

# Guidance to HMO Amenity Standards



Kent local authorities working in partnership  
with Kent Fire and Rescue Service

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **HMO STANDARDS FOR SHARED HOUSES/FLATS, SELF CONTAINED FLATS, HOSTELS AND BEDSITS**

This guidance is intended to assist in the provision of accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation which contributes to a safe and healthy environment for the occupants and any visitors.

On inspection, a risk assessment may determine that it is necessary to take other measures to ensure that the housing standards are satisfactory for each individual unit of living accommodation or that variation from these standards is appropriate.

## HMO STANDARDS FOR SHARED HOUSES/FLATS, SELF CONTAINED FLATS, HOSTELS AND BEDSITS

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### 1. Personal washing and toilet facilities

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| <p><b>1.1</b><br/>Location, size and condition</p>                                                                                                                                                   | <p><b>All accomm</b></p>                                     | <p>All facilities should be located in rooms of an adequate size and layout no more than 1 floor distant of any bedroom and accessible from communal areas unless provided as en-suite facilities for the exclusive use of that occupant.</p> <p>All baths or showers, toilets and wash hand basins (WHB) should be of an adequate size and be provided with an adequate water supply, necessary fittings, drainage and be in a satisfactory condition to enable thorough cleaning. Constant hot water at a suitable temperature to be provided to bath/showers and wash basins. Each WHB and bath/shower is to be provided with an appropriate splash back.</p> <p>Walls and floors should be reasonably smooth and non-absorbent and capable of being readily cleansed.</p> |
| <p><b>1.2</b><br/>Personal washing and toilet facilities in relation to number of persons</p> <p>Please note a bathroom refers to a room containing a bath or shower, wash hand basin and toilet</p> | <p><b>All accomm</b><br/><b>1 - 4</b><br/><b>persons</b></p> | <p>Where practicable wash hand basins to be provided in each unit of accommodation or within each shared bathroom and compartment containing a WC.</p> <p>At least 1 bathroom</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>5 persons</b></p>                                      | <p>Where practicable wash hand basins to be provided in each unit of accommodation or within each shared bathroom and compartment containing a WC.</p> <p>At least</p> <p>1 bathroom AND</p> <p>1 separate WC with WHB (but the WC can be contained within a second bathroom)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|                                         | <b>6 - 10 persons</b>  | <p><b>1 WHB required in each sleeping room plus</b></p> <p><b>At least</b></p> <p><b>2 bathrooms AND</b></p> <p><b>1 separate WC with WHB (the WC can be contained within a third bathroom.)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                         | <b>11 - 15 persons</b> | <p><b>1 WHB required in each sleeping room plus</b></p> <p><b>At least</b></p> <p><b>3 bathrooms AND</b></p> <p><b>1 separate WC with WHB (the WC can be contained within a fourth bathroom).</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>1.3 Ventilation</b>                  | <b>All accomm</b>      | <p><b>Bathrooms to have mechanical ventilation extracting 15 litres/second to the outside air in addition to any window(s).</b></p> <p><b>Each toilet in a separate compartment is required to have an openable window equivalent to 1/20<sup>th</sup> (5%) of the floor area or mechanical ventilation extracting at 6 litres/second to the outside air.</b></p> <p><b>Ventilation should not be obstructed externally</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>2. Kitchens</b>                      |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>2.1 Location, size and condition</b> | <b>All accomm</b>      | <p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>If hostels have a commercial kitchen where access is not available at all times and breakfast and a further main meal is provided every day a reduced standard may be agreed, contact the Local Housing Authority to determine.</b></p> <p><b>All facilities must be fit for purpose. Each sink is to be provided with an appropriate splash back.</b></p> |

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| <b>2.2<br/>Sinks</b>              | <b>Shared Use</b>    | <b>A sink with constant hot and cold water and a draining board per 5 occupants (a dishwasher will be acceptable as a second sink).</b>                                                                                                             |
|                                   | <b>Exclusive Use</b> | <b>A sink with constant hot and cold water and a draining board.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>2.3<br/>Cookers</b>            | <b>Shared Use</b>    | <b>A cooker with a 4 ring hob, an oven and a grill per 5 occupants (a 27 litre microwave with an oven and grill will be acceptable as a second cooker).</b>                                                                                         |
|                                   | <b>Exclusive Use</b> | <b>A cooker with a 4 ring hob, an oven and a grill for a 2 person unit of accommodation or a 2 ring hob, an oven and a grill will be acceptable in units of accommodation occupied by 1 individual.</b>                                             |
| <b>2.4<br/>Electrical sockets</b> | <b>All accomm</b>    | <b>A minimum of two double electrical sockets are required at worktop height plus one per major appliance (i.e. a cooker microwave, refrigerator/freezer, washing machine etc.).</b>                                                                |
| <b>2.5<br/>Worktops</b>           | <b>All accomm</b>    | <b>Fixed worktop(s) with a smooth impervious surface for food preparation, minimum size<br/>600mm x 1000mm (1-3 persons)<br/>600mm x 2000mm (4-6 persons)<br/>600mm x 3000mm (7-10 persons)</b>                                                     |
| <b>2.6<br/>Storage</b>            | <b>Shared Use</b>    | <b>A 0.3m<sup>3</sup> dry goods storage cupboard other than a sink base unit per occupant either in each occupant's room or in a shared kitchen.</b>                                                                                                |
|                                   | <b>Exclusive Use</b> | <b>A 0.3m<sup>3</sup> dry goods storage cupboard other than a sink base unit per occupancy either within the bedsit or in a shared kitchen.</b>                                                                                                     |
| <b>2.7<br/>Refrigerators</b>      | <b>Shared Use</b>    | <b>Two worktop height refrigerators with freezer compartments or 1 worktop height fridge and 1 worktop height freezer per 5 occupiers or a worktop height refrigerator with a freezer compartment within each individual unit of accommodation.</b> |
|                                   | <b>Exclusive Use</b> | <b>A worktop height refrigerator with a freezer compartment.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>2.8<br/>Refuse</b>             | <b>All accomm</b>    | <b>Suitable and sufficient provision for household waste and recycling disposal both within the unit of accommodation and outside in accordance with the Council waste disposal arrangements.</b>                                                   |

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| <b>2.9<br/>Ventilation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>In addition to any windows, mechanical ventilation extracting 60 litres/second to the outside air or 30 litres/second if sited within 300mm of the centre line of the hob.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>3. Heating</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>3.1<br/>Fixed heating</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>A risk assessment approach will be taken but in general an adequate, controllable and affordable form of central heating or storage heaters should be installed in compliance with the Government's Decent Homes Standard.</b><br><br><b>Heating appliances should be capable of maintaining a temperature of 21°C with an outside temperature of -1°C in each unit of living accommodation. Heating should be available at all times and be under the control of the occupier.</b> |
| <b>4. Gas and Electric</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>4.1<br/>Electrical Installation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>Electrical Installation to be tested every 5 years by a competent electrical engineer and to be in a satisfactory condition with no class 1 or 2 hazards.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>4.2<br/>Electrical Appliances</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>All items of portable electrical equipment to be subject of a PAT Test, in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice issued by the Institution of Electrical Engineers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>4.3<br/>Gas</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>All gas appliances to be tested by a suitably qualified Gas Safe registered contractor on an annual basis and a copy provided to the tenants. All gas appliances to be in a satisfactory condition.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>5. Furniture</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>5.1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>All accomm</b>          | <b>All furniture should comply with current regulations – 'The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993)'</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>6. Fire precautions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Provide fire precaution facilities and equipment to reduce fire risk and to ensure the safety of people in the premises as far as is practicable in accordance with the LaCoRS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) publication "Housing – Fire Safety, Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing".</b> |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>6.1<br/>Fire Risk Assessment</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Premises comprising</b> | <b>Where parts of a premises are shared in common by residents or they are available to paying</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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|                           | of common Parts | <p>guests the premises will require a fire risk assessment to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order). This should be available for inspection by Kent Fire and Rescue Service Inspectors (FRS) who enforce the provisions of the Order. The Order does not apply to areas of single private domestic use.</p> <p>Guidance is available on-line or in hard copy, the relevant guide is Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 6.2<br>Fire detection     | All accomm      | <p>Fire detection to comply with the current relevant British Standard in consultation with the Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>An automatic fire detection and alarm system will be required and the type of system installed should be in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5839: Part 6.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 6.3<br>Emergency lighting | All accomm      | <p>An emergency lighting system to comply with BS5266 in consultation with Local Housing Authority.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 6.4<br>Fire blankets      | All accomm      | <p>A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869:1997 in each shared kitchen.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 6.5<br>Fire doors         | All accomm      | <p>All fire doors specified by the Local Housing Authority to meet the following requirements, conform to BS476 Part 22 (FD30 type) or to BS EN 1634-1.</p> <p>The specification, installation and maintenance of fire doors should comply with BS 8214:2008.</p> <p>Each fire door to be hung on three 100mm mild steel butt hinges, and provided with an approved intumescent strip incorporating a cold smoke seal to the top edge, lock and hinge sides of the door. <u>(Alternatively the intumescent strip and cold smoke seal may be inserted into the identical position of the door frame/lining).</u></p> <p>Each fire door must be provided with an approved self closing device to ensure that the door closes firmly onto the latch.</p> <p>All doors are to be well fitted within the frame. Any gap between the top edge, lock and hinge sides of the door and the frame must not exceed 4mm.</p> |

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|                                                                                                                   |                          | <p>All fire doors required for escape purposes must be fitted with furniture, including hinges having a melting point of not less than 800°C. Those fitted with key operable locks must be capable of being operated from the inside in the direction of escape without the use of a key.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b>6.6<br/>Fire Separation</b></p>                                                                             | <p><b>All areas</b></p>  | <p>All separating structures (walls, floors, ceilings etc.) between separate lettings, common parts and kitchens etc. should be constructed to meet an appropriate fire resisting standard to the approval of the local Housing Authority in consultation with the FRS.</p> <p>This will be a minimum of 30minute Fire resistance and in some circumstances may be required to provide 60 minute fire resistance.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>6.7<br/>Extinguishers</b></p>                                                                               | <p><b>All accomm</b></p> | <p>Subject to your Local Housing Authority requirements and your own fire risk assessment you may have to provide:-</p> <p>a) a multipurpose dry powder content fire extinguisher, which has a capacity of not less than 2kg (13A / 70B rating) in each shared kitchen;</p> <p>b) An appropriate extinguisher on each landing.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p><b>6.8<br/>Sprinkler Systems</b></p>                                                                           | <p><b>All accomm</b></p> | <p>The installation of a certified British Standard sprinkler system may allow for some relaxation of requirements in respect of physical protection e.g. doors and intumescent seals, together with a lesser standard of alarm devices. All consultations with the Local Housing Authority will be carried out in conjunction with Kent Fire &amp; Rescue Service.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><b>6.9<br/>Maintenance of Fire Warning/Detection Systems<br/>Emergency lighting and Fire extinguishers</b></p> | <p><b>All accomm</b></p> | <p>The manager/responsible person must ensure that any firefighting equipment, emergency lighting and fire alarms are maintained in good working order.</p> <p>A maintenance contract must be arranged (with a competent contractor) at the time of initial installation for regular servicing in accordance with the relevant British Standard.</p> <p>The system must also be tested on a weekly basis by the person in control of the premises (manager/responsible person or their agent). All tests should be properly recorded within the system log book supplied by the installer during the handover procedure.</p> |



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| <p><b>6.10</b><br/> <b>Managing, maintenance and minimising false alarms</b></p> |  | <p>Contact details of the person responsible for the maintenance of the fire warning/detection systems should be displayed in a prominent position in accordance with the current management regulations.</p> <p>For complex buildings requiring a Multi-zone fire alarm system it is recommended that a legible zone plan is displayed adjacent to the alarm panel.</p> |
| <p><b>6.11</b><br/> <b>Emergency Signage</b></p>                                 |  | <p>In larger premises with common parts it will be necessary to provide relevant signs and signage to identify and facilitate means of escape.</p> <p>Fire action notices (what to do in case of fire) should be displayed to inform guests and residents.</p> <p>Signs should conform to the requirements of BS5499 Part 1.</p>                                         |

## HMO MINIMUM ROOM SIZES

### Accommodation With Facilities Shared By Occupiers

These standards apply where there is sharing of some or all facilities i.e. HMOs where:

- occupiers live independently of others e.g. single room lettings or bedsit accommodation (kitchen facilities within own room);
- occupiers forming a group e.g. students, professional persons and others who interact socially.

| Room Description where the room is in the unit of accommodation | Minimums           |                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                                                                 | 1 Person Unit      | 2 Person Unit       |
| Combined bedroom , living room and kitchen                      | 13m <sup>2</sup>   | 20.5m <sup>2</sup>  |
| Combined bedroom and living room                                | 10m <sup>2</sup>   | 14m <sup>2</sup>    |
| Combined living room and kitchen                                | 12m <sup>2</sup>   | 15m <sup>2</sup>    |
| Kitchen                                                         | 4.5m <sup>2</sup>  | 4.5m <sup>2</sup>   |
| Living Room                                                     | 9m <sup>2</sup>    | 12m <sup>2</sup>    |
| Bedroom                                                         | 6.51m <sup>2</sup> | 10.22m <sup>2</sup> |

| Where the room is shared by occupiers                                                                          | Number of Persons |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                                                                                                | 3                 | 4                | 5                | 6                | 7-10             |
| Kitchen area (minimum)                                                                                         | 5m <sup>2</sup>   | 6 m <sup>2</sup> | 7 m <sup>2</sup> | 9 m <sup>2</sup> | 11m <sup>2</sup> |
| Communal living room (not required if the individual combined bedroom and living room meet the standard above) | 12m <sup>2</sup>  | 12m <sup>2</sup> | 12m <sup>2</sup> | 12m <sup>2</sup> | 17m <sup>2</sup> |

### Hostels – To include Guest House and Bed & Breakfast accommodation where board is provided as part of the occupancy.

| Room Description                       | Number of Occupants |                     |                     |                                                         |                   |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|                                        | 1                   | 2                   | 3                   | 4+                                                      |                   |
| Bedroom only                           | 6.51m <sup>2</sup>  | 10.22m <sup>2</sup> | 15 m <sup>2</sup>   | Add 4.5 m <sup>2</sup> per each person over 3 occupants |                   |
| Combined Bedroom & Living Room         | 10m <sup>2</sup>    | 14m <sup>2</sup>    | 18.5 m <sup>2</sup> | Add 4.5 m <sup>2</sup> per each person over 3 occupants |                   |
| For shared use of occupants            | Number of persons   |                     |                     |                                                         |                   |
|                                        | 1-3                 | 4                   | 5                   | 6                                                       | 7-10              |
| Kitchen (all main meals* not provided) | 5m <sup>2</sup>     | 6m <sup>2</sup>     | 7m <sup>2</sup>     | 9m <sup>2</sup>                                         | 11 m <sup>2</sup> |
| Kitchen (all main meals provided)      | 5m <sup>2</sup>     | 5m <sup>2</sup>     | 5m <sup>2</sup>     | 5m <sup>2</sup>                                         | 7m <sup>2</sup>   |

|                                                                                                             |                         |                        |                        |                        |                          |
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| Communal living room<br>(not required if<br>individual bedroom &<br>living room meet the<br>standard above) | <b>8.5m<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>11m<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>11m<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>11m<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>16.5m<sup>2</sup></b> |
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\* Three meals a day (to be provided each day of the week)

#### Revision information

Version 4 – 03/12/2018

Version 3 – 26/03/2014

Version 2.2 - 28/07/2006 – working release

Version 2.2.1 - 31/07/2006

a) The inclusion of a clause relating to fire separation (6.5)

b) Reference to an appropriate fire extinguisher on each landing (6.6) nb still subject to local HA requirements.

c) Added a clause for contact details (6.9)

d) Modification of item numbering.

e) Correction of typing/format errors.

Version 2.2.2 – 14/08/2006

a) Spelling correction

b) Dover logo added to front sheet