

## **Standards for Accommodation for HMOs**

All HMOs, subject to licensing, must comply with the following standards before a licence can be granted.

Properties must not be overcrowded; to determine the number of occupants who may occupy the property, consideration must be given to the number, type and quality of amenities available.

All dimensions within the standards refer to useable space; please seek clarification where there is any uncertainty.

### **Sleeping Accommodation**

Normally sleeping accommodation will be in the form of single or double rooms with the occupant(s) having exclusive use.

All rooms used for sleeping accommodation must have natural ventilation, natural lighting and unobstructed outlook (please seek clarification if unsure).

Rooms must also be capable of accommodating:

- A bed
- A wardrobe (unless there is a built in wardrobe or cupboard of adequate size)
- A chest of drawers

There must be sufficient activity space for each item.

### **Single Unit**

- Rooms should be no less than 10m<sup>2</sup>; except where a separate communal room is provided which is not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room in which case the bedroom will be no less than 6.5m<sup>2</sup>.
- Where the letting includes a kitchen the room will be no less than 13m<sup>2</sup>.
- In rooms which have sloping the ceilings the above standard will apply, however any floor area which does not have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 1.5m will normally be discounted. Where rooms do not meet this standard discretion may be exercised if there are compensatory factors.

### **Two Person Unit**

- Rooms should be no less than 15m<sup>2</sup>; except where a separate communal room is provided which is not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room in which case the bedroom shall be 11m<sup>2</sup>.
- Where the letting includes a kitchen the room will be no less than 15m<sup>2</sup>.
- In rooms which have sloping ceilings the above standard will apply, however any floor area that does not have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 1.5m will normally be discounted.
- Where rooms do not meet this standard discretion may be exercised if there are any compensatory factors.

## **Kitchen Facilities**

### **Space**

- For up to 6 persons the kitchen or kitchen area should have usable floor area (measured wall to wall, including space occupied by units/cabinets) of at least 7m<sup>2</sup>.
- For each occupant in excess of 6 an additional 1.0m<sup>2</sup> per person is required up to a maximum of 13m<sup>2</sup>.
- Kitchens must have a layout which is safe and practicable.
- The room must be provided with an externally vented extraction system.

If you do not meet the standard with regard to space within the kitchen consideration will be given to the layout so as to ensure the convenient and safe use of the equipment and facilities. Please contact the HMO team to discuss.

### **Sink**

- A suitably sized sink and drainer, provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water, and properly connected to the drainage system should be provided for up to 6 persons.
- Where there are more than 6 persons additional sinks must be provided in a ratio of 1:6 persons'.
- Consideration may be given to the provision of a dishwasher in place of one of the additional sinks/drainers.

### **Food Storage**

Storage cupboards/units must be suitable and sufficient and be provided at a minimum capacity equivalent to a standard 500mm wall cabinet per person. A 500mm base unit would be sufficient for 2 persons. Storage below sinks will not count towards the figure.

### **Refrigerated Storage**

- A fridge with a minimum capacity of 150 litres should be provided for occupancies up to 6 persons.
- Additional capacity should be provided in a ratio of 20 litres per person.
- Unless a separate freezer is provided the fridge must have a freezer compartment.

### **Food Preparation and Cooking**

- For cooking purposes an oven, grill and 4 burner hob should be provided for 5 to 6 persons. The cooking facilities should be sited away from doorways.
- Where there are more than 6 persons, an additional cooking facility must be provided, may be a microwave oven.
- Where there are more than 12 persons an additional oven, grill and 4 burner hob and kettle must be provided.
- A preparation surface of 1.5 linear metres should be provided for up to 6 persons, part of which must be adjacent to the cooking facilities.
- For between 7 and 12 persons', 3 linear metres is required.
- For more than 12 persons an additional 1.5 linear metres of workbench must be provided.

- Adjacent walls must be provided with a non-porous and easily cleanable finish.
- Electrical sockets must be sufficient to facilitate the use of each fixed appliance plus two double socket outlets.
- A suitable bin must be provided for the storage of refuse prior to disposal.

Where cooking facilities are provided with the unit of accommodation (bedsit) and there are no other cooking facilities within the house the facilities must comprise:

- Cooking – two burner hob, an oven, grill and kettle.
- Dry foods – accommodation must be suitable and sufficient and at a minimum capacity equivalent to a 500mm wall cabinet.
- Refrigerated space – a refrigerator with a minimum capacity of 40 litres, together with a freezer compartment.
- Sink – a suitably sink and drainer, provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water, and properly connected to the drainage system.
- Food Preparation – a workshop or table of suitable material at least 500mm x 1000mm.

Where meals are provided as part of the board arrangements the Landlord must comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 and any Regulations made thereunder.

### **Bathing and Toilet Facilities**

The following table outlines the bathing and toilet facilities required in licensable HMO's (the number of facilities is dependent upon the number of occupants).

Number Of Persons sharing	1 Bathroom With WC	1 Bathroom And Separate WC	2 Bathrooms (one with a WC)	2 Bathrooms (both with WC)	2 Bathrooms (one with WC) and separate WC	2 Bathrooms and 2 separate WC's	3 Bathrooms (1 containing a WC) and 2 separate WC's
5	x	√	√	√	√	√	√
6 to 10	x	x	x	x	√	√	√
11 to 15	x	x	x	x	x	x	√

### **Baths and Showers**

The facility must allow for privacy and be:

- Readily accessible and suitably located
- Situated in a proper room
- Provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water and waste drainage
- Adequately heated
- Provided with adequate ventilation and electric lighting, and the adjacent /surrounding walls must have a non-porous and easily cleanable finish
- Fitted with a suitable locking mechanism to the access door to ensure privacy.

Where the amenity is provided in a house likely to be occupied by children the facilities must include a bath.

## **Wash Hand Basins**

### **Shared housing/hostels**

- A wash hand basin with a tiled splashback and satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water must be provided for up to 5 persons and may be situated in a bathroom or shower room. Facilities situated within a WC compartment will not be taken into account.
- Additional facilities must be provided as follows:  
6 to 10 persons, two wash hand basins  
11 to 15 persons, three wash hand basins.  
Further wash hand basins must be provided in a ratio of one additional basin for up to 5 additional persons.

Bed and Breakfasts, bedsits and properties let on an individual room basis (i.e. tenancies starting at different times throughout the year)

- Each letting must be provided with a wash hand basin; if the room is also provided with cooking facilities then a sink with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water must be provided.
- Each wash hand basin must be provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water and waste drainage.

### **Toilet Facilities**

The facility must allow for privacy.

- Toilets must contain a wash hand basin within the compartment or within an adjacent space which provides the sole means of access to the toilet. The wash hand basin must be provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water and waste drainage.
- Toilets must be provided in a proper compartment; if the toilet is separate to the bathing facilities it MUST be installed in a suitable location within the property (please seek clarification where there is any uncertainty).
- The room must be provided with adequate ventilation and electric lighting.
- A suitable locking mechanism must be fitted to the access door to ensure privacy.

### **Space Heating**

- Space heating must be provided in each unit of accommodation (i.e. bedrooms and common rooms). The heating must be capable of reaching and maintaining 21 degrees C regardless of the weather.
- It must be sufficient to protect the occupiers from excess cold and controllable enough to protect them from excess heat.
- Where central heating is not installed other adequate, affordable, programmable, controllable and efficient heating sources must be provided.
- Space heating MUST be permanent and fixed; portable heaters will not be accepted.

## Security

- All ground floor and other accessible windows must be protected by the provision of suitable window locks or other appropriate security measures. Keys must be readily available at all times, see fire precautions section for escape windows.
- The front and rear doors must be of sound construction and well maintained.
- The front door must be fitted with a suitable viewer where the door is not fitted with a transparent glass panel.
- The front door should be provided with a security chain.
- Front and rear access doors must be provided with a secure lock; these must be to the relevant British or equivalent European Standard. Doors fitted with a lock, including final exit doors forming part of the means to escape, must be capable of being opened from the inside without the use to facilitate escape in the case of fire. In addition the rear door is to be provided with a barrel bolt (200mm min) unless the door is fitted with a shoot bolt locking mechanism (3 or 5 point locking).
- Where locks are fitted to bedroom doors they must be capable of being opened from the inside the room without the use of a key to facilitate escape in the case of fire.

## Fire Precautions

**Note - this is just a brief guide. Fire prevention and provision of any automatic fire detection ( AFD ) system requires specialist advice to design and install and a prospective landlord must install a system which is to current expected standards.**

The Council will expect written evidence of an inspection and sign off by a suitably qualified AFD system installer before granting a licence.

There must be a means of escape in case of fire, adequate fire detection and provision of emergency firefighting equipment. There should be a protected escape route and fire resistant doors fitted opening on to the protected route. Emergency lighting and fire exit signs should be provided as necessary.

The Landlord must provide adequate fire safety instructions for residents and any employees. They must be brought to the attention of all tenants and must be kept available for inspection at the premises. A copy should be included to satisfy Management Arrangements.

A Fire Precautions log book must be used to record the periodic inspection and maintenance of the fire alarm system, fire-fighting inspection and maintenance of the fire alarm system, fire-fighting equipment and where applicable emergency lighting. It should be maintained and kept for inspection at the property. If the property is to be left unattended for 4 weeks or longer, the systems and equipment must be checked before tenants take up occupancy and always before re-letting the accommodation.

Compliance with these standards does not negate the requirement to also carry out a **Risk Assessment** as stipulated by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. **The Owner or Manager should carry out a fire risk assessment and make an emergency plan.** It should be kept available for inspection by the local Fire Authority. If you are having difficulty completing an assessment there are local fire specialists who will do this for a fee.

If there is a fire and somebody is hurt then the investigating officer will ask to see the fire risk assessment. If there is NO risk assessment then it is automatically an offence.

For guidance on fire precautions please see the Local Government Regulation publication: LACORS Housing – Fire Safety Guide ( website [www.lacors.gov.uk](http://www.lacors.gov.uk) ).

### **Refuse Storage**

Suitable facilities must be provided for storing refuse generated by tenants whilst it is waiting to be collected. Refuse disposal facilities sufficient for the number of occupants within the building must be provided.

### **Gas Safety**

If gas is supplied to the property, the licence holder must provide the Council with a copy of the current gas safety certificate. This certificate should state that the full gas installation covering the supply pipes, flues and gas appliances are safe for operation.

The annual inspection must be carried out by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer. The Gas Safety and Use Regulations 1998 (as amended ) require an inspection to be carried out annually.

A safety certificate must be retained for at least 2 years following its issue. The safety of the gas installation and appliances must be constantly maintained.

The Council will require to see a current gas safe certificate before any tenants take up occupation of the property.

### **Electrical Safety**

All electrical appliances made available by the licence holder should be in a **safe condition**.

The licence holder must provide the Council with a copy of an Electrical Installation Condition Report based on Appendix 6 of BS7671 which is used when carrying out routine periodic inspection and testing of existing electrical installations. The report must cover the whole installation. The inspection must be carried out by a competent electrical engineer to show that the installation is safe and satisfactory and has been obtained in the last 5 years. If you are providing other items such as kettles, toasters and TV's then ideally you should have these PAT tested – it is not the law but you do have a legal duty of care to ensure that items are safe.

## **Furniture and Furnishings**

If you are intending to let out HMO accommodation ( indeed any accommodation ) and are providing furniture and furnishings then Copeland Borough Council has a separate guidance sheet covering this. Please ask for a copy.

ISSUED BY COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL , THE COPELAND CENTRE, CATHERINE STREET

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