

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Amenity & Space Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

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1.0 Introduction to amenity standards

This document is designed to give guidance on what is an acceptable standard of fixtures and fittings, facilities and amenities in a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). These amenity standards will principally be used for determining the requirements for HMOs when they are assessed for licensing purposes, but are likely to be applied as the standard in all HMOs on assessment. The standards are intended to ensure the comfort, safety and convenience of occupiers.

The suitability of other types of residences is mainly determined on the basis of acceptable hazards as defined by the 'Housing Health and Safety Rating System' (HHSRS).

We acknowledge that every property is unique, so it is not always practicable to adhere exactly to these standards. Where this is the case, the council will make an assessment on an individual basis and advise landlords accordingly.

These standards have been determined having reference to current legislation, government guidance and established good practice.

Guidance in respect of the fire safety measures required in residential accommodation is provided separately and is based on the standards specified in the LACoRS document 'Housing – Fire safety', the relevant British Standard and following consultation with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service.

Separate guidance is also provided for single family house rentals and that document also includes an explanation of the HHSRS.

Commented [GJH1]: List of 29 hazards removed

2.0 Standards for bedsit type HMOs and shared house type HMOs

These are respectively:

- Units of accommodation where a room(s) is let under a separate tenancy, and;
- Houses leased under a single tenancy but occupied by more than one household.

Commented [GJH2]: New explanation

Minimum shared washing and toilet facilities:

Table 1: Minimum sanitary facilities

Number of Occupants	Minimum Amenity Provision		Notes
	Bathroom	Toilet (WC)	
1- 4 persons	1 bathroom	1 toilet	The bathroom and WC may be combined in one room.
5 persons	1 bathroom	1 toilet	At least one toilet must be in a separate compartment.
6-10 persons	2 bathrooms	2 toilets	
11-15 persons	3 bathrooms	3 toilets	
16+ persons	Full consultation with the Local Authority is required.		

Commented [GJH3]: New table - same requirements

- We recommend that all units of accommodation should contain hand washing facilities where this is reasonably practicable and deemed necessary due to lack of suitable alternative provision. In the absence of a sink (cooking facilities in unit) this shall comprise a wash hand basin.
- 'Bathroom' shall mean:- a bath (or shower) and a 'vanity' wash hand basin. Every HMO shall have one bathroom with a bath where children are in occupation.
- 'Toilet' shall include a water closet (flush toilet) and a suitable wash hand basin.
- Hot water to be delivered via a boiler, immersion heater or fixed gas appliance. Electric showers and wash hand basins may be instantaneously heated.
- All bathrooms and toilets must be fit for purpose, with enough space for necessary activities (e.g. undressing and towelling dry). External toilets shall be ignored.
- Every bathroom shall be adequately mechanically ventilated to the outside.
- Every toilet shall have the means for adequate ventilation (opening window or mechanical).
- All baths and wash-hand basins must be equipped with taps providing a **constant** and adequate sufficient supply of **hot** and **cold water** (and have an adequate associated 'splashback')
- All bathrooms must be adequately heated. If the heating is of an instantaneous variety, then this must be of a suitable capacity and type so as to be 'on demand' and allow bathing in comfort.
- Bathrooms and toilets must be located on the same floor or on the adjacent floor to the unit of accommodation - (e.g. an adequate bathroom located on the first floor of a 3 storey house would be sufficient).
- Where there are en-suite bathroom facilities these must be to a standard equivalent to such facilities otherwise. The provision of shared bathrooms and toilets in the HMO shall be calculated on the basis of the number of remaining occupants.

Commented [GJH4]: New & updated explanations and clarifications

Minimum standards for shared kitchens

(Where some of the individual units of living accommodation do not contain facilities for the cooking of food).

Table 2: Minimum kitchen facilities

Minimum Standard	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
Kitchen sink - a minimum of 500mm x 600mm (wash hand basin not acceptable).		
A fixed impervious sink with a drainer and with an impervious and washable splashback (to minimum height of 150mm). It must be provided with an adequate and wholesome supply of cold water, and a constant supply of hot water. Any junction to the splashback must be suitably sealed.	1 sink - To be connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap.	1 extra sink per 5 occupants and part of thereafter. One automatic dishwashing machine is acceptable in lieu of an additional sink.
Cookers	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
A cooker comprising an oven, grill and an electric or gas hob with 4 rings. Two microwaves each containing an oven and grill may be acceptable in lieu of a second or third cooker. Cookers must have a minimum of 300mm worktop adjacent either side.	A 4 ring cooker - either served by a gas or an adequate fused electric point.	1 extra cooker per 5 occupants and part of thereafter which may include ranges.
Electric sockets	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
Electrical sockets and points of the number stated should be set at a convenient height and in a safe position. Additional dedicated sockets/points are required for a refrigerator, freezer and any washing machine. A dedicated 30 amp supply is required if there is an electric cooker.	6 double outlet sockets – appropriately sited next to relevant work surfaces.	1 additional double socket - for each two persons over five sharing;
Worktops for food preparation	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
Worktops should be secure, in good repair, fixed and be of an impervious, smooth and readily washable finish.	500mm (length) x standard depth per user - to a minimum of 2.5m length.	Additional 500mm length per user.
Cupboards for storage of utensils and food	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
Either a floor based food storage cupboard 500mm wide and of standard depth and height or, a wall-mounted food storage cupboard 1000mm wide and standard depth and height should be provided per person. (N.B. the space below the sink is not to be included).	A combination as accords to the requirement.	Capacity to be increased proportionately for each additional occupant.
Refrigerators and freezer provision	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
A large standard combined fridge/freezer. (where each occupant can have at least one shelf in the fridge and adequate freezer space).	One standard fridge freezer of 250-300 litres capacity.	Additional fridge-freezer capacity to be increased proportionately, for each additional occupant.

Refuse disposal facilities in the kitchen	≤ 5 persons	≥ 6 persons
There must be suitable receptacles for the temporary sorting and disposal of refuse prior to decanting into external bins. In accordance with current council requirements, this should comprise separate receptacles for recycling, compostable waste and general waste. Receptacles must be capable of sealing against the release of odours. All bins must be easy to clean and clearly labelled by type of use i.e recycling etc.	3 suitably sized bins. Bins should be a minimum of 50 litres capacity.	Increased capacity or additional bins so as to provide at least an additional 30 litres per additional person.
Appropriate extractor fans		
All kitchens must have in place, as a minimum, adequate mechanical air extraction to the outside - with the outlet positioned away from windows and doors. Mechanical air extraction shall be in accordance with Approved Document F of the Building Regulations. Ideally extraction should be from the cooker hood where practicable.		
Fire-fighting equipment		
To be supplied and sited in accordance with the council's fire safety guidance. Generally this will comprise at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fire blanket suitably located so as to allow firefighting of small cooking fires. • A small multi-purpose fire extinguisher capable of being used on electrical or fat fires. Firefighting equipment must not be situated such as to encourage persons to be trapped by fire away from a means of escape.		
Appropriate fire doors		
Fire doors separating the kitchen from other rooms to be supplied and sited in accordance with the council's fire safety guidance or as otherwise directed by the Council.		
Appropriate surface finishes		
Kitchen floors must be water resistant, smooth, continuous and free from any cracks or crevices – to enable effective cleaning (e.g.: ceramic or vinyl floor tiles or linoleum flooring); Kitchen walls adjacent to cookers, sinks and food preparation areas shall be provided with washable and impervious splashbacks to a distance of at least 150mm from the areas, Ceilings and wall finishes shall be in good repair so as to minimise dust and debris.		

- *All kitchens should be suitably located – generally, no more than one floor away from the living and sleeping accommodation - (e.g. a suitable kitchen on the ground floor would be adequate for a 3 storey house).*
- *Unless cooking facilities as described below in table 6 are provided to an individual unit then any shared facilities must be sufficient to accommodate the occupiers of that unit (having regard to the facilities provided in the accommodation).*

Commented [GJH5]: Updated Explanations

Minimum room sizes

Table 4. Minimum room sizes for kitchen and lounge:

Occupants:-	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Communal Lounge or Dining Room	9 m ²	10 m ²	11 m ²	12 m ²	13 m ²	14 m ²	15 m ²	16 m ²
Kitchen	5 m ²	5.9 m ²	6.7 m ²	7.6 m ²	8.4 m ²	9.3 m ²	10.1 m ²	11 m ²

Commented [GJH6]: Updated Graduated Table Separating Kitchen and Lounge as opposed to total communal space

Table 5. Minimum bedroom sizes

	One room unit of accommodation				Unit of accommodation > 1 room (two room bedsits)		
Room type:-	Bedroom	Bed + Kitchen	Bed + Lounge	Bed + Lounge + Kitchen	lounge	Lounge + kitchen	Kitchen
Single	6.51 m ²	10.5 m ²	9 m ²	13 m ²	6 m ²	10 m ²	5 m ²
Couple	10.22 m ²	15 m ²	14 m ²	19 m ²	8 m ²	12 m ²	5.25 m ²

Commented [GJH7]: Updated table with minor adjustments

- *The above relates to permanent accommodation often occupied under an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.*
- *Kitchen lounge/dining will be summation of the above.*
- *For these calculations, any floor area where the ceiling height is below 1.5m shall not be counted as useable floor area (except at the discretion of the Council). In addition, when calculating the size of any attic room, this shall be calculated on the basis that a minimum of 75% of the usable floor area should be a minimum height of 2.14m.*
- *Where en-suite bathrooms are provided this shall not count towards the bedroom area.*
- *Where there are children living in a HMO, the letting they occupy must consist of at least 2 rooms.*
- *Any child over the age of 10 years shall not have to share a bedroom with their parents or a child of the opposite sex.*
- *A minimum size of bedroom only for a child under 10yrs is 4.64m² or 9.28m² for two children.*
- *The rooms must be self-contained and adjoined or preferably interconnecting. The letting must have its own directly accessible bathroom for exclusive use of that letting. Ideally the bathroom should have a bath rather than just a shower.*
- *Ideally, a play space and a desk shall be provided. Where there is a garden or other outside space associated with the dwelling, it shall be child friendly, safely and easily accessible to the children.*

Commented [GJH8]: New and updated explanation notes

Kitchen facilities for exclusive use of an individual letting

Where individual bedsit rooms are large enough to accommodate a kitchen or multi-room bedsits, or where a room is of adequate size to accommodate a separate kitchen for the exclusive use of the occupant(s) of an accommodation unit:

Commented [GJH9]: New table providing clarity as to what is required

Table 6: Kitchen facilities for individual units of accommodation:

Facility	Minimum Standard
Sink To be connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap.	A fixed impervious sink with a drainer. It must be provided with an adequate and wholesome supply of cold water and a constant supply of hot water.
Cookers Served either by a gas or (adequate) electric point.	A cooker with at least 4 rings with an oven and grill, including at least 300mm of worktop located either side, or if a microwave is provided this can be reduced to 2 rings.
Electric sockets	3 double electric sockets set at a convenient height and safe position including sockets for relevant white goods.
A worktop for the preparation of food	Minimum size 500 to 600mm deep x 1000mm long. The worktop should be secure, fixed and of an impervious material that can be hygienically cleaned.
Cupboards for the storage of utensils and food The cupboard space below the sink is disregarded.	A floor based storage cupboard of 500mm wide and of standard depth and height or; a wall mounted food storage cupboard of 1000mm wide and standard depth and height
A refrigerator	A refrigerator with a freezer compartment.

- *In the absence of adequate kitchen facilities, shared facilities will need to be present to accommodate the occupants.*

Bed & Breakfast (or Hostel) type accommodation

(occupied by persons or families as their main residence on a temporary basis, generally temporary homeless accommodation or supported living accommodation for the vulnerable or ex-offenders etc)

Commented [GJH10]: New table, graduated and clearer.

Minimum room sizes

Table 7. Minimum room sizes for 'temporary' bedroom accommodation

Occupants:-	1	2 (couple)	Couple + child under 10yrs
Bedroom only	6.51 m ²	10.22 m ²	15 m ²
+ lounge	9 m ²	14 m ²	20 m ²
+ kitchen	10.5 m ²	15 m ²	18.5 m ²
+ lounge + kitchen	13 m ²	19 m ²	24 m ²

Table 8. Minimum room sizes for 'temporary' shared rooms

Commented [GJH11]: New table and explanatory notes

Occupants:-	1-3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10**
Lounge	9 m ²	10 m ²	11 m ²	12 m ²	13 m ²	14 m ²	15 m ²	16 m ²
*Kitchen	5 m ²	5.9 m ²	6.7 m ²	7.6 m ²	8.4 m ²	9.3 m ²	10.1 m ²	11 m ²
*Kitchen-dining	10 m ²	11.1 m ²	12.3m ²	13.4m ²	14.6 m ²	15.7 m ²	16.8 m ²	18 m ²
Kitchen-lounge	15m ²	16.8 m ²	18.6 m ²	20.4 m ²	22.2 m ²	24 m ²	25.8 m ²	27.6 m ²

- The above applies to accommodation used as temporary accommodation generally occupied under licence.
- *Where ALL meals are not provided for the residents.
- Where All meals are provided the kitchen facilities shall comply with the requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations currently in force.
- A lounge may not be required where minimum bedroom + lounge room sizes above are met
- Where showers are provided in the bedroom a notional area for shower and shower use shall be disregarded from the calculation.
- **Where numbers are in excess of 10 consultation with the Council is required.

Dormitory accommodation

(limited to accommodation occupied by seasonal migrant workers as their work residence on a temporary basis only and in some cases night shelters for the homeless).

Commented [GJH12]: New category to deal with agricultural HMOs

Minimum room sizes

Table 9. Minimum room sizes for ‘temporary’ bedroom accommodation

Occupants:-	1	2 (couple)	2****	3+ occupants
Bedroom only	6.51 m ²	10.22 m ²	12 m ²	3.5 m ² for each extra occupant***
+ lounge	9 m ²	14 m ²	16 m ²	Separate areas for kitchen and lounge are required.
+ kitchen	10.5 m ²	15 m ²	17 m ²	
+ lounge + kitchen	13 m ²	19 m ²	21 m ²	

Table 10. Minimum room sizes for ‘temporary’ shared rooms

Occupants:-	1-3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10**
Lounge	9 m ²	10 m ²	11 m ²	12 m ²	13 m ²	14 m ²	15 m ²	16 m ²
*Kitchen	5 m ²	5.9 m ²	6.7 m ²	7.6 m ²	8.4 m ²	9.3 m ²	10.1 m ²	11 m ²
*Kitchen-dining	10 m ²	11.1 m ²	12.3 m ²	13.4 m ²	14.6 m ²	15.7 m ²	16.8 m ²	18 m ²
Kitchen-lounge	15 m ²	16.8 m ²	18.6 m ²	20.4 m ²	22.2 m ²	24 m ²	25.8 m ²	27.6 m ²

- Seasonal workers are those that are residing here for work on a temporary basis for a maximum of six months and may be subject to the conditions of a temporary seasonal worker visa. This type of accommodation is not suitable for **permanent** accommodation.
- *Required where ALL meals are not provided for residents
- Where ALL meals are provided the kitchen facilities shall comply with the requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations currently in force - and the model area above will not apply.
- Where en-suite bathrooms are provided this shall not count towards the bedroom area.
- Where showers are provided in the bedroom a notional area for shower and shower use shall be disregarded from the room size floor area calculation.
- **Where numbers are in excess of 10 consultation with the council is required.
- ***exclusive of any area devoted to storage.
- ****The standards shall only be relaxed where bunk beds are in use and a reduction of .5m² per set shall apply. (assumed single bed 1.45m² and .95m² floor space required)
- Bunk beds shall not be used where the floor to ceiling height does not exceed 3m.

3.0 Further amenity requirements.

Commented [GJH13]: Updated Section with references to single family dwellings removed.

Heating

All units of accommodation (and communal areas) must be provided with adequate thermal insulation and a suitable and effective means of space heating - so that it can be economically maintained at a reasonable temperature.

An effective means of space heating may include:

- a programmable natural gas, LPG or oil central heating system;
- an electric storage heaters linked to an Economy 7 (or 10) tariff;
- an economical under-floor heating or warm air heating system;
- any similar economic heating system not described above.

All heaters must be securely fixed in position and heating must be fully controllable by occupiers (of each unit).

All habitable rooms, bathrooms and WC's should have a heating provision capable of raising the temperature of the room to 21°C and maintaining that temperature when the outside temperature is -1°C;

Communal areas should have a heating provision capable of raising the temperature of the areas to 19°C and maintaining that temperature when the outside temperature is -1°C;

Electrical Safety

All rented accommodation must comply with the requirements of *The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020*. As a consequence, landlords must ensure that every fixed electrical installation is inspected and tested at least every five years by a qualified person. Installations must be maintained in a safe condition for the duration of any tenancy. Any remedial works must be undertaken by a competent person.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT testing)

Any electrical equipment that is provided by the landlord for a tenant must be safe and conform to *The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016* (or *The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994* for electrical equipment placed on the market before 8 December 2016) and the *Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994*.

Where undertaken, PAT testing should be carried out by a competent person, and records maintained of the inspection and testing results. Copies of certificates issued by the competent person should be displayed in a suitable location in the property, or given directly to the occupiers. Frequency of testing will depend on whether the appliance is Class I (earthed) or Class II (double or reinforced insulation). Equipment should be tested at the beginning of a new tenancy, or regularly during a longer tenancy. Manufacturer's instructions for use of equipment should be available to tenants.

Electric plug sockets

Determination of the number of sockets shall be bespoke to each property and room and shall take into account the following matters:

- The size and dimensions of the room and relative maximum distance from any point in a room and the nearest socket;
- Whether any sockets are unlikely to be used due to their positioning; and
- the recommended number of **double** sockets as follows:

As per Table 1 of Electrical Safety Council Guidance published March 2018 & BS7671:2018 IET Wiring Regulations 18th Edition and the IET On-Site Guide Table H7.

Location type	Smaller rooms (< 12m ²)	Medium rooms (12-25 m ²)	Larger rooms (> 25 m ²)
Main living area	4	6	8
Dining area	3	4	5
Single bedroom	2	3	4
Double bedroom	3	4	5
Bedsitting room	4	5	6
Utility room/area	3	4	5
Hallways and landing	1	2	3

HOME ENTERTAINMENT - In addition to the number of socket-outlets shown in the table it is recommended that at least two further double socket-outlets are installed in home entertainment areas.

Minor Domestic Electrical Installation Works Certificate

In order to comply with Part P of the Building Regulations, any electrical installation fitted in a room where water is present, such as a kitchen or bathroom, requires a minor domestic electrical installation works certificate.

Gas Safety

Landlords must comply with *The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998*. Among the requirements is that all gas appliances are tested on an annual basis.

Safety testing records for gas and electrical installations must be kept and made available to the council when requested.

Gas and electricity supplies to occupants of an HMO must not be unreasonably interrupted by the manager.

Ventilation

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

Lighting

All habitable rooms shall have an adequate level of natural lighting, provided via a clear glazed window or windows and/or door(s), the glazed area to be equivalent to at least $\frac{1}{10}$ th of the floor area.

All staircases, landings, kitchens, bathrooms, and cloakrooms to have a window, if practicable. Windows to bathrooms and cloakrooms are to be glazed with obscure glass.

Adequate electric lighting points to be provided to all habitable rooms, staircases, landings, kitchens, and cloakrooms. Generally, lighting to common parts to be paid for by the landlord. Lighting to staircases etc. may be controlled by time switches and two-way switches.

Ceiling Heights

All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and WC compartments shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.14m (except as described previously for existing attic rooms).

Disposal of Refuse

Commented [GJH14]: New section

Refuse should not be allowed to accumulate in the property except where properly stored pending disposal.

- Provide suitable rubbish containers of adequate size for the number of occupants (see Table 2).
- Site containers in the kitchen and in other appropriate locations.
- Ensure that tenants are aware of collection days for refuse and recycling (other than in areas where communal street bins are provided).
- Make arrangement for extra collections if there is not adequate space to store rubbish within the boundaries of the property.
- Make arrangements for the additional collection and disposal of refuse from the property if this is found to be necessary to avoid causing a nuisance to the neighbourhood.
- At the end of each tenancy any rubbish or unwanted household goods left by tenants should be removed and disposed of appropriately by the landlord prior to the commencement of the next tenancy.
- In particular, any refuse or goods left in front or rear gardens or yards and/or on the pavement should be removed immediately.

Gardens, Yards and Forecourts

Commented [GJH15]: New section

In most circumstances the definition of a dwelling includes any garden, yard, forecourt, outbuildings or appurtenances contained within the same curtilage.

The landlord should ensure that all such areas are kept free from vermin, in good order, safe to use and repair when necessary all outbuildings, boundary walls, fences, railings and hedgerows.

Gates should be in a good state of repair and be fully serviceable and capable of being locked, especially rear garden or yard gates.

Furniture & Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended)

Upholstered furniture and soft furnishings (beds, mattresses, pillows and cushions) provided by the landlord (including any furniture that has been left in the property by previous tenants for the use of the current or future tenants) must be compliant with the Regulations.

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

Commented [GJH16]: New section

The 'HMO Management Regulations' stipulate standards of management that apply to HMOs and should be read in conjunction with this document. These regulations apply to all HMOs and place a responsibility on landlords and managers to ensure for the safety of occupants. These Regulations cover items such as:

- Supply information: the name, address and a contact phone number for the manager must be supplied to each household and clearly displayed in a prominent position within the HMO;
- Maintain fire safety measures: all escape routes must be kept safe and free from obstruction (alarms, detection and firefighting equipment must be maintained in good working order);
- Protect occupiers from injury: apart from a general duty to maintain the structure, appropriate safeguards must be provided and maintained for roofs, balconies and low window sills
- Maintain water supply and drainage: all services and fittings shall be maintained in good, clean working order and free from frost damage (the manager must not unreasonably cause or permit the water or drainage supply to be interrupted);
- Ensure any gas appliances at the HMO are tested annually. The fixed electrical installation must be inspected and tested at intervals of no more than five years. Gas and electrical safety certificates must be supplied to the local authority within seven days of a request. The manager must not unreasonably interrupt the gas or electric supply;
- Maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances: these include stairs, handrails, banisters, lighting, ventilation, gardens, yards, paths, outbuildings etc;

- Maintain living accommodation: each room must be kept in good repair and installations in good working order;
- Provide waste disposal facilities: adequate arrangements must be made for the storage and disposal of refuse and litter

Under The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006, alongside the landlords/managers responsibilities, there are duties that the occupiers must also adhere to.

Every occupier of the HMO must:

- not hinder or frustrate the manager in the performance of their duties;
- allow the manager, for any purpose connected with the duties imposed on them under this regulation to enter any living accommodation or other place occupied by that person;
- provide the manager with any such information as he may require for the purpose of carrying out their duties;
- take reasonable care to avoid causing damage to anything which the manager is under a duty to supply, maintain or repair;
- store and dispose of waste in accordance with the arrangements made by the manager;
- comply with the reasonable instructions of the manager in respect of any means of escape from fire, the prevention of fire and the use of fire equipment;