

Adopted Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a house or flat which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household. There are various types of HMO including houses divided into rooms, bedsits or flatlets, shared houses, lodgings, hostels and some properties converted into self-contained flats.

A **summary** of the Council's main requirements is set out below. It is expected that all HMOs will comply with these standards where reasonable and practicable.

1. SPACE STANDARDS

Room sizes must comply with the following minimum standards:

1.1 One room lettings

Minimum room floor area where the kitchen is in a separate room	Minimum room floor area including kitchen	Maximum number of persons
10m ² (8.5m ²)	13m ²	1
14m ² (12.5m ²)	17m ²	2

1.2 Two or more room lettings

Minimum combined floor area for two or more room letting	Minimum floor area for any room used as a kitchen	Minimum room floor area for any room used for sleeping	Maximum number of persons
13m ²	4.5m ²	6.5m ²	1
17m ²	4.5m ²	10.2m ²	2

1.3 Notes:

- Persons of the opposite sex, aged ten years and over and who are not co-habitant are not allowed to sleep in the same room.
- There is no reduced space standard for children
- When measuring the floor area of a room, space taken up by any en-suite bathroom or w.c. facilities shall not be included.
- All rooms shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of at least 1.9 metres over not less than 75% of the floor area of the room. Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.53 metres shall be disregarded. Where bunk beds are used there shall be a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.5metres.
- Slight flexibility to these standards may be agreed by the Inspecting Officer. For example, account will be taken of additional suitable communal facilities that may be provided, such as a lounge or dining room or in other situations as may be appropriate. In these instances, the minimum floor areas given in the previous table 1.1 and shown in brackets will apply but in such cases, a minimum ceiling height of 1.9m over the entire area of the room will be required.
- In addition to the actual floor area, consideration shall be given to the shape, and usable living space within the room to determine whether it is suitable for occupation and by how many persons.
- If a studio room has a partition, the total floor area of all the spaces created will be aggregated. However, sleeping rooms must not be less than a minimum area of 6.5m² for a single letting and 9.5m² for a double letting.
- Half the area provided by a bay window can be included.
- Where the room door opens into a lobby/corridor within the accommodation that is less than 1.2 metres wide, the entire lobby/corridor will be disregarded. Where the lobby/corridor is between 1.2 and 1.8 metres, some of the area may be counted if it is suitable for storage/use. The allowable area is calculated by deducting 1.2 metres from the width and multiplying this by the length of the corridor. For example, if a corridor into a room is 1.5 metres wide by 2.5 metres deep, the useable area of the corridor would be 0.3 x 2.5 metres. No deduction should be made where doors open into corridors/lobbies of more than 1.8 metres width.

2. PERSONAL WASHING FACILITIES

- 2.1 **Where there are five or more occupiers each separate household shall, where practicable, be provided with a wash hand basin** (unless a sink is provided) together with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold running water, situated within the unit of accommodation. A tiled splash back minimum 300mm high (two standard tiles) is to be provided to each wash hand basin. See Appendix A for additional guidance.
- 2.2 **Each separate occupancy shall, where practicable, be provided with its own readily accessible bath or shower room of adequate size with sufficient space for drying and changing.** Where this is not practicable a readily accessible bathroom or shower room with sufficient space for drying

and changing shall be provided in the ratio of **one to every five persons** regardless of age. See Appendix A for additional guidance.

- 2.3 All bath/shower compartments shall be ventilated directly to the external air by an openable window. Where this is not practicable mechanical ventilation complying with the current Building Regulations shall be provided.
- 2.4 The walls and floors to any shower/bathroom are to be non-absorbent and readily cleansable. Showers shall be provided with a suitable water resistant screen or shower curtain.
- 2.5 An appropriate door with lock shall be provided to the bathroom/shower room to ensure privacy for the user.
- 2.6 Baths and showers shall not be provided in kitchens and in all cases shall not be more than one floor distant from any user.
- 2.7 All washing facilities must be fit for purpose, of an adequate size and layout and suitably located in relation to the living accommodation.
- 2.8 Adequate heating and artificial lighting shall be provided.

3. SANITARY CONVENIENCES

- 3.1 **Each separate occupancy shall where practicable be provided with its own water closet compartment.**
- 3.2 Where this is not practicable, water closets shall be provided in readily accessible compartments or bathrooms, being not more than one floor distant from any user, in the ratio of **one water closet to every five persons**, regardless of age. Where this is being shared by more than four persons it must be situated in its own w.c. compartment. See Appendix A for additional guidance.
- 3.3 External water closets are not permitted.
- 3.4 All w.c.'s must be fit for purpose and contained in a room of adequate size and layout and suitably located in relation to the living accommodation.
- 3.5 A wash hand basin shall be provided in each separate water closet together with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold running water. A tiled splash back minimum 300mm high (two standard tiles) is to be provided to each wash hand basin. All water closet compartments shall be ventilated directly to the external air by an openable window. Where this is not practicable mechanical ventilation complying with the current Building Regulations shall be provided.
- 3.6 An appropriate door with lock shall be provided to the room containing the w.c. to ensure privacy for the user.

4. FACILITIES FOR THE STORAGE, PREPARATION AND COOKING OF FOOD AND FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE WATER

4.1 Kitchen Facilities for Exclusive Use by Households

4.1.1 Each household shall, where practicable, have its own kitchen separate from and being not more than one floor distant from the sleeping room or within the unit of accommodation.

4.1.2 Each kitchen shall have the following facilities:

- An adequately sized food storage cupboards of minimum capacity 0.5 cubic metres (e.g. 2no: 600mm x 720mm x 600mm). This provision is in addition to any base unit cupboards provided below the sink/drain.
- An adequately sized (0.14 cubic metres) working refrigerator with a freezer compartment (1 to 2 persons = 140 litres). To minimise disturbance from noise an A rated energy efficient fridge is recommended.
- Four (13 amp) electric sockets: 1 conveniently located for the connection of refrigerator and 2 situated at work top height
- Adequately sized (1000mm x 600mm) fixed, impervious worktop for the preparation of food.
- A mains supplied cooking appliance with a minimum of two rings or hot plates together with a grill and oven.
- A sink and drainer of adequate size (1000mm x 600mm) together with its own satisfactory supply of hot and wholesome cold running water. The sink is to be properly connected to the drainage system.
- A tiled splash back minimum 300mm high (two standard tiles) is to be provided to the sink.
- There must be artificial lighting sufficient to carry out normal activities within a kitchen area.

4.2 Kitchens for Communal Use

4.2.1 Where it is not practicable to have exclusive use a shared kitchen may be provided for a maximum of five persons and must comply with the following:

- Have a floor area of not less than 6m²
- Depending upon the circumstances it may be possible to have two sets of kitchen facilities in the same kitchen. In such an instance, no more than two sets of facilities (each provided for a maximum of five persons) shall be provided in any one shared kitchen and in such an instance the kitchen must have a floor area of not less than 12m². In a shared kitchen, where two sets of facilities are provided, the two sets shall be reasonably separate from each other to allow their safe and simultaneous use by two or more households

4.2.2 Each shared kitchen shall have the following facilities:

- Adequately sized lockable food storage cupboards of minimum capacity 0.14 cubic metres per household (600mm x 380mm x 700mm). This provision is in addition to any base unit cupboards provided below the sink/drain.
- Adequately sized (1000mm x 600mm) fixed, impervious worktop for the preparation of food. A further 500mm (linear width) of worktop will be required for each additional person sharing (for example, a minimum provision for five persons sharing is 2.6 linear meters of worktop). Worktop to be at the same height as an adjacent cooker hob.
- Mains supplied cooking appliance with a minimum of four rings or hot plates together with a grill and an adequately sized oven.
- A sink and drainer of adequate size (1000mm x 600mm) together with its own satisfactory supply of hot and wholesome cold running water. The sink is to be properly connected to the drainage system.
- A tiled splash back minimum 300mm high (two standard tiles) is to be provided to the sink.
- There must be artificial lighting sufficient to carry out normal activities within a kitchen area.
- An adequately sized working refrigerator with a freezer compartment on the following ratios: 1 to 2 persons = 140 litres; 3 to 4 persons = 160 litres and 5 persons = 200 litres. To minimise disturbance from noise, an A rated energy efficient fridge is recommended.

4.2.2 In addition to the shared kitchen the following facilities shall be provided in a suitable location within each letting:

- An adequately sized (minimum 0.14 cubic metres) working refrigerator with a freezer compartment (140 litres). To minimise disturbance from noise, an A rated energy efficient fridge is recommended
- A storage cupboard of minimum capacity 0.14cubic metres (600mm x 380mm x 700mm)

4.3 General Requirements for all Kitchen Facilities

- Cooking facilities shall be reasonably located in relation to the room(s) occupied by the person(s) using them. This shall be not more than one floor distant from the sleeping room or within the unit of accommodation
- All wall, floor and ceiling finishes are to be non-absorbent and readily cleansable. No furniture or curtains shall be within 600mm of the cooker.
- Kitchen facilities must be available for use 24 hours a day.
- Cookers should not be fitted close to doorways and there should be enough floor space to safely retrieve items from the oven.

- A mechanical extractor must be provided, ducted to the open air, with the outlet away from adjacent windows.
- Adequate rubbish disposal facilities should be provided and regularly maintained.
- All rooms containing kitchen facilities should be provided with a fire blanket, in accordance with BS EN 1869 :1997 & BS 7944 1999 mounted on a wall near, but not above, cooker.
- There must be artificial lighting sufficient to carry out normal activities within the kitchen area.
- All rooms containing kitchen facilities should be provided with a carbon dioxide fire extinguisher complying with BS EN 3-9: 2006 & BS EN 3-8: 2006
- All kitchens should be provided with 30 minute fire resistant door sets. The door shall be a fire resisting door constructed to conform to BS 476-22 1987 and self- closing by means of an approved spring mechanism adjusted to positively close the door from any point of travel. The door is to be fitted with dual function cold smoke-and intumescent seal to the head and both sides of the door in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

5. HEATING

- 5.1 All units of living accommodation including sleeping rooms and bath/shower rooms must be equipped with an adequate means of fixed space heating (meaning a fixed gas or electrical appliance, or an adequate system of central heating) operable at all times and available at all times, taking into account affordability, the presence of thermal insulation, the location of the appliance, ease of use and performance. Such heating appliances must be suitable for use in a bath/shower room.
- 5.2 The appliance must be capable of efficiently maintaining the room at a minimum temperature of 19°C.
- 5.3 Where heating and hot water is provided centrally by the landlord, these provisions must be capable of being used at any time. There should also be the ability to control the level of heating within each letting e.g. thermostatic radiator valves (TRV's) on radiators.
- 5.4 The use of portable paraffin or oil fired heaters and liquefied petroleum gas heaters shall not be acceptable under any circumstances.

6. SECURITY

- 6.1 Deadlocks to doors and window locks reduce the risk of burglary. In order to prevent an 'Entry by Intruders' hazard, the following is required (6.2-6.4): -

6.2 Communal Exterior Doors

- Exterior doors to the building should close fully and be capable of resisting bodily pressure and the possibility of slipping the door lock.
- Exterior doors must be fitted with a self-closer with enough force and momentum to ensure that the door closes securely.
- The door and surrounding frame should be of a solid construction.
- Any lock fitted should comply with BS 8621 (2007) + A2 2012 (thief resistant assembly for keyless egress).
- Solenoid based, bolt action locks are acceptable and preferred, as they comply with means of escape requirements. They also offer the advantage of requiring less maintenance.
- Where the front door lock is within arm's reach of the letterbox, then either a letterbox cowl or a bottomless cage should be fitted.
- Consideration of the glazing for and surrounding the door should be given. Single glazed panels should be either protected with metal grilles or replaced with laminated glazing or security film.

6.3 Bedsit and Flat Entrance Doors

- The door and surrounding frame (notwithstanding the requirement to be a fire resisting door in the appropriate circumstances) should be of a solid construction.
- Doors require an auto-deadlocking night latch complying with BS 8621 (2007) + A2 2012 (thief resistant assembly for keyless operation).
- Doors require a mortice lock with thumb turn cylinder complying with BS 8621 (2007) + A2 2012 (thief resistant assembly for keyless operation), so that occupiers can escape in the event of a fire.
- The door needs to be fitted with hinge bolts and frame reinforcement (e.g., London Bar) to resist bodily pressure.
- Door chains and viewers are required.
- Where there are letterboxes to individual flats, a letterbox cowl or bottomless cage is required if the lock is within arm's reach of the letterbox.

6.4 Windows

- All windows should have key operated locks with the exception of windows which are escape windows to comply with fire requirements as part of a means of escape which are to be openable from inside without use of removable key.
- Windows that lead directly to a flat roof require restrictors to be fitted with easy release without the use of a key.
- All such devices above are to comply with BS 8621 (2007) + A2 2012 (thief resistant assembly for keyless egress).

7. PROVISION OF MEANS OF ESCAPE IN CASE OF FIRE IN HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

7.1 Appropriate fire precautions and equipment must be provided to reduce the risk of death/injury to the tenants in the event of fire.

7.2 In general terms, the following fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided:

- The installation of a suitable automatic fire detection system in accordance with BS 5839 Part 1, incorporating adequate numbers of, and suitably positioned, linked smoke/heat detectors, sounders and call points.
- Appropriate and suitable fire fighting equipment including fire extinguisher and other equipment considered necessary.
- An adequate number of notices detailing procedures in the event of fire.
- Generally and without prejudice to the above, the HMO's design, construction and condition should limit the spread of fire and smoke and there should be adequate fire protection to the means of escape and between each unit of accommodation and other spaces. The HMO should be provided with appropriate fire detection and alarm systems and as appropriate, emergency lighting and fire fighting equipment. All provisions to be in accord with LACORS Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing. This can be found at: -

http://www.rother.gov.uk/media/pdf/p/p/Lacors_Fire_Safety_Guide_July_2008.pdf

In general terms a means of escape from fire will include: -

- Doors and partitions constructed to provide the appropriate standard of fire resistance.
- Appropriate emergency lighting in accordance with BS 5266 Part 1 and fire signs.
- The provision of a 'protected route' leading to a place of safety (normally the street). 'Protected route' means a route having an adequate degree of protection from fire including walls (other than external walls), partitions and floors separating the route from the remainder of the building.

- 7.3 From 1st October 2006 your premise has been required to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The enforcing authority for this legislation is the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. For further information on this you can refer to the internet site <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/FireRiskAssessment.asp>.

In addition please note that the government has published a guidance document 'Fire safety risk assessment - Sleeping accommodation' which provides comprehensive guidance on the management of fire safety. It includes guidance on your duties regarding fire safety records and evacuation plans, which must be made available to residents and the Enforcing Authority. If you have any queries regarding your duties you should contact the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority on 0207 7587 2270 in writing at Barnet Borough Team, 227 Long Lane Finchley London N3 2RP or by e mail at barnetgroup@london-fire.gov.uk.

- 7.4 Where more than 5 people are employed at the property, the *Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997* will apply. A risk assessment must be undertaken at the property by the owner to identify the fire hazards present and take action to eliminate or reduce the risk of such hazards.

8.0 MANAGEMENT OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

- 8.1 All HMOs must comply with the requirements of The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 or in the case of an HMO falling within Section 257 of the Housing Act 2004, the Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007.

Further information concerning these Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/372/contents/made>

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/1903/pdfs/ukxi_20071903_en.pdf

9. PLANNING PERMISSION / BUILDING REGULATIONS

- 9.1 The conversion of a property to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) may require planning permission. For further information on planning issues please contact the Planning Department on 020 8359 3000.
- 9.2 The provision of additional facilities, structural and other alterations may require Building Regulations approval. More information on the requirements under the Building Regulations, please contact Building Control on 0208 359 4500.

10. OTHER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

10.1 Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1998 (amended 1989 & 1993)

Furniture and furnishings supplied in conjunction with the accommodation must comply with specified levels of fire resistance.

10.2 Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998:

- Gas safety inspections and tests must be completed by a Gas Safe registered gas installer/engineer annually. Certificates are required in relation to ALL gas appliances and the gas installation
- All servicing and repairs are to be carried out by Gas Safe approved contractors.
- Records of annual safety inspections and tests must be made available to the Council for inspection, with a copy supplied to the tenant.

10.3 HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM (HHSRS)

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a system for assessing the health and safety risks in dwellings and is a method used to inspect properties. An HMO can comprise of a number of separate dwellings. For example every bedsit room or self-contained flat within a HMO is a dwelling.

The principle of the HHSRS is that any residential premises (including the structure, means of access, and any associated outbuilding, garden or yard) should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor. The HHSRS is a risk assessment process and is comprehensive in its coverage of key health and safety risks in dwellings. In very broad terms, the rating system works by assessing the risk associated with certain hazards and if the likelihood of harm is significant the Council may take action to ensure that the risk is removed or reduced.

For additional information on any aspects of these standards please contact the Private Sector Housing Team at Environmental Health Section London Borough Of Barnet, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, London, N20 0EJ or on 020 8359 5355
or e mail hmos@barnet.gov.uk

Additional Guidance on Provision of Wash Hand Basins, Bath/Shower rooms and W.C's in Relation to Number of Persons (Based on Guidance provided by the DCLG April 2006)

Number Of Persons	Number and type of facilities
1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No wash hand basins required in sleeping rooms • At least 1 bath/shower room with wash hand basin if no wash hand basin in sleeping rooms • At least 1 W.C. with wash hand basin (this can be in the bath/shower room or in its own separate compartment)
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where reasonably practicable wash hand basins in sleeping rooms unless a sink has been provided • At least 1 bath/shower room • At least 1 W.C. with wash hand basin (either in it's own compartment or in an additional bath/shower room)
6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where reasonably practicable wash hand basins in sleeping rooms unless a sink has been provided • At least 2 bath/shower rooms • At least 2 W.C.' s with wash hand basins (at least one should be in its own compartment the other may be in one of the bathrooms)
11-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where reasonably practicable wash hand basins in sleeping rooms unless a sink has been provided • At least 3 bath/shower rooms • At least 3 W.C.' s with wash hand basins (at least one should be in its own compartment the other two may be in the bathrooms)