



HMOs – Space, Amenity and Fire Precautionary Standards

SPACE STANDARDS

One Person Units of Accommodation

One room units

- where kitchen facilities located in the room 11m²
- where separate exclusive or shared kitchen facilities 8m²

Room sizes may be reduced by up to 1.5m² to a minimum of 6.5m² at the discretion of the inspecting officer where a communal living room or kitchen with dining area exists. This will depend on the size and nature of the communal facilities and adequate standards of management. Health and Safety issues will also be taken into consideration when accepting reduced space standards.

Two or more room units

As a guide, rooms in two or more roomed units of accommodation should meet the following sizes:

- Living room/kitchen 10m²
- Living room 8.5m²
- Bedroom 6.5m² (minimum size)

Discretion may be applied by the inspecting officer in regard to room sizes providing the proposed layout is acceptable and the aggregate habitable floor area of the rooms is not less than 15m²

Two Person Units of Accommodation

One room units

- where kitchen facilities located in the room 16m²
- where separate exclusive or shared kitchen facilities 13m²

Not normally suitable for persons who are not either married couples or co-habitees

Room sizes may be reduced by up to 2m² at the discretion of the inspecting officer where a communal living room or kitchen with dining area exists. This will depend on the size and nature of the communal facilities and adequate standards of management. Health and Safety issues will also be taken into consideration when accepting reduced space standards.

Two or more room units

As a guide, rooms in two or more roomed units of accommodation should meet the following sizes:

- Living room/kitchen 13m²
- Living room 10m²
- Living / bedroom 13m²
- Bedroom 10m² (minimum size)

Discretion may be applied by the inspecting officer in regard to room sizes providing the proposed layout is acceptable and the aggregate habitable floor area of the rooms is not less than 20m²

AMENITY STANDARDS

Heating

Each unit of living accommodation must be equipped with an adequate means of space heating.

All rooms shall be provided with a fixed radiator, as part of a space heating system, or sufficient fixed appliances capable of achieving and maintaining temperatures of 21°C in each bedroom / bed-sitting room and bath / shower-room and 18°C in all other rooms and circulation areas when the external temperature is -1°C. This provision should be efficient, safely designed and be so sited and guarded as to minimise the risks to health and safety.

Where a central heating system is provided to comply with the heating requirements it must be operational at all reasonable times such that each separate occupancy may be capable of achieving and maintaining a temperature of 21°C.

A secondary heating appliance may be required in bathrooms / shower-rooms where the central heating system is not available at all times. This may be a wall mounted high level electric fan heater, with pull cord operation and capable of achieving and maintaining temperatures of 21°C; an isolating switch for each appliance should be located outside of the rooms.

A competent person shall maintain all such heating systems or appliances annually.

Kitchens

Exclusive kitchen facilities

Units of living accommodation containing kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of the individual household, and there are no other kitchen facilities available for that household, must be provided with a kitchen of such layout and size and equipped with such facilities so as to adequately enable occupants to store, prepare and cook food. Kitchens shall be equipped with appropriate extract fans and fire blankets.

Kitchen facilities should comprise the following:

(a) Cooking appliance(s) and equipment:

A cooker with a minimum of two burners / hobs (four burners / hobs if provided for more than one person), an oven and a grill. Alternatively, a microwave oven may be substituted for one or two of the burners / hobs, as appropriate.

(b) Kitchen sink:

A stainless steel (or similar) sink and drainer in good condition and of minimum overall dimensions 500 x 1000mm set on a stable base with a constant supply of hot and cold (drinking) water. A two course tiled splash-back shall be provided to each kitchen sink. The sink shall be connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap.

(c) Food Preparation surface(s):

A worktop of smooth and impervious material of minimum size 600 x 1000mm.

(d) Electrical sockets: -

Two twin outlet power sockets in addition to any serving major appliances set at a convenient height and safe position above the worktop.

(e) Storage of kitchen utensils and crockery: -

A storage cupboard / drawer unit of minimum capacity 0.16m³.

(f) Storage for food: -

A refrigerator, incorporating a freezer compartment, of minimum overall capacity of 0.15m³.

Note: Items (a) and (f) above shall not apply in relation to any unit of accommodation where:

- i. the landlord is not contractually bound to provide such appliances or equipment;
- ii. the occupier of the unit of accommodation is entitled to remove such appliances or equipment from the HMO; or
- iii. the appliances or equipment are otherwise outside the control of the landlord.

Shared kitchen facilities

Where all or some units of living accommodation within an HMO do not contain exclusive kitchen facilities:

- (a) there must be a kitchen, not more than one floor distant from any user, accessible from a common area 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, or alternatively, where the kitchen is more than one floor distant from a unit of living accommodation it must have an integral or adjoining dining space that would allow at least 4 persons to eat a meal at the same time;
- (b) the kitchen must be equipped with the following facilities, which must be fit for the purpose and supplied to a ratio of one set of facilities for each three units of living accommodation or a maximum of 5 persons sharing them;
- (c) there shall be no more than two sets of facilities in any one kitchen.

Where the kitchen is more than one floor distant from a unit of living accommodation it must have sufficient space for the provision of a suitable dining table and sufficient chairs to allow meals to be eaten in the kitchen.

Each set of facilities should comprise the following:

- (a) Cooking appliance(s):
A cooker with a minimum of four burners / hobs, an oven and a grill. Where 6 or 7 persons are sharing a set of kitchen facilities an additional cooking appliance, e.g. a microwave with grill / conventional oven facility must be provided.
- (b) Kitchen sink:
A stainless steel (or similar) sink and drainer in good condition and of minimum overall dimensions 500 x 1000mm set on a stable base with a constant supply of hot and cold (drinking) water. A 2 course tiled splash back shall be provided to each kitchen sink. The sink shall be connected to the drainage system via a suitable trap.
- (c) Food Preparation surface(s):
A worktop of smooth and impervious material of minimum size 600 x 1500 mm.
- (d) Electrical sockets:
2 twin outlet power sockets in addition to any serving major appliances set at a convenient height and safe position above the worktop.

In addition, the following facilities must be provided either within the shared kitchen or within each unit of living accommodation:

- (a) Storage for food or kitchen utensils and crockery:
Storage cupboard(s) of minimum capacity 0.16m³.
- (b) Storage of food:
A refrigerator, incorporating a freezer compartment, of overall capacity 0.15m³.

A shared kitchen shall be provided with covered refuse storage container(s).

A shared kitchen shall be equipped with fire blanket(s) and fire door(s).

General

All kitchens must be accommodated within a room or space of conventional construction that is adequately insulated, heated and equipped with appropriate extract ventilation.

Toilet and Washing Facilities

Exclusive use facilities

Units of living accommodation having facilities for the exclusive use of the individual household, and there are no other facilities available for that household, must be provided with facilities comprising:

An enclosed and adequately laid out and ventilated room with a toilet, bath or fixed shower and wash basin supplying adequate cold and constant hot water provided for the exclusive use of the occupiers of that unit either:

- (a) within the living accommodation; or
- (b) within reasonable proximity to the living accommodation.

Each bathing / toilet facility shall not be entered from another room, except in respect of an "en-suite" arrangement. An "en-suite" bathing / toilet facility shall be acceptable as the sole provision for any accommodation only where that accommodation is of the "studio" or one bedroom type.

Shared facilities

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, shared facilities must be provided comprising:

- (a) where there are 5 or fewer persons sharing those facilities there must be at least one bathroom with a fixed bath or shower, a wash basin (suitable for personal washing) and a toilet (which may be situated within the bathroom);
- (b) where there are 6 or more persons sharing those facilities there must be a minimum of 1 bathroom with a fixed bath or shower, 1 toilet and 1 wash basin (suitable for personal washing) for every 5 persons or lesser number. The second shared toilet must be within a compartment separate from the bathroom. Where 3 or more shared toilets are required at least one third shall be provided within a compartment separate from bathrooms.
- (c) where reasonably practicable there should be a wash basin (suitable for personal washing) in each unit of living accommodation other than a bed-sit unit in which a sink has been supplied as part of the unit's kitchen facilities and having regard to the age and character of the HMO, the size and layout of each unit and its existing provision for wash-hand basins, toilets and bathrooms.

Note: Examples of where installation might be considered impracticable include rooms very close to the minimum size limit or where no suitable external drainage exists.

General

Each toilet must be provided with a wash basin suitable for hand washing within the toilet compartment.

All baths, showers and wash basins in an HMO must be suitably equipped to provide an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water. Baths to be of minimum dimensions 1700mm x 760mm and showers of minimum dimensions 800mm x 800mm. Wash basins, other than those provided exclusively for hand washing in association with separate toilets, to be of minimum dimensions 560mm x 430mm.

A two course tiled splash back should be provided to each wash basin and bath. Any showers provided should have fully tiled walls or be a complete self-standing cubicle.

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

All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be of an adequate size and layout.

All baths, toilets and wash basins in an HMO must be fit for the purpose.

All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO. Shared facilities should be provided not more than 1 floor distant from any user and to be accessible from a common area.

MEANS OF ESCAPE AND OTHER FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The property shall be provided with an adequate means of escape from fire, together with other fire precautions including, so far as necessary, a fire detection and warning system and an emergency escape lighting system, to the satisfaction of the local authority.

National guidance on fire safety provisions for HMOs may be obtained by reference to a document published by LACORS (the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) in July 2008, HOUSING – FIRE SAFETY ‘Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing’ available as a separate download.