



ADVISORY STANDARDS FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

January 2018

Epsom and Ewell Amenity Standards

The Housing Act 2004 requires mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), with two or more households, comprising five or more occupants in properties that are three storeys or over.

It is impracticable to anticipate every HMO type, layout and construction. As part of the HMO licensing process, the Council can discuss with landlords any variations from the advisory standards that may be appropriate for a particular HMO. Permission must be sought from relevant regulatory organisations before undertaking works.

Under the Housing Act 2004 the Housing Health and Safety Hazard Rating System (HHSRS), aims to ensure that dwellings present a minimal risk to the health and safety of all occupants and visitors to the property.

Additionally, reference to the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 and the LACORS Housing Fire Safety Guidance should be made in conjunction with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO).

Revision Schedule

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1 Heating

- 1.1 Each unit of living accommodation in an HMO must be equipped with adequate means of space heating.
- 1.2 Heating shall be provided in every habitable room and bathroom which is capable of maintaining a 19 degrees Celsius (°C) temperature difference with the external air when the outside temperature is -1°C. (The provision of insulation can assist in meeting this standard).
- 1.3 Such heating provision must be capable of being used at any time.
- 1.4 *Heating may be by means of:*
 - (a) Central heating, OR
 - (b) Gas heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet, OR
 - (c) Oil heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet, OR
 - (d) Electricity – if electricity is to be used to heat a room, an electric point shall be provided for that exclusive purpose. Individual heaters (except oil filled radiators) must be a fixed installation, have ability control the heat output, and have a timer.
- 1.5 The use of portable paraffin or oil fired heaters and liquefied petroleum gas heaters (LPG) (bottled gas heaters) shall not be acceptable under any circumstances, whether provided by the landlord or the tenant.
- 1.6 Installations in the house for space heating shall be maintained in good repair and proper working order and serviced annually by a competent person.

2 Washing facilities

- 2.1 Where all or some of the units of living accommodation in an HMO do not contain bathing and toilet facilities for the exclusive use of each individual household:
- 2.2 Where there are four or fewer occupiers sharing those facilities there must be at least one bathroom with a fixed bath or shower and a toilet (which may be situated in the bathroom);
- 2.3 *Where there are five or more occupiers sharing those facilities there must be:*
 - a) One separate toilet with wash hand basin with appropriate splash back for every five sharing occupiers; and
 - b) At least one bathroom (which may contain a toilet) with a fixed bath or shower for every five sharing occupiers;

- 2.4 The splash-back to a wash hand basin or bath shall be a minimum of 300mm high and extend to at least equal to the width of the wash hand basin and all joints shall be adequately sealed.
- 2.5 In the case of a shower whether in its own compartment or over a bath, the splash-back shall be 150mm above the height of the shower head and up to the edge of a fixed shower screen. Where a shower curtain is used the splash-back shall extend 300mm beyond the shower curtain. All joints shall be adequately sealed.
- 2.6 *All baths, showers and wash hand basins in an HMO must be equipped with taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water.*

Hot water may be provided by any of the following methods:

- (a) Piped from hot a water tank and boiler
 - (b) Immersion Heater
 - (c) Fixed gas appliance, e.g. multipoint
 - (d) Instantaneous heaters (only to wash hand basins and electric showers) having a minimum rating of 6KW
 - (e) Combi-boiler
- 2.7 *Where there are no adequate shared washing facilities for a unit of living accommodation, an enclosed and adequately laid out and ventilated room with a toilet and bath or fixed shower supplying adequate cold and constant hot water must be provided for the exclusive use of the occupiers of that unit either;*
- a) Within the living accommodation; or
 - b) So as to meet the section 2.8 part a requirement below
- 2.8 *All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO*
- a) Suitably located bathrooms mean that there shall be bathroom facilities not more than one floor distant in relation to the sleeping accommodation.
 - b) Suitably located water closet facilities shall be not more than one floor distant from living and sleeping accommodation.
 - c) The walls and floor of any bathroom, shower room and WC must be smooth, non-absorbent, and capable of being readily cleansed.
 - d) The house shall be provided with an effective system, both above and below ground for the drainage of foul water, waste and surface water.

e) All bathrooms in an HMO must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated

2.9 Heating provisions are detailed in section 1 above and the ventilation provisions are detailed in section 8 below.

3 Kitchens

3.1 Where all or some of the units of accommodation within the HMO do not contain any facilities for the cooking of food;

3.2 There must be a kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, and of such layout and size and equipped with such facilities so as to adequately enable those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food;

3.3 *The kitchen must be equipped with the following facilities, which must be fit for purpose and supplied in a sufficient quantity for the number of those sharing;*

(a) Sinks with draining boards;

Sinks shall be at the ratio of one sink for 5 persons. Where a house is occupied by 6 persons, the provision of a double bowled sink, or a dishwasher (in addition to a sink) may be treated as meeting this standard.

A suitable splash-back, 300mm high shall be provided to the sink and draining board, and all joints shall be adequately sealed.

(b) An adequate supply of cold and constant hot water to each sink supplied;

Hot water may be provided by any of the following methods:

(a) Piped from storage and boiler

(b) Immersion heater

(c) Fixed gas appliance, e.g. multipoint

(d) 3KW heater

(c) Installations or equipment for the cooking of food;

Kitchens shall be equipped with cookers with a minimum of 4 rings, a standard sized oven and a grill. They shall be usually provided at a ratio of one per 5 persons sharing the kitchen. Where an HMO is occupied by 6

persons the provision of a cooker with more than 4 rings and more than one oven, or, a combination microwave oven (in addition to a cooker with 4 rings, an oven and a grill) may be treated as meeting this standard.

(d) Electrical sockets;

In addition to sockets provided for appliances required by these standards, a minimum of 4 sockets shall be provided and located in a safe position. These shall be at a ratio of one double socket for every two persons or part of two persons using the kitchen to be sited above worktop height.

(e) Worktops for the preparation of food;

Worktops shall be a minimum of 500mm depth and a length of 0.5m plus 0.5m per person, in addition to any work surface taken by an appliance, sink unit or cooker required to satisfy the standards set out at paragraphs 3.1(b)(i) and (iii) above.

A suitable splash-back shall be provided to any work surface that abuts a wall and all joints must be adequately sealed.

(f) Cupboards for the storage of food or kitchen and cooking utensils

Food cupboards shall be a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboards per person. The space in a sink unit below the sink will not be acceptable.

(g) Refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment (or, where the freezer compartment is not adequate, adequate separate freezers);

Fridge space shall be a minimum one cubic foot of space per person in addition to the freezer compartment.

(h) Appropriate extractor fans as required

- 3.4 Where the landlord provides some catering services they are required to comply with the food hygiene regulations; however some self-catering facilities will need to be provided. The Council will consider the circumstances of the case and decide what self-catering services are required to adequately meet the occupier's needs.

4 Units of living accommodation without shared basic amenities

- 4.1 *Where a unit of living 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:*

(a) Adequate appliances and equipment for the cooking of food;

The minimum requirement is two rings/hot plates together with a minimum of 1 cu ft. (28 litres) oven and a grill. For occupancies of two persons the minimum requirements is three rings/hot plates together with a full sized oven and grill. For occupancies of three or more persons a full size cooker is required.

(b) A sink with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water;

A suitable splash-back shall be provided to the sink and draining board, and all joints shall be adequately sealed.

(c) A work top for the preparation of food;

A suitable work surface having a minimum of 500mm depth and a length of 0.5m plus 0.5m per person using the facility shall be provided. A table in the kitchen area of suitable size and type may be considered an acceptable alternative for half of the requirement.

A suitable splash-back shall be provided where any work surface abuts a wall and all joints must be adequately sealed.

(d) Sufficient electrical sockets;

A minimum of 2 socket outlets shall be located above the work surface for the use of portable appliances in addition to any sockets required by these standards, situated in convenient positions for the appliances.

(e) A cupboard for the storage of kitchen utensils and crockery; and

(f) A refrigerator;

Fridge space shall be a minimum of 1 cu ft. (28 litres) of space per person plus a freezer compartment.

Cupboards for the storage of food shall be required a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboard per person. The space located below the sink shall not be treated as a food cupboard for the purpose of this standard.

5 Fire precautionary facilities

- 5.1 These circumstances are covered by both the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO). Under the RRO the responsible person must carry out a [fire risk assessment](#) which covers the parts of the premises that are used in common by the occupants
- 5.2 Advice on fire safety provisions for different types of existing housing is now contained in the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services

(LACORS) guidance. A copy of the document can be found at

http://www.cieh.org/library/Knowledge/Housing/National_fire_safety_guidance_08.pdf

- 5.3 You will be required to submit a Fire Risk Assessment as part of HMO licence application, however even if your property does not require a licence then we recommend that you carry out a fire risk assessment as this will ensure that those you have legal responsibility towards will have adequate fire safety measures in place.
- 5.4 Appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment must be provided of such type, number and location as is considered necessary by the Local Authority in consultation with the Fire Officer
- 5.5 All means of escape from fire in the house (including any escape apparatus such as alarms, notices, extinguishers etc.) must be maintained in proper repair, good working order and kept free from obstruction at all times.
- 5.6 Different minimum standards will apply to different types of HMO and will be determined by inspection by the Local Authority in consultation with the Fire Officer.

6 Fire Doors

- 6.1 All lockable bedroom doors within HMOs must have thumb turn locks. Key operated mechanisms are not appropriate due to fire safety concerns.
- 6.2 Any glass panels leading onto the protected fire route must meet fire proofing guidance specifications.
- 6.3 The final exit door must be fitted with a thumb turn lock

7 Artificial Lighting

- 7.1 All rooms, passageways, staircases and cellars in use shall be adequately lit with suitable switching, including two way switching to stairs and passageways etc., as necessary
- 7.2 Time switches should only be allowed to common landings, passages and staircases and should stay on for an adequate time to allow a person to climb stairs etc., and enter a room

8 Ventilation

- 8.1 All habitable rooms shall be ventilated directly to the external air by an openable window, the area of which shall be equivalent to not less than 1/20th of the floor area of that room.
- 8.2 All kitchens, bathrooms and water closet compartments shall comply with paragraph 8.1 above; where this is not practicable, mechanical ventilation providing a minimum of 6 air changes an hour shall be provided. Such an installation shall be fitted with an overrun device. In the case of bathrooms, this will usually be connected to the lighting circuit of the room.
- 8.3 Permanent means of appropriate passive and /or mechanical ventilation shall be provided in all living rooms, bedrooms, dining kitchens, kitchens, bathrooms and water closet compartments

9 Refuse, Storage and Disposal

- 9.1 Refuse and recycling bins or containers shall be provided in sufficient numbers for the needs of the house, and an acceptable means of disposal provided.

10 Gas and Electricity Supply

10.1 Gas

All gas cookers and fires must be safe to use. As a landlord you must ensure that:

- (a) Gas appliances are checked for safety at least once a year;
- (b) The safety check is to be carried out by a registered Gas Safe engineer;
- (c) The safety certificate is available to show to your tenants when they ask to see it;

10.2 Electricity

All electrical equipment must be safe to use. As a landlord you must ensure that:

- (a) Electrical appliances are checked for safety at least once every 5 years
- (b) The wiring to the property shall be checked and certified by a person who is registered under the competent person scheme to carry out electrical work complying with the requirements of the current Building Regulations and the current edition of BS7671.

(c) Any electrical work carried out must comply with the latest British Standards.

11 Space Standards

11.1 The number of amenities and the health and safety precautions that are appropriate for an HMO are related to the differing needs of different types of occupiers. These advisory standards take this into account and suggest different standards for different categories of HMOs as described below whilst applying the following principles:

- a) The obligate sharing of rooms by persons of the opposite sex over the age of 12 shall not be permitted.
- b) No staircase, landing or any room, which has been appointed as a kitchen or bathroom, shall be deemed suitable for sleeping accommodation.
- c) Bathrooms shall not be counted in habitable room numbers considerations or space calculations

| Room(s) | Details |
|--|--|
| Bedroom with no other facilities for 1 person | 6.51 m ² |
| One room unit for one person | 10m ² where separate shared kitchen is provided but there is no separate eating area or lounge within the dwelling. 13 m ² including kitchen facilities when contained within a one room unit |
| One room unit for a co-habiting couple | 14 m ² including kitchen facilities. 10m ² where separate shared kitchen is provided |
| Two or more roomed unit for one person | Kitchen – 4m ² Living Kitchen – 11m ² Living room – 9m ² Bedroom – 6.51m ² Bed / Living room – 10m ² |
| Two or more roomed unit for two persons living as a single household | Kitchen –5.5m ² Living Kitchen – 15m ² Living room – 12m ² Bedroom – 10.22m ² Bed / Living room – 14m ² |

11.2 *Loft Conversions*

Regarding technical requirement standards; any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the Gross Internal Area.

12 **Other services to contact for advice**

Planning – for change of premises use considerations

Building Control – for guidance on building regulations approval

Fire Officer at Surrey Fire and Rescue – for fire risk assessments and advice

13 **References**

<http://www.cieh.org/assets/0/72/1126/1212/1216/1218/9531976b-6749-4823-918f-e823b735bc10.pdf>

<https://www.thegreenage.co.uk/multipoint-and-single-point-hot-water-heaters/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7841/152056.pdf

<https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/sites/default/files/amenity-standards-hmo.pdf>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/3627416/HMO-Amenity-Standards.pdf>

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (2000), Houses in Multiple Occupation Model Licensing Scheme