

# Houses in Multiple Occupation Standards

## Minimum Space Standards

These standards apply to all Houses in Multiple Occupation. (HMO's)

This is the standard that the Council will use for all licensable HMO's. We would also consider them appropriate for non-licensable HMO's however would consider this on a case by case basis.

<b>One person units of accommodation</b>	
With kitchen facilities in the room	13m <sup>2</sup>
Bedroom only with use of separate kitchen	10m <sup>2</sup>

These sizes can be reduced at the discretion of the inspecting officer if there are adequate communal living room, kitchen, or dining facilities. No room of less than 6.5<sup>2</sup> m will be adequate. Room size is determined on useable space and deductions maybe made for inaccessible layouts for example sloping ceilings.

<b>Two person units of accommodation</b>	
with kitchen facilities in the room	18.7m <sup>2</sup>
Bedroom only with use of separate kitchen	15m <sup>2</sup>

Room sizes can be reduced by up to 2m<sup>2</sup> at the discretion of the inspecting officer if there are adequate communal living room, kitchen or dining facilities.

Health and safety issues will also be taken into account when accepting reduced space standards and how useable the space is. **Please see notes.**

## Minimum Amenity Standards

### WCs, bathrooms, shower rooms and wash hand basins

Each WC cubicle, bathroom, shower room must have:

- Appliances of the type and number set out in the table below;
- Constant and adequate supplies of hot and cold water;
- Waterproof splash-backs to basins and baths and waterproof enclosure to showers;
- Smooth non- absorbent and easily cleaned walls and ceiling;
- Appropriate water resistant, non- slip flooring;
- All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated;
- Where reasonably practicable wash hand basins should be provided to bedsit rooms, except where there is a sink provided as part of kitchen facilities within the room or where the HMO is a shared house. Wash hand basins must be

provided in bath/shower rooms and separate WCs unless hand washing facilities are adequate elsewhere. **Please see notes.**

- There must be at least one bath or shower for every five occupants;
- All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be of adequate size and layout with suitable door and lock to provide privacy

<b>Number sharing</b>	<b>Toilet facilities required</b>
1-3 occupiers	1 toilet may be incorporated within the bathroom
4-5 occupiers	1 toilet to be separate from the bathroom (could be in second bathroom)
6-8 occupiers	2 toilets could be sited within 2 separate bathrooms
9-10 occupiers	2 toilets. 1 must be separate from any bathroom
11+ occupiers	3 toilets + on ratio of 1:5. 1 or more to be separate from bath/shower room

*Reference to a bathroom may be a room containing either a bath or shower.*

## **Facilities for storing preparing and cooking food**

### **Location and availability**

Each occupant must have 24 hour access to a suitable kitchen which should preferably not be more than one floor away from the letting room.

### **Layout, dimensions and space**

A shared 'kitchen' should be suitably located in relation to the living accommodation and be of adequate size (see table below). Each 'kitchen' must have the following facilities;

- Sink and drainer of minimum dimensions 500 x 600 mm;
- An adequate supply of cold drinking water and constant hot water;
- A fixed worktop or table of smooth and impervious material of minimum size 500 x 1000 mm;
- 1 full sized oven with grill and 4 ring burners and /or microwave equivalent;
- Two double sockets plus one socket for each fixed appliance;
- Smooth impervious splash backs to the sink and draining board;
- Adequate storage ( 0.08 m<sup>2</sup> ) and refrigerator space ( 0.075 m<sup>2</sup> ) must be allocated.

Additional 'kitchens' to the same standard shall be provided on a ratio of 1 per 6 residents and based on the following floor area.

<b>Number of occupants sharing</b>	<b>Minimum floor area</b>
<b>Kitchens</b>	
1 - 3 people	5 m <sup>2</sup>

4 people	6 m <sup>2</sup>
5 people	7 m <sup>2</sup>
6 people	9 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Dining kitchens</b>	
1 – 3 people	10 m <sup>2</sup>
4 – 6 people	11.5 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Living rooms or dining rooms</b>	
1 – 3 people	8.5 m <sup>2</sup>
4 – 6 people	11 m <sup>2</sup>

In-room kitchen facilities can be scaled down from this with purpose built micro kitchens being acceptable.

## **Fire Protection**

The council uses the fire safety guidance issued by the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory services (LACoRS) and building regulations approved documents to determine what measures are appropriate to the level of risk.

### **Notes:**

#### ***Bedsit type HMOs***

These are HMOs which have been converted into a number of separate non-self-contained bedsit lettings or floor-by-floor lets. Typically there will be individual cooking facilities within each bedsit, but alternatively there may be shared cooking facilities or a mixture of the two. Toilets and bathing/washing facilities will mostly be shared. There is unlikely to be a communal living or dining room. Each bedsit or letting will be let to separate individuals who will live independently, with little or no shared communal living between tenants. Each letting will have its own individual tenancy agreement and there will usually be a lock on each individual letting door.

#### ***Shared House type HMO***

There is no legal definition of a 'shared house' and so this term can sometimes cause confusion. Whilst shared houses fall within the legal definition of an HMO and will be licensable where licensing criteria are met, it is recognised that they can often present a lower fire risk and other management risks than traditional bedsit-type HMOs due to their characteristics.

Shared houses are described as HMOs where the whole property has been rented out by an identifiable group of sharers such as students, work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. Each occupant normally has their own bedroom but they share the kitchen, dining facilities, bathroom, WC, living room and all other parts of the house. All the tenants will have exclusive legal possession and control of all parts of the house, including all the bedrooms. There is normally a significant degree of social interaction between the occupants and they will, in the main, have rented out the house as one group and have a single joint tenancy agreement. In summary, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household, although the property is still technically an HMO as the occupants are not all related