

Minimum Amenities Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

Public Health

24 November 2016

MINIMUM AMENITIES STANDARDS for HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

These are local minimum standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (as defined in the Housing Act 2004 Part II). These standards are guidance for the purposes of interpretation of Schedule 3 of Statutory Instrument 2006 No 373 “The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006”.

Please note that the standards in this document are minimums, not the ideal state. Amenity standards may exceed the minimum and amenities should not be deliberately reduced to reach only the minimum standard.

Address of property **Date of inspection**

Officer conducting inspection

		Mandatory	Recommended
General			
A notice displayed in a suitable position giving the name, address and phone number of the person who is the manager of the HMO			
Is an HMO Licence in place?	3 storey HMOs with 5 or more occupiers require an HMO licence		
Is planning permission in place?	Required for 7 or more occupiers for use as an HMO; and for some alterations		
Did any alterations comply with Building Control Regulations?	A certificate of compliance with building regulations is required		
Are any of the amenity standards in this document not met? If yes, in which sections? Note any deficiencies in the section.	Yes / No		

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Definitions:

HMO – a house or flat occupied by 3 or more people forming 2 or more households who share some amenities, such as kitchens, bathrooms, living room; of whom at least one pays rent; who live their as their main residence

“Household” – people who are related to each other and live as a family group.

Hostel type HMO – short duration accommodation for people with no other permanent place of residence. Not hotels or bed and breakfast accommodation, where amenity standards are set within the document “Setting the Standard for Temporary Accommodation in London”

Bedsit type HMO – an HMO where accommodation is not self-contained and some facilities are shared, such as bathrooms and / or toilets, but individual rooms are let separately and contain some facilities for exclusive use of the occupier, such as cooking facilities.

Licensable HMO – an HMO (see above) which has 3 or more storeys (or 2 if above a ground floor commercial premises) and 5 or more occupiers.

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Heating			
		Mandatory	Recommended
Central heating, fixed gas fires or mains wired fixed electric heaters capable of maintaining an average minimum temperature 18°C			
Minimum temperature of 21°C achievable in the occupancy room			
Each unit of accommodation can control the temperature within their dwelling			
Gas fired central heating running from a modern Condensing Boiler			
Programmable 7 day timer and room thermostats			
Structural thermal insulation, eg cavity walls insulated; loft insulation requires 270mm thickness (approx 10 inches)			
Portable oil or gas heaters not permitted			
A carbon monoxide detector with 5 year battery to be situated adjacent to all gas appliances e.g hob, fire, boiler			
Natural and artificial lighting			
All habitable rooms have clear glazing of at least 10% of floor area in a window or door, opening to external air			
All staircases, landings and hallways have an area of clear glazing, or adequate artificial lighting			
Switches on each landing, hallway or staircase			
Each landing, hallway or staircase can be lit at the same time			
Timed switches must allow a person to climb stairs and enter a room before going off			
Ventilation			
All habitable rooms have an openable area in a window or door with of at least 5% of floor area, opening to external air			
Basements used as habitable room must have a window opening with space outside with a depth of at least 0.6m (2 feet) or 0.3m if a bay window			
Kitchens, bathrooms and WCs shall comply as above, or have an extractor fan			

Washing and sanitary facilities			
		Mandatory	Recommended
At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined)	1 – 4 persons		
At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC separate to the bathroom	5 persons		
2 bathrooms AND 2 WCs with wash hand basins (one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms)	6 - 10 persons		
3 bathrooms AND 3 WCs with wash hand basins (two of the WCs can be contained within 2 of the bathrooms)	11 - 15 persons		
Wash hand basin or sink in each bedroom with appropriate splashback ¹	5 or more persons		
Glazing in bathrooms and WCs is obscure	All bathrooms, showers, toilets and wash hand basins		
An adequate supply of cold and constant hot water			
Adequately heated and ventilated			
An adequate size and layout			
Suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation, not more than one floor distant from the occupancy rooms			
Adequate natural or artificial lighting			
Kitchens			
A minimum of 7 square metres or 11 m2 for a kitchen / diner	For every 5 people sharing one set of facilities ²		
Suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation, not more than one floor distant from the occupancy rooms			
Drinking water supplied, hot and cold water and waste drainage, protected from frost damage, with sink and drainer board			
A fridge freezer of at least 300 litres, with a frozen food compartment			
An oven and grill with a 4 ring hob (2 ring hob for single person use)			

¹ Wash hand basins are required in Schedule 3 of Statutory Instrument 2006 No 373 “The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006” but if these are not already present they will not be insisted upon provided there are sufficient bathrooms and wash hand basis in WCs

² In hostel type accommodation, this may be for every 10 persons in occupation, but no single kitchen shall provide facilities for more than 20 persons.

		Mandatory	Recommended
Four (or two x two-gang) 13 amp electric power points with at least one at work top level, in addition to power points dedicated to appliances			
Worktop measuring at least 1500 x 600 mm (1000 x 600mm for single occupier accommodation)			
A lockable food storage cupboard per unit of accommodation (not to be located under the sink)			
Appropriate refuse storage and disposal facilities			
One microwave			
Living rooms			
Minimum size of 11m ² <i>(in hostels, an additional 1m² must be available for each person in occupation in excess of 11)</i>	For every 5 people using it		
Bedrooms			
0 – 6.5m ²		Not suitable	
6.5m ² – 10m ²	Where a separate living room is provided which is not a kitchen or kitchen / dining room	Maximum 1 occupier	
10m ² to 15m ²		Maximum 2 occupiers	
15m ² to 19.5m ²		Maximum 3 occupiers	
19.5m ² to 24m ²	Hostels only - where a separate living room is provided which is not a kitchen	Maximum 4 occupiers	
24m ² or		Maximum 5 occupiers	
0 - 10m ²	Where no separate living room is provided which is not a kitchen or kitchen / dining room	Not suitable	
10m ² to 15m ²		Maximum 1 occupier	
15m ² or bigger		Maximum 2 occupiers	

		Mandatory	Recommended
Where kitchen facilities are provided within a bedroom (ie bedsits), a minimum additional floor area of 3.5m ² should be added to the minimum bedroom sizes			
Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.5m shall be disregarded			
Minimum ceiling height 2.3m ³ over 75% of the floor area ⁴			
The sharing of rooms by persons of the opposite sex over the age of 10 is not permitted unless and they are over 16 and live as a couple			
No room which has been appointed as a kitchen or bathroom is suitable for sleeping accommodation			
External doors and windows			
Maintained in a good state of repair and decoration			
Capable of resisting drafts and heat loss so that internal temperature remains above 16 degrees when internal space heating is switched off			
Sufficiently secure to prevent entry by intruders – windows cannot be opened from the outside and doors secured with a double lock ⁵ which must be openable from the inside without a key (ie thumb turn lock) to enable escape in the event of fire			
Windows on first floor and above have sills no less than 1.1m from floor level and limiters restricting the window being opened more than 100mm if children are present, capable of being over-ridden by an adult if no children are present or in the event of a fire			

³ Except in existing attic rooms which must be at least 2.14m over 75% of the floor area

⁴ Not including parts of the floor area where ceiling height is less than 1.5m

⁵ Particularly in the following wards which have higher than average rates of burglary:
Tooting, Bedford, Nightingale, Fairfield, Roehampton, Thamesfield, St. Mary's Park, Balham, Shaftesbury, Northcote

FIRE PREVENTION ⁶ - ALL HMO BUILDINGS

Fire Doors			
		Mandatory	Recommended
A half hour fire resisting Fire Door with self-closing device of an approved type to any room (other than a bathroom or WC) which opens onto the ground floor hallway (and all upper floor landings in bedsits or hostels)			
Gaps not greater than 4mm to the head (top) and stiles (sides) and not more than 8mm at the bottom			
A single strip of hardwood lipping may be glued and pinned to the door edges, if a production size fire door will not provide a minimum overall gap of 4mm and 8mm			
Combined intumescent ⁷ strip/smoke seal to routed edges of the sides and top edges of the door if there are smoke detectors inside the room.			
If there are no smoke detectors in the room, and a smoke detector outside the room, ie in a landing or hall, smoke seals must not be fitted ⁸			
If new door stops are fitted they must be fixed by 38mm (1 ½ inch) No.10 screws at 230mm (max 9 inches apart).			
Fire Doors hung on three steel hinges and with self closing device of approved type ⁹			
Suitable knob or lever furniture			
Exit doors to open easily and immediately from the inside, without the use of a key.			
All other internal doors to be of sound and solid construction – no doors should be hollow or made of easily combustible material such as hardboard or cardboard			

⁶ This is a summary only. For full information on how to conduct a fire risk assessment and minimize danger from fire, reference must be made to “LACoRS Housing-Fire Safety: Guidance on Fire Safety Provisions in Certain Types of Existing Housing” (LACoRS: Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services)

⁷ An **intumescent** is a substance that swells as a result of heat exposure

⁸ As an intumescent strip would slow down the activation of the smoke detector, by which time the escape route may already be affected by smoke

⁹ This may be relaxed for doors within low-risk, shared houses. Doors to rooms within larger flats in multiple occupation and in larger or higher risk shared houses may require self-closers within the context of an overall fire risk assessment. Entrance doors to flats and internal entrance doors to bedsit rooms will always require them.

Glazing above a Fire Door			
		Mandatory	Recommended
Fire resistant glazing (such as Pyroshield or Georgian Wired) in a fixed frame, each pane of which must not exceed 1.2m in area			
Walls and ceilings			
All walls or partitions achieve at least half hour fire resistance and be totally free from perforations			
Timber studding constructed not less than 75mm x 50mm (3" by 2") not more than 600mm (2 feet) apart faced on both sides with 12.5mm (½ inch) plasterboard or other approved material must be used to achieve half hour fire resistance. Joints must be taped and the whole surface skimmed with plaster			
Remove any polystyrene tiles from ceilings to the common hallway or landing. Make good the underlying surface with a plaster skim coat			
Line the loft hatch on the upper face with 12.5mm (½ inch) plasterboard or other approved material ensuring the hatch is a good fit within the surrounding frame			
Cupboards within the Hallway or Landing Area			
Fix to the inner face of the staircase, including the inner face of the door, 12.5mm (½ inch) thick plasterboard or other approved material, finished with a 6mm (¼ inch) thick coat of finishing plaster, to achieve an imperforate, half-hour fire resistance. The cupboard should be kept locked shut upon completion	Understairs Cupboards where the underside of the timber staircase is visible and unprotected.		
If the cupboard is to be used by the occupying tenants then protect the cupboard by lining the inside with 12.5mm (½ inch) plasterboard or other approved material and fit a fire door	Airing cupboards		
Fix a suitable 30 minute fire resisting enclosure to the gas/electric meter if situated in the entrance hall. This should consist of 12.5mm (½ inch) plasterboard or other	Gas/Electric Meter situated within the Hallway		

approved material on a timber framework with a top hung door (if a side hung door is fitted it must be provided with a self closing device)			
Basements			
If a cellar is not in use (no meters, electrical appliances or boilers located there) the cellar door to be kept locked shut. Flammable materials not to be stored			
Otherwise, a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistant boarding to the whole of a cellar ceiling with 12.5mm plasterboard or other approved material joints to be staggered and taped and the whole surface plaster skimmed. Smoke detector to be fitted.			
If the basement room is a risk room such as a kitchen or bedsit with cooking facilities, 60 minutes fire resistant ceiling must be fitted.			
Furniture			
Furniture must meet fire safety standards and carry a permanent label to say it passes fire safety standards ¹⁰			
Fire Protection Equipment			
9 litre water or 3 litre water with additives (Hydrospray) type fire extinguisher within the ground floor hallway & first floor landing			
2kg Carbon Dioxide or Dry Powder type fire extinguisher within the kitchen			
Fire blanket within the kitchen fixed at a height of 1.5m from floor level and located away from the cooker			
Fire extinguishers mounted on wall brackets at a convenient height			

¹⁰ All furniture provided within the HMO must comply with the The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988.

Fire Safety Signs			
		Mandatory	Recommended
To all fire doors, a sign stating " FIRE DOOR KEEP SHUT " in lettering of minimum 5mm high			
To any understairs cupboard door, or cupboard door situated off the ground floor hallway or first floor landing, a sign stating " FIRE DOOR KEEP LOCKED SHUT " in lettering of minimum 5mm high			
Instructions about actions in the event of fire ¹¹ to be prominently located in a common area and on the inner side of the door in all bedsit rooms			

¹¹ Leave immediately; sound the alarm; direction of escape route; location of meeting point

Fire Warning System - SHARED HOUSEHOLD HMOs (no cooking facilities in bedrooms – see Bedsit HMOs where there are cooking facilities in bedrooms)			
		Mandatory	Recommended
Grade D ¹² : LD3 coverage – smoke detectors in circulation spaces forming part of escape routes + smoke detection in lounges and basements containing a risk (interlinked); heat detectors in kitchens		1 to 4 storeys	
Grade A ¹³ : LD2 coverage – smoke detectors in circulation spaces forming part of escape routes + in all rooms or areas which present a high fire risk “risk rooms” such as bedrooms		5 or more storeys	
Manual break glass call points must be provide on exit doors and on each landing area within the property			
Mixed system: Grade D : LD2 coverage in the common areas and <u>heat</u> detectors in bedsits (interlinked); Grade D smoke alarm in each bedsit (not interlinked)		Bedsit HMOs 1 to 2 storeys	
Mixed system: Grade A : LD2 coverage in the common areas and <u>heat</u> detectors in bedsits (interlinked); Grade D smoke alarm in each bedsit (not interlinked)		Bedsit HMOs 3 or more storeys	
All smoke detectors to be optical beam devices		All	
Heat detectors provided within any kitchen or room which has cooking facilities provided. All heat detectors to be rate of rise temperature type		All	
Provide a certificate of design, installation and commissioning		All	

¹² Grade D: a system of one or more mains-powered smoke (or heat) alarms each with integral battery standby supply. These are designed to operate in the event of mains failure and therefore could be connected to the local lighting circuit rather than an independent circuit at the dwelling’s main distribution board. There is no control panel.

¹³ Grade A: a fire detection and alarm system that is designed and installed in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5839. This comprises a system of electrically operated smoke and/or heat detectors which are linked to a control panel. The control panel must conform to current BS 5839: part 4 (or equivalent). In general the system must incorporate manual call points which should be located next to final exits, and, in larger multi-storey properties, on each landing. The alarm signal must achieve sound levels of not less than 65dB (A) in all accessible parts of the building and not less than 75dB (A) at all bed-heads when all doors are shut, to arouse sleeping persons.

Emergency Lighting - three storey HMOs and all Bedsit HMOs			
		Mandatory	Recommended
A secondary lighting system supplied with electricity from a source independent of the main supply		Large HMOs with dark or complex escape routes and all bedsit HMOs	3 or more storey HMOs with simple escape route with "borrowed light"
Sufficiently illuminate all stairways, corridors and exit routes and should come into operation automatically on failure of the main lighting			
Capable of maintaining the necessary level of illumination for a minimum period of ONE hour from the time of failure or disconnection of the normal supply			
Emergency Lighting certificate duly submitted upon works completion			

Gas - safety requirements

Gas appliances checked for safety every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered engineer			
Copy of the gas safety record to be given to tenants within 28 days of the check or to new tenants before they move in			
Landlord must keep a copy of the record for two years			
Regular inspections and any necessary repairs			

Electricity - safety requirements

All electrical work must be carried out in accordance to 17th Edition of the I.E.E. Regulations and must be installed by a member of the Government-approved scheme providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRE Certification Limited • British Standards Institution (BSI) • ELECSA Limited • NAPIT Registration Limited • NICEIC Group Limited 			
A Completion and Inspection (Installation) certificate must be obtained			
Either the electrician (where they are registered with one of the government-approved schemes) or the building-control body must issue a Building Control Compliance Certificate if the work requires it			

A Periodic Inspection ¹⁴ must be carried out on the condition of an existing electrical installation, to identify any deficiencies against the National Standard, BS 7671. Any C1 and C2 deficiencies identified by the electrical engineer must be rectified.		
The <i>Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006</i> requires that every fixed electrical installation in a HMO is inspected and tested at intervals not exceeding 5 years by a person qualified to undertake such inspection and testing		
A certificate from the person conducting that inspection and test, specifying the results of the inspection and test must be obtained and supplied to the local housing authority within 7 days of receiving a request in writing for it from that authority		
A Visual Condition Report is only suitable where the installation has been inspected and tested in the last two years, and the results were reported (on an Electrical Installation Certificate or a Periodic Inspection Report)		
To ensure that portable appliances continue to be safe for use, annual basic safety checks should be carried out. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) Certificates should be kept along with other important property documentation.		
Electrical equipment provided must conform to Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994		
Certificates are required for fire alarm systems when they are first installed, modified and following periodic inspection and servicing. All certificates should be kept along with the fire alarm system log book and other important property documentation.		
Certificates are required for emergency lighting systems when they are first installed and following periodic tests. All certificates and reports should be kept along with other important property documentation.		

¹⁴ The frequency of periodic inspection and testing will depend upon the type of installation, its use and operation, the frequency and quality of maintenance and the condition of the electrical installation at the time of the inspection and test. Although *IEE Guidance Note 3 Inspection and Testing* recommends 10 years as the maximum period between tests, this relates to the period from the *initial* inspection (when the installation was first installed) to the first periodic inspection and test. Subsequent inspections may result in a recommendation for the interval between future inspections to be increased or decreased depending upon the condition of the installation