

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Amenity Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

July 2026

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Introduction

- This document sets out the amenity standards expected for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) within the borough of Hertsmere.
- The standards apply to all HMOs whether or not they are licensable by the local authority.
- The purpose of these standards is to ensure that HMOs provide safe, suitable and adequately equipped accommodation for occupants. The standards support the Council's duties under the Housing Act 2004 and related regulations governing HMO licensing and management.
- This document should be read in conjunction with the council's Housing Enforcement and Licensing Policy and Guide to Fire Protection in Houses in Multiple Occupation document which are available on the council's website.

Legislative Background

- Local authorities have statutory duties and powers to regulate housing conditions and the management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to ensure that accommodation is safe, suitable and properly managed.
- The regulatory framework for HMOs and the wider private rented sector is primarily derived from the Housing Act 2004 together with subsequent regulations and recent reforms introduced through the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- These provisions establish the legal basis for local authority enforcement, licensing of HMOs, and the setting of amenity standards to ensure appropriate living conditions for occupants.

Housing Act 2004

- The Housing Act 2004 provides the principal legal framework for the regulation of housing standards in England.
- Part 1 of the Act sets out the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), which is used by local authorities to assess housing conditions and identify hazards that may pose a risk to the health and safety of occupants. Where Category 1 hazards are identified, the local authority has a duty to take enforcement action.
- Part 2 of the Act sets out the licensing regime for HMOs. Under these provisions, certain HMOs must be licensed by the local authority, enabling the authority to ensure that properties:
 - Are suitable for the number of occupants,
 - Contain adequate facilities and amenities, and
 - Are properly managed by fit and proper persons
- When determining licence applications, local authorities must be satisfied that the property provides adequate means of escape from fire and adequate amenities for the number of occupants.
- Part 7 of the Housing Act 2004 sets out rules on overcrowding in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and gives local authorities the power to step in when too many people are living in a property.

HMO Licensing

- Mandatory HMO licensing requirements were expanded through the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018.

- Under this Order, properties are required to be licensed (unless a statutory exemption applies) if they are occupied by:
 - five or more persons,
 - forming two or more households,
 - sharing basic amenities
- Local authorities also have powers under the Housing Act 2004 to introduce additional licensing schemes for smaller HMOs where evidence demonstrates issues relating to housing conditions or management. The Council has not exercised this provision however the Amenity Standards would be updated if any additional licensing scheme were to be introduced.

Minimum Sleeping Room Sizes

- Minimum room sizes for sleeping accommodation in licensed HMOs were introduced through the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018.
- These regulations prescribe the minimum room size for single persons over 10 years is 6.51 square metres.
- Local authorities can introduce stricter amenity standards where necessary to ensure suitable living conditions.

Management of HMOs

- The requirements for the management and maintenance of HMOs are governed by the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006.
- These regulations place duties on landlords and property managers to ensure that HMOs are properly maintained and safely managed. Responsibilities include:
 - Maintaining common parts and shared facilities
 - Ensuring gas and electrical installations are safe
 - Maintaining water supply and drainage
 - Keeping the property in good repair
 - Providing adequate waste disposal facilities
- Failure to comply with these regulations may result in enforcement action by the local authority.

Renters' Rights Act 2025

- The Renters' Rights Act 2025 introduces significant reforms to the private rented sector, including HMOs, aimed at improving tenant security and housing standards.
- The Act received Royal Assent in October 2025 and is being implemented in phases beginning on 1st May 2026.

Key reforms include:

- Abolition of Section 21 'no-fault' evictions, requiring landlords to rely on statutory grounds for possession
- Replacement of fixed-term assured shorthold tenancies with assured periodic tenancies as the default tenancy type
- Limits on rent increases, which may generally occur only once per year and must follow a statutory notice process

- Creation of a Private Rented Sector landlord database to support transparency and assist local authority enforcement
 - Establishment of a Private Rented Sector Ombudsman for resolving disputes between landlords and tenants
 - Planned extension of the Decent Homes Standard and additional housing quality requirements to the private rented sector
- These reforms strengthen the regulatory framework governing rented accommodation and increase the role of local authorities in monitoring standards and enforcing compliance across the sector.

Role of Local Authorities

- Local housing authorities have a range of enforcement powers under the Housing Act 2004 to address poor housing conditions and non-compliance with licensing requirements.
- These powers include:
 - Improvement Notices and Hazard Awareness Notices
 - Prohibition Orders
 - Civil Penalties
 - Rent Repayment Orders
 - Revocation or refusal of HMO licences
- Amenity standards adopted by the Council support these statutory powers by providing clear expectations regarding the facilities and living conditions required within HMOs.
- If a HMO is found to be breaching these Amenity Standards, enforcement action will be taken when necessary. This applies to all HMOs operating within the borough, not just those requiring a HMO licence issued by the local authority.
- If a licensed HMO breaches these conditions, their licence may also be revoked.

Regulatory Context and Future Reforms

- The private rented sector is undergoing significant regulatory reform aimed at improving housing standards, strengthening tenant protections, and increasing transparency and accountability among landlords.
- The reforms introduced through the Renters' Rights Act 2025 form part of a broader programme of changes to the regulation of privately rented housing in England.
- These reforms are being implemented alongside other national housing policy initiatives, including the extension of the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector. Historically applied only to social housing, the Government has committed to applying this standard to privately rented properties, including HMOs, to ensure that all rented accommodation meets minimum quality requirements.
- The Decent Homes Standard requires that homes:
 - Are free from serious hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System
 - Are in a reasonable state of repair
 - Have reasonably modern facilities and services
 - Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort
- Government proposals also include extending provisions commonly referred to as Awaab's Law to the private rented sector. These provisions originate from reforms introduced through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- The extension of these requirements is expected to introduce legally enforceable timeframes for landlords to investigate and remedy hazards such as damp and mould

- Local authority amenity standards therefore operate within this evolving regulatory environment and should be interpreted alongside current and forthcoming national housing standards.

Article 4 Direction

- The council has proposed to withdraw permitted development rights that allow development without planning permission to convert houses with C3 planning Use Class classification to C4 planning Use Class classification. This will be achieved through an 'Article 4 Direction' which covers the wards of Potters Bar Parkfield Ward, Potters Bar Oakmere Ward, Potters Bar Furze Field Ward, Bentley Heath & The Royds Ward.
- The result of the Article 4 Direction will require planning proposals to convert existing dwellings with planning Use Class C3 to HMOs, planning Use Class C4, to apply for planning permission.
- The Article 4 Direction will come into force on 06 May 2027 if confirmed and more information will be available on the council's website.

Definitions and Categories of Property

House in Multiple Occupation	A house which is occupied by people who do not form a single household and share basic amenities such as bathroom, toilet and kitchen facilities The dwelling referred as a 'house' in a House in Multiple Occupation includes the property itself and any relevant grounds, outbuildings and boundaries
Household	Each of these is a single household: • A single person • Co-habiting couples • Families of related people
Licensable HMO	A HMO that is: • Occupied by 5 or more people living in two or more households and • Occupied by these people as their only or main home
Unit of Accommodation	A space within the main building that is occupied solely by the tenant, for example a bedroom or bedroom with adjoining study or living space
Bedsit	A single room accommodation that combines sleeping and living space often with basic cooking facilities, whilst sharing bathroom and kitchen facilities with other tenants

Hostel/ Dormitory/ Board and Lodgings

This is dealt with under separate guidance. Please ask the Council for details.

Further Advice and Information

If you need help in applying these standards to your own situation, or you have an alternative proposal for meeting a particular standard, contact the **Housing Enforcement and Licensing Team**, Hertsmere Borough Council, Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, WD6 1WA.

Telephone 020 8207 2277

Email: private.sector@hertsmere.gov.uk

Planning permission may be required if an owner is considering major conversions, extensions or a change of use from a single-family home or if the property has protected status.

Contact the **Planning Enforcement Team** at the Civic Offices.

Telephone 020 8207 7451

Email: planning@hertsmere.gov.uk

Building Regulation approval may be required if an owner is considering conversion, adaptation or structural alterations.

Contact **Hertfordshire Building Control Limited**.

Telephone 01438 879 990

Email: building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk

Monitoring and Review of the Amenity Standards

The Council will review the Standards regularly. This will allow the Council to ensure the Policy meets its stated aims and objectives and complies with changes in legislation. Any minor amendments will be reviewed and agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Housing Development.

Section 1: Standards for all types of HMOs

This section provides guidance on standards required in all types of HMOs.

1. Heating

- Each unit of living accommodation within a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) must be provided with adequate and efficient means of space heating.
- Heating shall be installed in every habitable room, bathroom and any shared/common areas, and must be capable of maintaining the following minimum internal temperatures when the external temperature is -1°C:
 - Living rooms and bedrooms: 21°C (recommended target 22°C)
 - Bathrooms: 22°C
 - All other areas (including communal spaces, hallways, kitchens): 18°C
- The provision of adequate structural thermal insulation should be in place to support the achievement and maintenance of these temperatures.
- Heating must be safe, suitable, and capable of being used at any time. All heating appliances shall be appropriately installed, maintained, and, where necessary, guarded.
- Acceptable forms of heating include the following where sufficient heat output can be demonstrated:
 - Gas-fired central heating
 - Electric heating systems (including fixed panel heaters and night storage heaters)
 - Oil or gas heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet
 - Solid fuel systems using authorised smokeless fuel in an approved appliance
- Night storage heaters are only acceptable where they include a facility for manual override or supplementary heating to ensure adequate heat is available at all times.
- Where electricity is used, a dedicated fixed installation must be provided. Portable plug-in heaters (other than oil-filled radiators) are not acceptable.
- Solid fuel systems must include appropriate external fuel storage facilities in an accessible location for each unit.
- In bedsit and bedsit-type HMOs heating should preferably be provided by:
 - Fan-assisted storage heaters
 - Gas fires
 - Gas-fired central heating systems
- Where individual room heaters are provided:
 - Adequate heating must also be provided in all communal areas
 - Communal areas must be capable of achieving 18°C, and bathrooms 22°C, when the external temperature is -1°C
- The cost of heating communal areas must be included within rent or general energy charges and must not be supplied via prepayment meters.
- All heating systems must:
 - Be fully controllable by the occupants at all times

- Include programmable controls where practicable
- Allow occupants to adjust heating output to meet their needs
- Wherever practicable, heaters (including radiators) should:
 - Be fixed to an external wall or chimney breast, or
 - Be positioned to effectively distribute heat toward the centre of the room
- All heating appliances must be maintained in safe working order by a competent person.
- Gas appliances must be inspected annually and certified in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (updated from 1994)
- The following heating appliances are strictly prohibited under all circumstances:
 - Portable paraffin heaters
 - Liquid fuel heaters
 - Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottled heaters

2. Fire precautionary facilities

- Appropriate fire precaution measures and equipment must be provided within the property. The type, number and location of such measures must be suitable for the size, layout and occupancy of the premises.
- The property must be provided with an adequate protected means of escape in case of fire, ensuring that occupants are able to safely evacuate the building. Escape routes must be maintained in good condition and kept clear of obstructions at all times.
- Additional fire safety measures must be provided where necessary. These may include:
 - A suitable fire detection and warning system
 - Emergency lighting where required to illuminate escape routes
 - Emergency exit route signage where appropriate
- All fire safety measures must be installed and maintained to the satisfaction of the council's inspecting officer.
- This document must be read in conjunction with the **"Guide to Fire Protection in Houses in Multiple Occupation"** document which is available on the council's website or by request.

3. Natural and artificial lighting

- All habitable rooms must receive an adequate level of natural light through a clear glazed window or windows and/or door(s). The glazed area should be at least one-tenth (1/10) of the floor area and extend up to approximately 1.75 meters above floor level. Windows should be positioned to allow light to illuminate most of the room
- Windows in bathrooms and toilets must be glazed with obscured or frosted glass to ensure privacy
- Adequate electrical lighting points must be provided in all habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, toilets, staircases, landings, and passages. Lighting for common areas must be supplied, maintained, and paid for by the landlord. Lighting in staircases, landings, and passages may be controlled by time switches or similar devices to facilitate ease of use. Where necessary, two-way switches should be installed on stairs and passageways.
- All HMOs should be equipped with sensor-controlled lighting at both the front and rear of the property

4. Ventilation

- All habitable rooms must have direct ventilation to external air via a window with an openable area of at least one-twentieth (1/20) of the room's floor area. Alternatively, a whole-house ventilation system suitable for habitable rooms may be used, provided it is installed and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions and includes individual room controls.
- Refer to specific sections regarding respective room ventilation requirements.

5. Drainage

- All new drainage installations must comply with current Building Regulations.
- The property must be equipped with an effective drainage system for foul, waste, and surface water, operating efficiently both above and below ground.

6. Refuse, Storage and Disposal

- The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990 require that the storage and disposal of household waste comply with any local authority waste management schemes.
- To meet these requirements, landlords and managing agents must:
 - Provide suitable waste and recycling containers of adequate size as stipulated by the local authority to meet the needs of the number of occupants
 - Ensure containers are stored and presented for collection as per the collection requirements of the local authority and within the curtilage of the property. Internal containers should be stored conveniently within the kitchen and at other appropriate points in the property
 - Inform tenants of waste disposal requirements, refuse and recycling collection days at the beginning of their tenancy
 - Make arrangements for extra refuse collection and disposal if necessary to prevent nuisance or detriment to the neighbourhood
 - Ensure that waste and recycling storage areas are kept clean and tidy and accessible for residents. Remove any excess side waste or bulky waste.
 - Remove and appropriately dispose of any rubbish or unwanted household goods left behind by tenants at the end of each tenancy before the next tenancy begins
 - Ensure that any rubbish or items left in front or rear gardens, or on pavements adjacent to the HMO, are removed immediately

7. Electrical Supply

- Electrical outlets shall be provided in individual rooms or lettings according to the following minimum standards:

Living rooms	6 sockets
Bedroom or study	6 sockets
Bedsits with cooking facilities	At least 4 sockets located in the kitchen area must be installed above work surfaces to accommodate portable appliances plus 6 sockets elsewhere

- All socket outlets shall be positioned to allow safe, convenient, and proper use at all times, considering the room layout. Outlets must not be sited where appliance cables are likely to cause safety hazards.
- All new electrical installations must comply with current Building Regulations and be accompanied by appropriate certification.
- Electrical installations must be inspected and tested every five years, with a valid certificate issued following each inspection.
- Portable appliances provided by the landlord must be visually inspected at the start of each tenancy. All such appliances must undergo Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) at least annually, performed by a competent person, with certification provided.

8. Gas safety

- Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, landlords must ensure that all gas appliances, fittings, and flues provided for tenant use are safe. An annual gas safety inspection must be carried out by a qualified engineer, and records of these inspections must be kept for a minimum of two years. A copy of the current gas safety certificate must be provided to each tenant. For licensed HMOs, a copy of the certificate must also be submitted to the Council.
- Landlords must comply with all relevant provisions of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994 (as amended). Although enforced by the Health and Safety Executive, compliance with these Regulations is also a statutory requirement under the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 and forms part of the HMO licence conditions.
- Landlords must install a carbon monoxide alarm in any room used as living accommodation that contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers), in accordance with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022. This requirement came into effect on 1 October 2022 and complements the duties set out in the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.
- The 2018 amendment allows for a flexible "MOT style" check, enabling landlords to schedule the inspection up to two months before the certificate's expiry date and retain the original deadline.

9. Furniture safety

- The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988(as amended) set standards for the fire resistance of domestic upholstered furniture, furnishings, and other products containing upholstery. These regulations require that certain items of furniture provided in accommodation to comply with the specified fire safety standards.
- Landlords and agents are legally responsible for ensuring that any upholstered furniture or furnishings they supply meet the safety requirements. This includes items that are both new and second hand.
- In licensed HMOs, compliance with furniture fire safety requirements is incorporated into the licence conditions
- Further information and guidance can be obtained from the Hertfordshire Trading Standards Service or Department for Business and Trade.

10. Personal safety and security

- Adequate measures must be in place to ensure a secure environment for all occupants. This includes fitting appropriate locks to external doors and to tenants' individual rooms to prevent unauthorised access whilst ensuring safe access in an emergency.

- Vulnerable windows must be capable of being securely fastened to prevent unauthorised entry, without compromising means of escape in the event of fire.
- Windows on first floor and higher must be fitted with restrictors that limit the opening to 100mm to prevent falls. The restrictors must be readily "over-ridable" in an emergency to allow the window to be used as a fire escape. The release mechanism for an escape window restrictor must be operable in a single motion and not require a removable key or tool.
- For the windows (all habitable rooms on the first floor and above) with a sill height of 800mm or less, safety glass or safety bars may be needed, along with window restrictors. If furniture is placed near a low window, reducing the height from which a person could fall, the 800mm rule should be measured from the top of the furniture, not the floor.
- Landlords must have procedures in place to manage the issue and return of house keys at the start and end of tenancies, including the changing of locks where necessary.
- Any crime prevention guidance given by a Police Crime Prevention Officer should be followed wherever reasonably practicable, in accordance with general duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which places a duty on responsible authorities to have regard to crime prevention in exercising their functions.
- Simple locks must be provided on communal bathroom and toilet doors to ensure tenant privacy.
- All staircases should have handrails or equivalent as a means of supporting stability on staircase.

11. Thermal Efficiency

- An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) must be in place for all HMOs where legally required. In addition, landlords must comply with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004, which includes assessing hazards such as excess cold, and with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) Regulations 2015, which require rental properties to meet a minimum EPC standard.
- The EPC must be made available to prospective tenants at the earliest opportunity and provided to any person taking up occupation, in accordance with statutory requirements.
- All HMOs which are required to have an EPC must achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of **Band E**.
- A property with an EPC rating of Band F or G shall not be let or continue to be let unless:
 - a) An applicable exemption has been validly registered on the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Exemptions Register and
 - b) The exemption remains current and compliant with all relevant regulations
- An EPC is valid for a period of 10 years, unless replaced earlier by a new certificate.

12. Asbestos

Landlords have a statutory duty to manage any asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) present in their property.

- If the asbestos material is in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed, such as during normal occupation, it may be appropriate to leave it in place.
- If there is any doubt regarding the condition or risk of disturbance, professional advice should be sought.
- Landlords should:
 - Keep a record of the location, type, and condition of any ACMs

- Inspect all known ACMs at least every six months to ensure there is no damage or deterioration
 - Update the record after each inspection, including the date and signature to confirm that the checks have been carried out
- These measures are essential to ensure the ongoing safety of tenants and compliance with statutory asbestos management duties.

13. Garden Areas

- Garden areas (at the front and back of the property) should be kept tidy, free from rubbish and debris, should have no fire hazards or have no harbourage for rodents.
- The landlord must take regular steps to keep grass and other trees and plants under control and should prevent the garden areas being a nuisance to neighbours.

Section 2: Space standards

Occupancy and Space Allocation

Requirement	Standard
Inclusion in occupancy count	All persons, including babies and children, must be included in occupancy calculations
Individual space allocation	Each occupant must have their own allocation of space
HMO occupancy definition	A person of any age is counted toward HMO occupancy numbers

Sleeping Arrangements

- The number of people sharing includes babies and children. Everyone must have their own allocation of space.
- The Licence Holder is required:
 - to ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged over 10 years is not less than 6.51 square metres (mandatory condition)
 - to ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by two persons aged over 10 years is not less than 12.22 square metres (mandatory condition)
 - to ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged under 10 years is not less than 4.64 square metres (mandatory condition)
 - to ensure that any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64 square metres is not used as sleeping accommodation (mandatory condition)
- The Licence Holder shall ensure that:
 - where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged over 10 years only, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged over 10 years specified in the licence (mandatory condition)
 - where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged under 10 years only, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged under 10 years specified in the licence (mandatory condition)
 - where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged over 10 years and persons aged under 10 years, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged over 10 years specified in the licence and the maximum number of persons aged under 10 years so specified (mandatory condition)
- Whilst there is an expectation that no child would reside within a HMO, for the purposes of space standards everyone over the age of 10 years must be able to occupy sleeping accommodation so that they do not have to share with someone who is not a close relative and/or with someone of the opposite sex unless they are living together/co-habiting.
- Close relative means parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or cousin. People who are not close relatives should not be required to share a bedroom without their prior consent.

- A staircase, landing or any room, which has been appointed as a kitchen or bathroom, shall not be used as sleeping accommodation.

Ceiling height requirements

- All rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and toilet compartments shall have a minimum requirement for ceiling:

Requirement	Standard
Minimum ceiling height	2130 mm for all rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and toilet compartments
Sloping ceilings	Minimum 2130 mm over at least 50% of the floor area
Measurement method	Measurements taken at a plane 1500 mm above floor level
Excluded floor area	Any area with ceiling height below 1500 mm is not counted as usable space

Living Room and Kitchen Definition

- The term “each living room/kitchen” refers to a single combined room (i.e. an open-plan living room and kitchen counted as one space).

One Person Units of Accommodation

(Any unit of accommodation intended for occupation by one person)

One room unit

Including kitchen facilities in the room	11 m ²
Separate individual or shared kitchen	8 m ²

Two or more room units

Each living room/kitchen (combined room)	10 m ²
Each living room	8.5 m ²
Each bedroom	6.51 m ²

- Trade-off between room sizes in 2 or more roomed units may be acceptable at the discretion of the council's inspecting officer, providing the proposed layout is acceptable and the aggregate habitable floor area of the rooms is not less than 14.5 m².

Two Person Units of Accommodation

(Any unit of accommodation intended for occupation by two people)

One room unit

Including kitchen facilities in the room	16 m ²
Separate individual or shared kitchen	13 m ²

Two or more room units

Rooms in two or more roomed units of accommodation have to meet the following sizes:

Bedroom	11 m ²
Must include one of the following (which is for exclusive use of the unit)	
Kitchen/diner (combined room)	6 m ²
Living room	8.5 m ²

Common Rooms

Numbers Sharing	Minimum Floor Area
<u>Kitchens (no dining room facility)</u>	
Used by 1-5 persons	6 m ²
Used by 6-10 persons	11 m ²
<u>Kitchen with dining room facilities included</u>	
Used by 1-5 persons	8.5 m ²
Used by 6-10 persons	12.5 m ²
<u>Living rooms or separate dining rooms</u>	
Used by 1-5 persons	8.5 m ²
Used by 6-10 persons	12.5 m ²

- For each additional person over 10 persons, 1.5 m² should be added for each room
- The kitchen must be sited no more than one floor distance from the bedroom unless there is a dining room area (which can be included in the kitchen)

Section 3: Standards for HMOs with shared amenities and facilities

Personal washing facilities and sanitary conveniences for shared use

General facilities	An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water for all internal washing facilities
Toilet facilities Up to 5 persons 6-10 persons 11+ persons	- At least 1 bathroom with a fixed bath or shower and a toilet - At least 2 bathrooms and at least 1 with separate WC - For every 5 persons there must have an additional WC with hand wash and shower or bath - A minimum number of 3 toilets should be available for 11+ persons. - At least 1 toilet must be separate from any bathrooms or provision of a 4th bathroom. For every 5 persons, there must be an additional WC with handwash and shower or bath
Wash basin	- Basin size should be a minimum of 550mmx400mm, with a waterproof splashback of a minimum size of 300mm in height - A hand wash basin is required in all bedrooms unless it is impractical to do so, written confirmation is required from the landlord or letting agent.
Bath and shower facilities	- All bathing facilities shall include a readily accessible, standard-sized bath or shower, with sufficient space provided for users to change and dry themselves safely and comfortably - Adequate splashback protection shall be installed as follows: - A minimum of 300 mm above the rim of a bath - A minimum of 150 mm above the height of the showerhead for showers (including over-bath showers) - Where a shower curtain is used, splashback protection shall extend at least 300 mm beyond the curtain area - All joints and connections shall be properly sealed to ensure water tightness - Shower installations shall incorporate fully waterproof wall finishes or be provided within a complete, self-contained shower cubicle

	- Flooring within bathrooms and shower rooms shall be durable, slip-resistant, and capable of being easily cleaned - The walls of any toilet, bathroom or shower room must be reasonably smooth and non-absorbent and capable of being easily cleaned
Heating and ventilation	- Adequate heating in bathrooms to maintain a temperature of 22°C when the external temperature is -1°C - Bathrooms or shower rooms must have mechanical ventilation to the outside air that meets current building regulations. The installation should be coupled to the light switch and incorporate a suitable over-run period or an appropriately set humidistat
Space standards and room sizes	- All bathroom and shower room facilities shall have a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2130 mm - Each bathroom or shower room shall be of sufficient size to provide users with adequate space for changing and drying - Although there is no prescribed minimum floor area, bathrooms shall be of an adequate size and appropriate layout. As a guide, the following typical minimum sizes are considered suitable: - WC and hand basin: 1.5 m² - Shower room (WC, shower and hand basin): 2.5 m² - Bathroom (WC, bath or shower and hand basin): 4.4 m² - Bathrooms with a total area of less than 2 m² are more likely to present hazards and may pose an increased risk to users - The layout and positioning of bathroom fixtures and amenities shall be carefully considered, as poorly designed or arranged facilities may create additional risks - Bathroom and shower room design shall ensure that users are able to change clothing and dry themselves comfortably, without obstruction or risk of collision with walls, fixtures, or fittings - All bathroom and shower room facilities shall be well maintained and kept in good condition
Location of bathroom and toilets	- Where shared, these facilities must be accessible from a common area - Bathrooms and toilets should be located within a reasonable distance, typically no more than one floor away from the bedrooms they serve

Kitchen equipment and facilities for shared use

Cookers with oven and grill	1 full sized cooker with minimum 4 burner rings
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	• Cookers should not be side by side; air fryers are permitted but will not replace a cooker
Sink and draining board	• Full size sink with draining board and waterproof splashback 300mm high • Wash basin shall not be used in place of sink
Electrical socket	• 4 power sockets in addition for those needed for appliances for up to 5 persons
Worktop	• A minimum dimension of 500mm x 1500mm worktop should be provided. • Waterproof splashback 300 mm height
Refrigerator - fridge/freezer	• If possible separate per occupancy, or appropriate capacity • At least 1 shelf per persons and adequate freezer space or a separate freezer for each room • A minimum of 90ltr fridge with ice box if placed in individual rooms, plus full size upright/ fridge freezer in any communal kitchen
Hot and cold water	• An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water. Stand-alone water heaters are not a satisfactory supply of hot water • Landlords should ensure that the water supply and drainage system serving the HMO is maintained in a good, clean and working condition – this includes in licensable HMOs conducting a legionella risk assessment, if required (a review is required for any changes in the system, new persons, or following maintenance, as outlined by Legionella Control Interna)
Ventilation	• A mechanical electrical extractor fan ducted to the external air is a mandatory requirement for kitchens to ensure adequate ventilation, removing steam, smells, and pollutants • The required extraction rate is typically 60 litres per second, or 30 litres per second if a cooker hood is fitted and vents externally • A separate extraction fan and must be operable by the tenant, and in kitchens not directly exposed to the outside, its control must be linked to the main room light switch with a 15-minute overrun or be a correctly set humidistat • Electrical extraction in accordance with Approved Document F under Building Regulations 2010
Walls and ceilings	There should be a waterproof splashback behind sink
Flooring	Floors should be free of slip, trip, and fall hazards and be easily cleanable
Storage	• Each separate occupancy shall be provided with dry goods storage space either within the kitchen, or in an adjacent and readily accessible position

	- One double wall cupboard or a single base unit is required per occupancy for the storage of dry goods and utensils, although households comprising more than one individual will require additional space - If located in a communal kitchen, the dry goods storage shall be lockable or otherwise secure - The space in a sink unit below the sink will not be accepted for the above purposes
Fire blanket	- A fire blanket must be provided near the cooking point - Appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided of such type, number and location as is considered necessary. The property shall be provided with an adequate protected means of escape from fire, together with other fire precautions including so far as necessary, a detection and a warning system with emergency lighting to the satisfaction of the inspecting officer. - Further guidance is available in the document entitled - 'Guide to Fire Protection in Houses in Multiple Occupation' available on the council's website
Hot and cold water	- An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water. Stand-alone water heaters are not a satisfactory supply of hot water - Landlords should ensure that the water supply and drainage system serving the HMO is maintained in a good, clean and working condition – this includes in licensable HMOs conducting a legionella risk assessment, if required (a review is required for any changes in the system, new tenants, or following maintenance, as outlined by Legionella Control Interna)
Washing facilities	A washing machine or washer-dryer can be provided
Additional cooking facilities for more than 5 persons	- For up to 5 persons: 1 full sized cooker (a cooker must have a minimum of 4 ring burners, an oven and a grill) plus microwaves or air fryers as required - For 6 or 7 persons: 1 cooker and 1 combination microwave/oven 8-10 persons: 2 full sized cookers 10+ persons: expectation that for every increase of 7 persons, 1 additional cooker and combination microwave/oven is provided - Additional electrical sockets may be required

Kitchens for Exclusive Use or Bedsits

Sink and draining	Full size sink with draining board and waterproof splashback 300mm high
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	Wash basin shall not be used in place of sink
Ventilation	- Adequate ventilation must be provided - A separate extraction fan must be operable by the tenant, and in kitchens not directly exposed to the outside, its control must be linked to the main room light switch with a 15 -minute overrun or be a correctly set humidistat
Electrical sockets	4 power sockets in addition for those needed for appliances
Worktop	500 x 1000mm for single person units, 500 x 1500 for 2 person units. Waterproof splashback 300 mm height
Fridge freezer	A minimum of 90ltr fridge with ice box if provided for in individual rooms
Flooring	Floors should be free of slip, trip, and fall hazards and be easily cleanable
Storage	- Each separate occupancy shall be provided with dry goods storage space either within the kitchen, or in an adjacent and readily accessible position - One double wall cupboard or a single base unit is required per occupancy for the storage of dry goods and utensils, although occupancies comprising more than one individual will require additional space - The space in a unit below the sink will not be accepted for the above purposes
Fire blankets	- A fire blanket must be provided near the cooking point - Appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided of such type, number and location as is considered necessary. The property shall be provided with an adequate protected means of escape from fire, together with other fire precautions including so far as necessary, a detection and a warning system with emergency lighting to the satisfaction of the inspecting officer. - Guidance is available in a separate document entitled - 'Guide to Fire Protection in Houses in Multiple Occupation'
Hot and cold water	- An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water. Stand-alone water heaters are not a satisfactory supply of hot water - Landlords should ensure that the water supply and drainage system serving the HMO is maintained in a good, clean and working condition – this includes in licensable HMOs conducting a legionella risk assessment, if required (A review is required for any changes in the system, new tenants, or following maintenance, as outlined by Legionella Control Interna)
Washing facilities	A washing machine or washer-dryer can be provided

Note: Due to safety concerns related to cooking facilities being within the bedroom there is an expectation that the tenant has access to a communal kitchen with such facilities. As such, the policy prohibits kitchen areas or kitchenettes within single rooms used for living/sleeping.

Section 4: Units of Living Accommodation Without Shared Basic Amenities

Kitchen facilities

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: -

Cookers with oven and grill	- The minimum requirement is 2 rings/hot plates together with a minimum of 28 litres oven and a grill for 1 person and 4 rings/hotplates together with a full-size oven and grill if provided for more than 1 person - A microwave oven may be substituted for 1 or 2 rings subject to agreement with the council's inspecting officer. - Air fryers are permitted but will not replace a cooker
Sink and draining	- Full size sink with draining board and waterproof splashback 300mm high - Wash basin shall not be used in place of sink
Ventilation	- Adequate ventilation must be provided - A separate extraction fan must be operable by the tenant, and in kitchens not directly exposed to the outside, its control must be linked to the main room light switch with a 15 -minute overrun or be a correctly set humidistat
Electrical sockets	4 power sockets in addition for those needed for appliances
Worktop	500 x 1000mm for single person units, 500 x 1500 for 2 person units. Waterproof splashback 300 mm height
Fridge freezer	A minimum of 90ltr fridge with ice box if provided for in individual rooms
Flooring	Floors should be free of slip, trip, and fall hazards and be easily cleanable
Storage	- Each separate occupancy shall be provided with dry goods storage space either within the kitchen, or in an adjacent and readily accessible position - One double wall cupboard or a single base unit is required per occupancy for the storage of dry goods and utensils, although occupancies comprising more than one individual will require additional space - The space in a unit below the sink will not be accepted for the above purposes
Fire blankets	- A fire blanket must be provided near the cooking point - Appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided of such type, number and location as is considered necessary. The property shall be provided with an adequate protected means of escape from fire, together with other fire precautions including so far as necessary, a detection and a warning system with emergency lighting to the satisfaction of the inspecting officer. - Guidance is available in a separate document entitled - 'Guide to Fire Protection in Houses in Multiple Occupation'
Hot and cold water	An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water. Stand-alone water heaters are not a satisfactory supply of hot water

	Landlords should ensure that the water supply and drainage system serving the HMO is maintained in a good, clean and working condition – this includes in licensable HMOs conducting a legionella risk assessment, if required (A review is required for any changes in the system, new tenants, or following maintenance, as outlined by Legionella Control Interna)
Washing facilities	A washing machine or washer-dryer can be provided

Personal washing facilities and sanitary conveniences

- Where adequate shared washing facilities are not provided for a unit of living accommodation, an enclosed room must be provided for the exclusive use of the tenants of that unit. The room must be appropriately laid out, adequately ventilated, and fitted with a toilet and either a bath or a fixed shower, supplying adequate cold water and a constant supply of hot water. This facility must be located either:
 - within the living accommodation; or
 - within reasonable proximity to the living accommodation.
- Washing facilities should ideally be for exclusive use but where this is not possible the following apply:

General facilities	An adequate and potable supply of cold water and constant hot water for all internal washing facilities
Toilet facilities	At least 1 bathroom with a fixed bath or shower and a toilet
Wash basin	- Basin size should be a minimum of 550mmx400mm, with a waterproof splashback of a minimum size of 300mm in height - A hand wash basin is required in all bedrooms unless it is impractical to do so, written confirmation is required from the landlord or letting agent.
Bath and shower facilities	- All bathing facilities shall include a readily accessible, standard-sized bath or shower, with sufficient space provided for users to change and dry themselves safely and comfortably - Adequate splashback protection shall be installed as follows: - A minimum of 300 mm above the rim of a bath - A minimum of 150 mm above the height of the showerhead for showers (including over-bath showers) - Where a shower curtain is used, splashback protection shall extend at least 300 mm beyond the curtain area - All joints and connections shall be properly sealed to ensure water tightness - Shower installations shall incorporate fully waterproof wall finishes or be provided within a complete, self-contained shower cubicle - Flooring within bathrooms and shower rooms shall be durable, slip-resistant, and capable of being easily cleaned

	The walls of any toilet, bathroom or shower room must be reasonably smooth and non-absorbent and capable of being easily cleaned
Heating and ventilation	- Adequate heating in bathrooms to maintain a temperature of 22°C when the external temperature is -1°C - Bathrooms or shower rooms must have mechanical ventilation to the outside air that meets current building regulations. The installation should be coupled to the light switch and incorporate a suitable over-run period or an appropriately set humidistat
Space standards and room sizes	- All bathroom and shower room facilities shall have a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2130 mm - Each bathroom or shower room shall be of sufficient size to provide users with adequate space for changing and drying - Although there is no prescribed minimum floor area, bathrooms shall be of an adequate size and appropriate layout. As a guide, the following typical minimum sizes are considered suitable: - WC and hand basin: 1.5 m² - Shower room (WC, shower and hand basin): 2.5 m² - Bathroom (WC, bath or shower and hand basin): 4.4 m² - Bathrooms with a total area of less than 2 m² are more likely to present hazards and may pose an increased risk to users - The layout and positioning of bathroom fixtures and amenities shall be carefully considered, as poorly designed or arranged facilities may create additional risks - Bathroom and shower room design shall ensure that users are able to change clothing and dry themselves comfortably, without obstruction or risk of collision with walls, fixtures, or fittings - All bathroom and shower room facilities shall be well maintained and kept in good condition
Location of bathroom and toilets	- Where shared, these facilities must be accessible from a common area - Bathrooms and toilets should be located within a reasonable distance, typically no more than one floor away from the bedrooms they serve

Section 5 General requirements for all types of HMOs

Management

- The manager of the house in multiple occupation is ultimately responsible for maintaining standards within the building. Where the manager is not resident he or she must make suitable arrangements to ensure that conditions and facilities are kept in good order.
- The property should be inspected on a minimum quarterly basis.

General Management Duties

- The manager of an HMO must comply with the HMO Management (England) Regulations 2006. A good standard of management shall be observed in the house. In particular this shall ensure the repair, maintenance and cleansing and good order of:
 - all means of water supply and drainage in and serving the house
 - all means of escape from fire and all apparatus, systems and other things provided by way of fire precautions and alarms
 - kitchens, bathrooms and toilets in common use
 - sinks and wash basins in common use, common staircases, corridors and passages, and outbuildings, yards and gardens in common use
 - arrangements for the disposal of refuse and litter from the house
 - ensure that all means of escape from fire are kept clear of obstructions

Enforcement

- It is the responsibility of landlords to meet their legal obligations and not the responsibility of the Council to point out deficiencies.
- The Council will encourage owners to comply with their legal obligations with information, advice and support. Where owners or managers are unwilling to meet their obligations or where failures are significant, the Council will take appropriate enforcement action in accordance with the Council's Housing Enforcement and Licensing Policy to protect the health, safety or well-being of tenants and others affected. This may include
 - any of the actions available to the Council in Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 following a Housing Health & Safety Rating System ('HHSRS') assessment
 - prosecution for breaches of the Management Regulations or licence conditions
 - the making of Interim and Final Management Orders where the health, safety or wellbeing of tenants is of serious concern
 - taking action to revoke the licence
 - where formal enforcement action is taken this may affect future decisions as to whether someone associated with a licence or property is a fit and proper person and future applications for the grant, renewal or variation of licences