any fire fighting equipment, emergency lighting and fire alarms are maintained in good working order.</p> <p>A maintenance contract must be arranged (with a competent contractor) at the time of initial installation for regular servicing in accordance with the relevant British Standard.</p> <p>The system must also be tested on a weekly basis by the person in control of the premises (manager/responsible person or their agent). All tests should be properly recorded within the system log book supplied by the installer during the handover procedure.</p>
<p>6.10</p> <p>Managing, maintenance and minimising false alarms</p>		<p>Contact details of the person responsible for the maintenance of the fire warning/detection systems should be displayed in a prominent position in accordance with the current management regulations. For complex buildings requiring a Multi-zone fire alarm system it is recommended that a legible zone plan is displayed adjacent to the alarm panel.</p>

6.11 Emergency signage		<p>In larger premises with common parts it will be necessary to provide relevant signs and signage to identify and facilitate means of escape.</p> <p>Fire action notices (what to do in case of fire) should be displayed to inform guests and residents.</p> <p>Signs should conform to the requirements of BS5499 Part 1.</p>
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