



**South Ribble Borough
Council & Chorley Borough Council**

**Houses In Multiple Occupation –
Guide & Amenity Standard 2024**



WORKING TOGETHER

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1. Introduction

This guidance details the required standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The guide is intended to assist owners, agents, and occupiers in understanding the standards they should expect in such accommodation. It encompasses both licensable and non-licensable HMOs. The Housing Act 2004 introduced licensing for certain HMOs. Larger HMOs, such as bedsits and shared houses, often have poorer physical and management standards than other privately rented properties. As HMOs often serve as the primary housing option for many individuals, particularly those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, the Government recognises the critical need for stringent regulation to ensure safety and quality living conditions. The licence holder or manager should not solely rely upon the occupiers' reporting defects and problems at the property. This is particularly important in relation to facilities provided for safety purposes including maintenance of fire doors and alarms. A plan of routine inspections should be developed which would highlight maintenance issues.

The Council may be able to offer general advice; however, please note that our role is not to act as your consultant or provide specific advice for current or potential developments. When possible, advisory visits and response times to queries concerning this document will depend on our capacity and resources.

2. Overview

- **Space Standards:** Minimum room sizes for bedrooms and communal areas, ensuring adequate living space for all occupants.
- **Kitchen Facilities:** Provision of adequate cooking, storage, and waste disposal facilities to maintain hygiene and convenience.
- **Bathroom and Toilet Facilities:** Sufficient and accessible bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of all occupants.
- **Heating and Ventilation:** Adequate heating systems and ventilation to prevent damp, mould, and ensure comfort.
- **Fire Safety:** Comprehensive fire detection and prevention measures, including smoke alarms and fire escapes.
- **Waste Management:** Proper waste storage and disposal facilities to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.
- **Electrical Safety:** Regular inspections and maintenance of electrical installations to ensure safety.

3. Implementation

This document will not apply in its entirety to properties that are already established and occupied until there is a change of ownership or a new licence application is submitted. This specifically pertains to licenced HMOs concerning space standards not specified by legislation. However, all legislative requirements, such as those outlined below will be applicable.

4. HMO Legislation

- Housing Act 2004
- The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006
- The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018
- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015
- Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

5. HMO Definition

An HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) is defined as a house or flat where three or more unrelated individuals form two or more households share amenities.

Amenity Definition: Basic amenities are defined as a toilet, personal washing facilities or cooking facilities. The degree of sharing is not relevant and there is no requirement that all the households share those amenities.

Household Definition: A household includes a single person, a couple, or members of the same family living together. This encompasses parents, grandparents, siblings, children, grandchildren, stepchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, and aunts. Additionally, an HMO can be a building with one or more non-self-contained units. A non-self-contained unit is one where amenities or facilities are not within the occupant's room, even if those amenities are exclusively used by the occupant.

Example: A tenant might have a room in a house and a designated bathroom that they do not share with others. However, this bathroom is not within their room but is located down the hall. Although it is for their exclusive use, it is physically separated from their living area and not self-contained.

An HMO also includes buildings converted into self-contained flats where less than two-thirds are owner-occupied and the conversion does not comply with the appropriate Building Regulations.

- **Pre-June 1992 Conversions:** Must meet the 1991 Building Regulations.
- **Post-June 1992 Conversions:** Must comply with the Building Regulations in force at the time of conversion.

Key Points

- **Standard Test:** Applies to most HMOs where amenities are shared by three or more unrelated individuals forming two or more households.
- **Self-Contained Flat Test:** Applies to flats with shared amenities among three or more unrelated individuals.
- **Converted Building Test:** Applies to buildings converted into self-contained flats not meeting building regulations, with less than two-thirds owner-occupied.

- **Non-Self-Contained Unit Test:** Applies to buildings with units sharing amenities, even if designated for exclusive use.

Case Law Reference

The case of **Hastings Borough Council v Turner [2020] UKUT 184 (LC)** emphasises the owner's responsibility to prove compliance with building regulations to avoid HMO classification.

6. Exemptions

Certain properties are not classed as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Examples include:

- **Occupied by Two People:** Properties occupied by two people do not qualify as HMOs.
- **Owner-Occupied with Lodgers:** If a property is occupied by the owner (and their family) and only one or two lodgers, it is not classified as an HMO.
- **Religious Communities:** Properties occupied by a religious community are exempt.
- **Main Residence Elsewhere:** If the occupiers have their main residence elsewhere, the property is not considered an HMO. This does not include full-time student accommodation, as student housing is typically considered the main residence for students during term time. Other specific scenarios include:
 - **Students:** Properties let to full-time students are considered their main residence during term time.
 - **Seasonal Workers and Migrants:** Accommodation provided for seasonal workers or migrants by their employers is considered their main residence.
 - **Asylum Seekers:** Properties provided for asylum seekers under certain conditions are also treated as their main residence.
- **Public Body or Educational Institution:** If the owner or the manager is a public body or an educational institution, the property is exempt.
- **Owner-Occupied Flats:** Buildings of self-contained flats are exempt if two-thirds or more of the flats are owner-occupied.
- **Guest Houses and Hotels:** Properties part of a guest house or hotel are exempt unless an HMO Declaration has been made.
- **No Rent or Consideration:** If no one in the property pays rent or other considerations, it is exempt.

Additional Notes

For the purposes of determining whether a property is an HMO, the exemptions do not affect the application of Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 and the use of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). For further details please follow the link to:

[HHSRS Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals.](#)

7. Certification Requirements

Landlords will be requested to provide certificates and records to prove compliance with these safety regulations. Ensure all relevant documents are up-to-date and readily available such as: -

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

- Annual checks by a Gas Safe registered installer.

- Provide tenants with safety check records within 28 days.

Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector 2020

- Obtain an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every five years or after alterations.
 - Supply a copy of this report to the existing tenant within 28 days of the inspection and test.
 - Supply a copy of this report to a new tenant before they occupy the premises.
 - Supply a copy of this report to any prospective tenant within 28 days of receiving a request for the report.

Supply the local authority with a copy of this report within 7 days of receiving a request for a copy. The Council will request, where applicable, Portable Appliance Test (PAT) certificates for appliances. If appliances are new, evidence must be able to be produced to show they were purchased in the last 12 months.

8. HMO Declaration

Where the local authority is satisfied that a building, or part of a building meets one of the tests (Section 6), they may serve a notice under section 255 of the Housing Act “an HMO Declaration” declaring that the building or part to be a house in multiple occupation.

9. HMOs Licensing

From 1st October 2018, all HMOs occupied by five or more persons from two or more separate households must be licensed. Licensing ensures: -

- **Fit and Proper Persons:** Landlords and managers are deemed fit and proper to manage the property.
- **Suitability for Occupation:** HMOs are suitable for the specified number of occupants.
- **Adequate Management Standards:** Management of the HMO meets required standards.
- **Amenities and Facilities:** HMOs have adequate amenities and facilities for occupants.
- **High-Risk HMOs:** Identifying and improving high-risk HMOs under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to provide a safe environment for occupants and visitors.

The Council has a mandatory duty to address serious hazards. Non-compliance can result in enforcement actions, including fines and prosecution.

A licence typically lasts for 5 years and includes conditions to ensure safety and proper management. To apply for a licence, please contact the Council for further details.

- [South Ribble Borough Council](#)
- [Chorley Council](#)

10. Fit and proper person

The Council will carry out checks to make sure that the person applying for the licence is a fit and proper person and the following will be taken into consideration:

- Any previous convictions relating to violence, sexual offences, drugs and fraud.
- Whether the proposed licence holder has broken any laws relating to housing or landlord and tenant matters.
- Whether the person has previously been found guilty of unlawful discrimination.

11. Failing to apply for a licence

It is an offence to be a person having control of or managing a licensable house in multiple occupation (HMO) without a licence; this applies to mandatory and additional licences. Licence holders or persons in control may also have committed an offence if they:

- Knowingly permit another person to occupy and this results in more persons or households occupying than authorised by a licence, or
- Breach any condition of a licence.

It is an offence if the landlord or person in control of the property:

- Fails to apply for a licence for a property that is licensable.
- Allows a property to be occupied by more people than are permitted under the licence.

The penalties include prosecution, fines, civil penalties (up to £30,000) and banning orders. Refer to the enforcement options section for further details.

Additional Information

For further details, please refer to the following documents:

- [Gov.uk - HMO Licensing Enforcement: Civil Penalties](#)
- [Shelter Legal - HMO Standards.](#)
- [SRBC Housing Enforcement Policy](#)

12. HMO Declarations

Where the local authority is satisfied that a building or part of a building meets one of the tests (see section 6), they may serve a notice under section 255 of the Housing Act “an HMO Declaration” declaring that the building or part to be a house in multiple occupation.

13. Rent Repayment Orders

A tenant living in a property that should be licensed but found not to be licensed, can apply to the residential property tribunal for a rent repayment. This would cover the rent they have paid during the unlicensed period. The Council can also reclaim any housing benefit that has been paid during the time the property was without a licence.

14. Licensing Decision Appeals

An appeal against the Council’s decision regarding an HMO licence can be made to the Residential Property Tribunal (RPT) in respect of the following actions:

- **Refusal to Grant a Licence:** If the Council refuses to grant an HMO licence, the applicant can appeal this decision.
- **Granting of a Licence:** Appeals can be made against the conditions or terms under which a licence is granted.
- **Revocation of a Licence:** If the Council decides to revoke an existing HMO licence, the licence holder can appeal.
- **Variation of a Licence:** Appeals can be made against any variations imposed on the licence by the Council.
- **Refusal to Vary a Licence:** If the Council refuses to make requested variations to the licence, this decision can also be appealed.

15. Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) covers a wide range of problems and includes any behaviour capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to individuals or the wider community. This type of behaviour can include:

- **Harassment and Intimidating Behaviour:** Actions intended to harass or intimidate others.
- **Hate Crime:** For example, racist or homophobic abuse.
- **Behaviour Creating Alarm and Fear:** Actions that cause fear or alarm in others.
- **Noisy Neighbours and Loud Parties:** Excessive noise disturbing others.
- **Problems Associated with Drugs:** Supplying, dealing, or using drugs.
- **Alcohol-Related Behaviour:** Actions likely to cause distress or nuisance to others due to alcohol consumption.
- **Vandalism and Graffiti:** Deliberate damage to property.
- **Rubbish and Litter:** Abandoned household and personal items, such as mattresses.

What is Not ASB

- The sound of children playing or a baby crying.
- Everyday living noises, such as flushing toilets.

Landlord Responsibilities

Landlords must take reasonable steps to prevent, identify, and manage antisocial behaviour caused by tenants in their properties. Antisocial behaviour can have a detrimental impact on the community and neighbouring residents. While tenants are responsible for their own actions, landlords should take reasonable steps to prevent, identify, and manage this behaviour.

HMO Regulations

Landlords of HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation) must comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006. Duties include:

- **Maintenance of Common Parts:** Ensuring that gardens and other common areas are kept in a safe and tidy condition.
- **Waste Disposal Facilities:** Providing adequate waste disposal facilities.

Failure to comply with these regulations can result in a civil penalty or prosecution. Tenants of HMOs also have duties under these regulations.

Council Support and Enforcement

If a complaint about tenant behaviour is made to the Council, the landlord should work with Council officers to resolve the matter. The Council will support landlords who are working towards tackling issues of antisocial behaviour and will take action against landlords who fail to engage or breach licence conditions.

ASB Licence Conditions

There are additional responsibilities for landlords of licensed properties to ensure compliance with property licence standards and conditions. These standards and conditions require landlords to take specific actions in relation to antisocial behaviour and the provision of waste storage.

Landlords will be asked to provide a written ASB policy as part of the HMO licensing procedure. A copy of the ASB policy should be signed by the tenant and the landlord prior to occupation.

Enforcement Action:

- The licence can be revoked.
- Prosecution or civil penalty can be imposed on non-compliant licence holders.

HMO Standards

16. Legal Standards

The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), introduced by the Housing Act 2004, is a risk-based evaluation tool that helps local authorities identify and protect against the potential risks from hazards to persons in residential properties. The aim is to make homes healthier and safer to live in. All residential accommodation, including HMOs, must have adequately controlled hazards to ensure occupant safety and wellbeing.

Key Points of HHSRS

- **Assessment Method:** Evaluates potential risks to health and safety from property deficiencies over a 12 month period.
- **Hazard Categories:** Includes 29 types of hazards, from damp and mould to fire and electrical issues.
- **Hazard Scores:** Determines whether hazards are 'Category 1' (most serious, requiring immediate action) or 'Category 2'.

Further and detailed information on HHSRS can be found at: [HHSRS Operating Guidance & HHSRS Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals](#).

17. Management Regulations

Various regulations govern the management, licensing, and safety standards for all types of HMOs to ensure they provide safe, well-maintained and properly managed living conditions. These regulations include requirements for regular maintenance, safety checks, appropriate occupancy levels and proper

waste disposal. Non-compliance with these regulations can result in council prosecution and other enforcement actions. For a brief overview of these requirements, refer to Table 5.

- [Management Regulations: Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [Licensing Regulations: Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [Additional Provisions: Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation \(Additional Provisions\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

18. Table 1 - Space Standards

The following space standards have been adopted as the minimum requirements.

Minimum Bedroom Size	Minimum Kitchen Size: Note 1	Communal Space: Note 2	Combined Communal and Kitchen Size	Bathroom and W.C Note 3
With a separate communal space: 1 Occupant 6.51m ² . or 2 Occupants 10.22m ² .	Per Person: 1.4m ² Minimum 5.6m ² Maximum occupants permitted to share single kitchen: 10	Per Person: 1.9m ² Minimum area 7.6m ² Maximum occupants permitted to share: 10	Per Person: 3.3m ² Minimum area 13.2m ² Maximum permitted to share: 10	Under 5 Occupants: 1 full Bathroom. 5 Occupants: 1 full bathroom and separate W.C. with WHB. 6 to 9 Occupants: 2 full bathrooms.
Without a separate communal space: 1 Occupant 10m ² or 2 Occupants 15m ²	Per Person: 1.4m ² Minimum 5.6m ² Maximum occupants permitted to share single kitchen: 10			10 Occupants: 2 full bathrooms and 2 separate W.C.'s, each with WHB. 11 to 14 Occupants: 3 full bathrooms.
Bedsit provided with a full kitchen see Table 3. No additional communal space 1 Occupant 13m ² . or 2 Occupants 20.5m ² .				Occupants that have exclusive use of a full bathroom ensuite shall be disregarded when determining shared

				bathrooms and W.C.
Bedsit full kitchen provided. Additional communal space provided. 1 occupant 10m ² or 2 occupants 14.5m ²		Per Person: 1.9m ² minimum area 7.6m ² . Maximum occupants permitted to share: 10		
<p>Note 1: Kitchens must have a minimum width of 1.8m, with a minimum walkway of 900mm. Kitchens shall be within one floor distance of an occupant's bedroom or communal area. Kitchen to allow 75% of the occupants to be present in the kitchen at the same time.</p> <p>Note 2: Communal space must be provided with furniture to allow applicable occupants to sit comfortably such as settees, table and chairs.</p> <p>Note 3: Full bathroom containing a bath or shower, toilet with a wash hand basin (the toilet with wash hand basin may be situated in a separate room).</p>				

19. Definition and Requirements for Bedsits in HMOs

Definition of a Bedsit

A bedsit is a single room unit within a shared property where the tenant has exclusive use of the room but shares other facilities, such as bathrooms and kitchens with other tenants in the building. It can be occupied by a maximum of two persons. Bedsits are often found within HMOs.

Communal Space Requirements: If the individual bedsit units do not meet the minimum space standards, additional communal areas must be provided and should be adequately furnished to accommodate all occupants comfortably. This includes settees, tables and chairs.

Kitchen Facilities: If a bedsit does not have a kitchen that meets the requirements detailed in this document (Table 3), then a communal kitchen must be provided for these occupants as specified in Section 20-21 Table 1 & 2.

Bathroom Facilities: Bedsits typically share bathroom facilities with other tenants in the building. A shared bathroom must include a bath or shower, toilet, and wash hand basin. The toilet and wash hand basin may be located in a separate room.

20. Kitchen Requirements

A kitchen in an HMO must be suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, with a layout, size, and equipment that enables those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food safely and hygienically. The kitchen must be equipped with items listed in Table 2 below, be fit for purpose and in sufficient quantity for the number of occupants sharing the facilities:

- **Layout:** The kitchen layout must be safe, convenient and allow good hygiene practices. Cookers should be located away from doorways and have enough floor space for items to be safely retrieved.
- **Dual Facilities:** If two sets of facilities are provided, the layout must allow them to be used safely at the same time. No more than two sets of facilities shall be provided in any one kitchen. See Table 2.
- **Usable Space:** The available kitchen space is to allow 75% of the occupants to access facilities freely, without restriction and ensure safe use.
- **Minimum Walkway:** Kitchens must have a minimum walkway of 900mm to ensure safe and unrestricted movement.
- **Location:** Kitchens should be within one floor distance of an occupant's bedroom or communal area.
- **Occupancy:** The kitchen should accommodate 75% of the occupants at the same time.

21. Dining Space Requirements

Proximity: An occupant should be within one floor and no more than 30 metres of a place to eat, whether it is a designated dining area or their own room. A dining area must be adequately furnished with dining tables and chairs to allow occupants to eat comfortably and hygienically.

22. Table 2 - Kitchen Facilities for Shared Use

Number of Occupants	Minimum Provision of Kitchen Facilities
3 to 5 people	<p>Sink: Provide a 1.5 bowl and drainer with a constant supply of hot and cold running water and be properly connected to the drains (minimum 1000mm x 500mm). The cold water must come directly from the rising water main. The bowl size shall accommodate the cleaning of items associated with food preparation; therefore, small bowls will not be accepted. 0.5 bowl can be substituted if a full-size dish washer is provided.</p> <p>Cooker and hob: A gas or electric cooker with four cooking hobs. <u>The oven and grill shall be capable of simultaneous use.</u></p> <p>Microwave: Required minimum power output 800W that provides a minimum 20L capacity</p> <p>Kettle & Toaster – Provide a 4 slice toaster and Kettle with a minimum 1.7 litre capacity with a 2400 W power rating.</p> <p>Layout: It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker, hob and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each, by providing approximately 400mm clearance between them. The cooker and sink including the drainer shall be located away from doorways with at least 400mm clearance.</p> <p>Worktop: A kitchen worktop that is level, secure and impervious (not allowing fluid to pass through). The minimum dimensions are 1500mm length for 3 occupants plus 500mm per additional person.</p> <p>Splash-back: Wall surfaces immediately adjacent to cookers, sinks, drainers and worktops shall be of an impervious, robust and durable finish such as plastic splash-back or tiles to a recommended height of 450mm. The joint between any sink, drainer or worktop and the adjacent wall should be sealed and watertight. Areas immediately behind a cooker must have a non-flammable splashback to a height of 450mm with an impervious easily cleaned surface.</p> <p>Electrical Sockets: At least four double 13-amp electrical power points, in addition to those used for fixed appliances, such as washing machines / fridges/freezers and in compliance with current IET Wiring Regulations following the onsite guide.</p> <p>Storage: A food storage cupboard for each occupant that is at least one 500mm wide base unit or wall unit. The space in the unit beneath the sink and drainer is not allowable for food storage.</p> <p>Fridge/Freezer: Refrigeration and freezer space must be provided within the kitchen. If not in the kitchen the fridge/freezer must be freely accessible and adjoining the kitchen where 30 litre fridge and 15 litres freezer spaces are provided per person.</p> <p>Waste Disposal: Appropriate waste disposal facilities must be provided – see section 31 for further information.</p> <p>Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceiling to be finished in an impervious surface such as kitchen paint.</p> <p>Floor covering: Provide and lay within the kitchen a durable, slip resistant and washable floor covering with an impervious surface; on a solid and level sub floor</p>

	<p>throughout the food preparation area. Properly edge the floor covering and ensure that the edges are effectively sealed and secured.</p> <p>Ventilation: Install a hood extractor over the cooker, providing at least 30l/s which is vented to the outside. If an extractor hood cannot be installed over the cooker, then the below standard must be met.</p> <p>Provide a suitable and efficient continuous running humidity (decentralised mechanical extract ventilation) and timer extractor fan situated as close to the ceiling as possible. The fan must discharge to outside air and be fitted with a back-shutter. It must provide a minimum extraction rate of 60l/s.</p>
6 to 7 people	<p>In addition to the above:</p> <p>A combination oven microwave: Required minimum power output 900w that provides a minimum 25L capacity.</p> <p>or a second cooker.</p> <p>Cooking hobs: –2 separate sets of 4.</p> <p>One additional 1.5 bowl kitchen sink or full-sized dishwasher.</p>
8 to 10 people	Two complete sets of kitchen facilities as above.
10 plus	A separate and full kitchen following the above standard.

Note: The electrical power supply must be capable to allow the simultaneous use of all the appliances without causing a power failure.

Where the landlord provides a catering service, the facilities must comply with the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006.

In addition, some self-catering facilities will need to be provided and the level of facilities required will be determined on a case-by-case basis considering the level of provision by the landlord.

23. Table 3 - Kitchen Facilities for Exclusive use: Bedsits

A bedsit is where sleeping, living and cooking amenities are provided for exclusive use by occupants within a single unit of accommodation (i.e. one room maximum **2 occupants sharing**).

Minimum Provision of Kitchen Facilities for Exclusive use: Bedsits

Sink: Provide a sink and integral drainer which is provided with a constant supply of hot and cold running water and be properly connected to the drains. The cold water must come directly from the rising water main.

Cooker and hob: A gas or electric cooker and a fixed two cooking hobs. The cooker shall provide an oven and grill.

Layout: It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker, hob and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each, by providing approximately 400mm clearance between them. The cooker and sink including the drainer shall be located away from doorways with at least 400mm clearance.

Storage: A food storage cupboard for each occupant that is at least one 500mm wide base unit or wall unit. The space in the unit beneath the sink and drainer is not allowable for food storage.

Preparation: A kitchen worktop that is level, secure and impervious. The minimum dimensions are 500mm width and 1000mm length. Worktops must be sealed at all junctions with wall surfaces using a proprietary sealant.

Electricity: At least two double 13 amp electrical power points (in addition to those used for fixed appliances, such as washing machines / fridges/freezers and shall follow current IET Wiring Regulations following the onsite guide.)

Structure: Walls and ceiling finished in an impervious surface such as kitchen paint.

Floor covering: Provide and lay within the kitchen a durable, slip resistant, impervious and washable floor covering on a solid and level sub floor throughout the food preparation area; to a minimum 1m from the kitchen units that runs along entire span of the kitchen. A suitable threshold strip must be provided. Properly edge the floor covering and ensure that the edges are effectively sealed and secured.

Fridge/Freezer: Refrigeration and freezer space must be provided within the kitchen. A minimum of 30 litre fridge space and 15 litre freezer space provided per person.

Ventilation: Install a hood extractor over the cooker, providing at least 30 litres per second which is vented to the outside. If an extractor hood cannot be installed over the cooker, then the below standard must be met.

Provide a suitable and efficient continuous running humidity (decentralised mechanical extract ventilation) and timer extractor fan situated as close to the ceiling as possible. The fan must discharge to outside air and be fitted with a back-shutter. It must provide a minimum extraction rate of 60 litres per second.

24. Ventilation and lighting

Bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms are classified as habitable rooms and require adequate natural lighting and ventilation. This is typically achieved through suitable windows that provide both light and the ability to open for ventilation.

- **Ventilation:** Habitable rooms must have openable windows that provide at least 1/20th of the floor area if the opening angle is greater than 30 degrees, or 1/10th if the opening angle is between 15 to 30 degrees. Whole building ventilation requirements must also be met through trickle vents or other means, as specified in Building Regulations Approved Document F.
- **Lighting:** Habitable rooms must have windows or other openings that allow sufficient natural light to perform daily activities safely and conveniently. Fixed lighting should be energy-efficient, meeting a minimum luminous efficacy of 75 lumens per circuit-watt.

Acoustic passive wall vents

Where windows open onto the public highway, or on to areas where it is reasonable to perceive there is fear or risk of crime and the window is accessible, then acoustic passive wall vents must be provided. These wall vents shall be draught free, prevent the passage of water and are ideally provided with a humidity sensor.

For detailed requirements and additional information, please refer to the relevant sections in Approved Document F and other Building Regulations documents.

25. Heating Standards

Controllable Fixed Heating: The heating system must be controllable, understandable and accessible by the tenants and be capable of heating the property to the following temperatures when the outside temperature is -3°C:

- Communal/Dining Rooms: 21°C
- Bedrooms: 21°C
- Kitchens: 21°C
- Bathrooms: 22°C
- Hallways and Corridors: 18°C

Continuous Operation: Tenants must have control over their heating to ensure comfort, meeting the above temperatures without landlord interference.

Tenant Rooms: Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs) are an acceptable option for tenants to control their bedroom or bedsit room temperatures. Ideally, digital TRVs should be provided as they allow multiple time and temperature settings.

Central Thermostat: A central thermostat in combination with TRVs should control the temperature in communal areas to the specified levels.

Affordability Considerations

When Tenants are Responsible for Heating Costs: The property must have an affordable heating system, considering the type of heating and the level of thermal resistance. On-demand electric heaters and storage heaters are generally unsuitable due to high running costs, as electricity is typically three times as expensive as gas-powered central heating. An assessment will be conducted if there is any doubt regarding the operating costs for the potential occupant, which may result in enforcement action to ensure an efficient and economical system is provided.

Energy Efficiency Recommendation: It is recommended that the property achieves an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C to ensure energy efficiency and help reduce heating costs for tenants.

Building Regulations Approved Document L: Covers the requirements for the conservation of fuel and power in buildings, including heating and insulation standards. Gov.uk - Approved Document L.

26. Utility Location

Proper placement of gas, water and electrical meters, as well as electrical consumer units is essential for safety and accessibility. All such units must be sited in communal areas or rooms that are always accessible, allowing for maintenance and emergency services. This includes isolation valves and switches without requiring entry into individual living spaces.

Tenant controlled rooms: Gas-powered heating boilers and any communal systems (immersion heaters) should ideally not be located in tenant-controlled rooms, as this placement may hinder access for maintenance and servicing. Additionally, there is a potential for the system to cause a noise nuisance, which could result in the issuance of an abatement notice by the council.

Commercial: For HMOs situated above or below commercial premises, each unit must have separate gas and electric supplies to prevent shared responsibilities and potential disputes. Shared supplies and meters are not acceptable due to complications with billing and accountability and they may not meet safety regulations.

27. Usable Space

The measured space in any room must be 'usable space'. This means the room should easily accommodate the required amount of appropriate furniture while still allowing space for movement.

Height Requirements: Any floor space with a ceiling height of less than 1.5 meters shall be disregarded when measuring the total usable space in the room.

Corridors and Walkways: Internal corridors that cannot accommodate furniture such as a set of drawers or a wardrobe while still allowing a 600mm walkway, will be disregarded from the measurement.

Floor to Ceiling Height: All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets must have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.14m.

28. Bathrooms, W.C and W.H.B

General Requirements

- **Minimum Facilities:** For five occupants, there must be at least one separate toilet and wash hand basin with splash back, plus one bathroom with a fixed bath or shower and toilet (see Table 1).

- **WC Requirements:** Any toilet in a separate compartment must include a wash hand basin with splash back.
- **Accessibility:** Bathrooms and toilets must be accessible from a common area, within one floor of the users, and located inside the building.
- **Area:** A suitable room of adequate dimensions and facilities to allow for user to change their clothes and dry themselves.
- **Privacy and Security:** Bathrooms and shower rooms must be lockable and designed to ensure privacy, with adequate space for dressing and undressing safely.
- **Bath and shower minimum size:** Bath 1700mm x 760mm in a bathroom. Shower 800mm x 800mm
- **Heating:** Bathrooms must be heated to maintain a constant room temperature of 21°C, even when the outside temperature is -3°C.
- **Ventilation:** Equipped with continuous running humidity-controlled fans, venting externally, and providing a minimum extraction rate of 15 l/s.
- **Splash-backs and Sealants:** Minimum 400 mm high splashbacks for wash hand basins or baths; shower splash-backs must extend 150 mm above the shower head and cover all walls of the shower cubicle.
- **Shower Screens:** Fixed shower screens must meet British Standards; shower curtains are not acceptable.
- **Flooring:** Durable, slip-resistant, and impervious floor coverings with properly sealed edges.
- **Walls and Ceilings:** Must be smooth, impervious, and easily cleanable.
- **Water Supply:** Continuous supply of hot and cold running water, designed to ensure reasonable temperature control for washing/bathing.
- **Lighting:** Bathrooms and shower rooms must have adequate lighting

WHB Additional Notes

Legislation Reference: According to The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006, it is preferable to provide wash hand basins in each tenant's room where reasonably practicable.

Definition: The term "reasonably practicable" considers constraints such as the property's age and character, the size and layout of each unit, and existing provisions for wash-hand basins, toilets and bathrooms.

Landlord Compliance:

1. **Assess the Property:** Conduct a thorough evaluation of the property's age, character and layout to determine the feasibility of installing WHBs.
2. **Document Constraints:** Gather and present evidence such as layout plans, cost estimates, and tenant feedback to support any claims regarding the impracticability of installations.
3. **Engage with the Local Authority:** Consult with the local authority to understand their specific requirements and provide clear rationales for any deviations.

29. Fire Safety

Fire Safety Requirements

The risk of fire and the potential harm it can cause is heightened in multiple-occupancy dwellings. Therefore, measures must be taken to reduce the risk to occupiers in the event of a fire.

The strategy to mitigate the risk of harm to occupants is to provide early warning of a fire occurring and has two main components.

1. Ensuring a means of escape from any room in the house to a place of safety (Protected Route).
2. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to fire safety in HMOs. Due to the vast variations in layout, building type and occupants, a risk-based approach is required.

While general guidelines for some categories of property will be discussed in this section, determining the specific levels of protection needed requires a risk assessment for each HMO.

Council Assistance

The following information is not a schedule of works, but a guide on general requirements. You will need to conduct more in-depth research and it is suggested that you review the provided web resources. The Council may be able to offer advice; however, please note that we cannot act as your consultant or complete your risk assessment. Advisory visits and response times to queries will depend on our capacity and resources.

Regulatory Framework

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 (Schedule 3) mandates the provision of appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment; considering the type, number, and location deemed necessary.

The Management Regulations stipulate that fire-fighting equipment and fire alarms must be maintained in good working order.

The **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** mandates that a fire risk assessment be conducted for all HMOs. The responsible person (usually the landlord or managing agent) must identify fire hazards, evaluate risks and implement measures to mitigate these risks. The Council may conduct joint inspections of licensed HMOs with the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure compliance.

Maintenance and Compliance

As a condition of the licence, all licensable HMOs must have a valid written fire risk assessment, identifying risks and control measures to be implemented while the property is occupied. This assessment must be carried out by a competent person and be in place when the building is occupied.

Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988

Ensure that all furniture and furnishings provided in the rental property meet the safety standards set out in the regulations. A permanent label will be present showing compliance with the regulations.

Fire Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment is essential and involves a systematic evaluation of the premises, activities and potential fire hazards. The aims are to:

- Identify fire hazards.
- Reduce the risk of hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable.
- Determine necessary physical fire precautions and management arrangements to ensure safety in the event of a fire.

For licensed and high-risk HMOs, it is strongly recommended that a professional fire risk assessment be conducted by a competent person.

The fire risk assessment should be reviewed by a competent person in accordance with its findings and whenever significant changes occur.

Written Risk Assessment

Maintaining a written fire risk assessment is crucial because:

- **Proof of Compliance:** A written record demonstrates that a thorough assessment has been conducted and appropriate control measures are in place.
- **Accountability:** It helps in tracking the implementation of safety measures and ensures accountability.
- **Review and Update:** Regular reviews and updates are easier to manage with a documented policy.

This is mandatory if:

- The property has an HMO licence.
- The responsible person employs five or more persons.

Even when not legally required, keeping a written record is strongly encouraged as it provides proof of compliance and ensures that all fire safety measures are documented and are reviewable.

Fire Risk Assessment Template Guidance

The following fire-risk-assessment template produced by Liverpool City Council is a useful resource intended to assist responsible persons in conducting fire risk assessments for residential accommodations. It is particularly suitable for properties with a simple layout or those considered low risk. However, please be mindful that we were not involved in producing this document and it is not fully endorsed by our council. For more complex or high-risk properties, it is recommended to seek professional advice and consult the LACORS Fire Safety Guide and relevant British Standards.

You can access the template here: [Liverpool City Council Fire Risk Assessment Landlord Guide](#).

Higher Risk Houses

Properties with non-standard layouts or occupants presenting higher risks (e.g., drug/alcohol dependency, limited mobility) require additional precautions. This must be factored into the fire risk assessment. A written risk assessment will be required for all properties which are deemed to be high risk.

An example of a non-typical layout is 'inner rooms' where the occupant must pass through risk rooms such as lounges or kitchens to reach the escape route. Solutions such as escape windows or water suppression systems should be discussed with the Council before implementation.

Emergency Lighting, Firefighting Equipment, and Signage

The provision of emergency lighting, firefighting equipment, and signage along escape routes in HMOs must be determined through a risk assessment, considering the complexity of the escape route and the type of occupants. This assessment should refer to recognised guidance documents such as the LACORS Fire Safety Guide and relevant British Standards, including BS 5266 for emergency lighting and BS 5839 for fire detection systems.

Shared Houses - Students

For shared houses, such as those rented by a collective of students under a single tenancy, the fire safety standards may differ from those required for bedsits. Shared houses typically feature communal living spaces and shared utility bills, with personal rooms often lacking individual locks. In contrast, bedsits are let to individual tenants, often with locked doors and minimal communal interaction.

A lesser standard of fire safety may be permissible for shared houses compared to bedsits, but this must be agreed upon in writing with the local authority. This consultation ensures that the specific fire safety needs of the property are met while maintaining compliance with local regulations.

30. Table 4 - Overview of Fire Precautions Measures

		Number of Floors	
Area	Items	1-2	Any floor/storey above 200m ² or 3 + Storeys
Fire Doors	Doors to kitchens must be 30-minute fire doors with combination heat and smoke seal intumescent strips. Self-closers must be fitted.	YES	YES
	Bedroom doors must be 30-minute fire doors with combination heat and smoke seal intumescent strips. Self-closers must be fitted.	YES	YES
	Doors to any cellars must be 30-minute fire doors with combination heat and smoke seal intumescent strips. Self-closers must be fitted.	YES	YES
Fire Alarm and Detection - Communal	Grade A LD2 fire alarm and detection system. See Note 1.	NO	YES

	<p><u>Existing HMO</u></p> <p>Grade D1 - LD2 fire alarm and detection system – See Note 1.</p> <p><u>New or material altered (including converted dwellings)</u></p> <p>Grade D1- LD1 Fire alarm and detection system. See Note 1.</p>	YES	NO
Fire Alarm and Detection - Individual Tenant Dwellings	<p><u>No cooking facilities are included in the tenant dwelling.</u> Additional interlinked smoke detector connected to the communal system in accordance with Note 1</p> <p>OR</p> <p><u>Any type of cooking facilities included in the tenant dwelling.</u> An additional interlinked heat detector connected to the communal system and an independent Grade D1 LD2 provided to the tenant dwelling. (Single room hard wired alarm and detector)</p>	YES	YES
	<p><u>Individual dwelling units, within the HMO, comprising two or more rooms. –</u> Addition to the communal system Grade D1 LD2</p>	YES	YES
Protected Escape Routes	30-minute protected escape route.	YES	YES
	Walls and floors should be of sound, traditional construction;	YES	YES
	Separation between commercial dwellings must achieve 60 minutes fire protection. Which includes walls, doors, floors – refer to LACoRS – Fire Safety	YES	YES
Escape Windows	Refer to below section		
Fire Fighting Equipment	Fire blanket in kitchen	YES	YES
Locks on Doors	Final exit doors must have a security lock that can be opened from the inside without a key.	YES	YES
	Locks on tenant’s rooms leading on to the escape route must be provided with a lock that can be opened easily without a key from the inside.	YES	YES

Note 1 –

An automatic fire detection and alarm system must conform to the current version of BS 5839-6: For quick reference refer to Table 1 of this British Standard.

The type of system will be based upon if the property is a new development, material altered (converted into an HMO) or an existing HMO. The above is just for reference and the reader must refer to the full British Standard.

LD1: A system installed throughout the premises with detectors in all circulation areas forming part of **escape routes and all rooms and areas** (including cellars), excluding those with negligible ignition sources like toilets and bathrooms.

Detectors may normally be omitted from roof voids unless there are specific significant fire hazards such as gas boilers or electrical equipment for photovoltaic systems.

LD2: A system with detectors in all circulation areas forming part of escape routes and in specified rooms or areas that present a high fire risk, including kitchens and principal habitable rooms.

Heat detectors should be installed in every communal kitchen. Heat or smoke detectors, as appropriate (taking into account the fire risk and the potential for false alarms), should be installed in every communal lounge and cellars.

Testing and Maintenance Schedule

Fire Alarms

- **Grade A Systems:** These should be tested weekly by a competent person, with a full system inspection and servicing every six months.
- **Grade D Systems:** These should be tested monthly by a competent person, with a formal check and servicing annually.

Emergency Lighting

- **Monthly Testing:** A short functional test should be carried out by a competent person to ensure that all emergency lighting illuminates.
- **Annual Testing:** A full discharge test should be carried out by a competent person to ensure that the lights function correctly for the full rated duration.

Grades of Fire Detection Systems

Grade A:

- Comprises electrically operated smoke and/or heat detectors linked to a control panel, typically located in the ground floor hallway.
- Must comply with BS EN 54-2: + A1 and BS 5839-1 for wiring, siting, and types of detectors and sounders.
- Suitable for higher-risk HMOs as the control panel constantly monitors the system and indicates any faults.

Grade D1:

- For rented dwellings due to higher reliability, suitable for higher-risk occupants.
- Operates during mains failure and can be connected to a lighting circuit to prevent prolonged disconnection.
- Consideration needed for disabling detectors in a permanent alarm state without isolating the lighting circuit.

- Grade A, Category LD2, with detectors sited in accordance with the recommendations of BS 58391 (2017) for a Category L2 system.

Compliance and Installation

All systems must be installed and maintained by competent persons per British Standards. Regular testing, maintenance, and record-keeping are essential. HMOs are subject to periodic local authority inspections to ensure safety compliance.

Protected Routes and Separation

Protected routes and fire separation are essential for ensuring safe evacuation and preventing the spread of fire and smoke within a building. Key points include:

- **Fire Resistance:**
 - Protected routes should be constructed using fire-resistant materials, typically providing 30 minutes of fire resistance for low-risk areas and 60 minutes for high-risk areas.
 - High-risk areas such as commercial kitchens, licenced premises and large boiler rooms.
- **Service Penetrations:**
 - Any penetrations for services like plumbing and electrical must be sealed with fire-stopping materials to maintain the integrity of fire-resistant walls and floors.
- **Clearance:**
 - Protected routes must be always kept clear of obstructions and combustible materials. White goods such as washing machines, tumble dryers, fridges, and freezers must not be installed along the escape route.

Escape Windows

Escape windows are required in rooms where the only escape route is through another room (inner rooms) and where the escape route does not provide a direct, protected path to the final exit. Escape windows provide an alternative means of egress in the event of a fire, particularly where protected routes are not available or as an additional safety measure.

- **Height:** Escape windows may be provided to ground and first floor rooms, provided that the distance from the window sill to external ground level does not exceed 4.5 metres. Such rooms should only be occupied by persons physically capable of escaping via this route.
- **Size and Accessibility:** These windows should be large enough to allow occupants to escape easily. The recommended minimum clear opening is 0.33m² with a minimum width and height of 450mm. The bottom of the openable area should be no more than 1100mm above the floor.
- **Lock Mechanisms:** Escape windows should be fitted with locks or mechanisms that can be easily opened from the inside without the use of a key.
- **Window Restrictors:** Window restrictors, if fitted, must be easily overridden to allow for quick escape in case of an emergency.
- **Fire alarm and detection:** Where there is an inner room, a hard-wired smoke/heat detector must be located in the access room, which is interlinked with the appropriate fire alarm system in the building.

Fire Safety Guidance

It is expected that HMOs comply with current British Standards and adhere to the guidance in the LACORS Fire Safety document. Despite being published in 2008, this document remains relevant; however, readers must refer to the current version of the British Standards.

Key British Standards

- **BS 5839-6:** Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings.
- **BS 5266-1:** Emergency lighting – Part 1: Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises.
- **BS 9991:** Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings including HMOs; covering means of escape, fire detection and alarm systems, fire suppression systems and management policies.
- **BS 476-22 and BS EN 1634-1:** Fire doors and their performance standards.
- **BS 5266-1:** Emergency lighting.
- **BS 9999:** Fire safety in the design, management, and use of buildings.

Resources

- [LACORS Housing - Fire Safety: LACoRS Housing - Fire Safety .](#)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation-: Gov.UK Fire Safety -](#)
- [Fire safety principles for residential accommodation.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Liverpool City Council - Landlords Guide to Fire Risk Assessment In Residential Properties](#)

31. Waste Management Requirements

Landlords of HMOs must ensure adequate waste storage and disposal to maintain a clean, hygienic environment and prevent health hazards like pest infestations. This includes providing and managing bins for both general waste and recycling. Bins must be of sufficient size to accommodate waste; inadequate provision may breach regulations or licence conditions. If waste is not properly managed, landlords may need to increase bin capacity.

Key Points:

- **Adequate Storage:** Provide sufficient bins for general waste and recycling.
- **Accessible and Safe:** Refuse storage must be accessible, safe and well-maintained.
- **Ventilated and Cleanable:** External refuse storage areas should be well-ventilated and capable of being readily cleansed.
- **Capacity Adjustments:** Increase bin capacity if waste is not managed properly.
- **Information:** Post refuse collection instructions in common areas.

For more detailed guidelines on waste management requirements, please refer to the Council's waste management resources:

- [South Ribble Council Waste and Recycling](#)
- [Chorley Recycling and Waste](#)

Landlords should contact the Council's waste management or housing department for specific documentation and guidelines on HMO waste management requirements.

32. Overview of Enforcement Options for HMOs

Local authorities have several enforcement options to ensure HMOs are managed properly and maintained safely:

- **Improvement Notices:** Require landlords to fix identified hazards by a specified deadline.
- **Prohibition Orders:** Restrict or prohibit the use of unsafe parts of a property.
- **Hazard Awareness Notices:** Inform landlords of less serious hazards that don't need immediate action.
- **Emergency Remedial Action:** Allow local authorities to make urgent repairs when there is an imminent risk, with costs recovered from the landlord.
- **Emergency Prohibition Orders:** Immediately restrict the use of the property in cases of imminent danger.
- **Management Orders:**
 - **Interim Management Orders (IMO):** Temporary control to address immediate issues.
 - **Final Management Orders (FMO):** Long-term control if the property remains a risk.
- **Civil Penalties:** Financial penalties up to £30,000 for breaches of management regulations or licensing conditions.
- **Banning Orders:** Prohibit landlords from managing properties due to serious or repeated breaches.
- **Rent Repayment Orders:** Reclaim rent paid during unlicensed periods or breaches, including housing benefits.
- **Overcrowding Notices:** Require landlords to reduce the number of occupants or improve amenities when a property exceeds occupancy limits or poses health and safety risks due to overcrowding.
- **Prosecution:** Direct prosecution for serious breaches of management regulations or licensing conditions, leading to significant fines and potential criminal records.

For further information please refer to - [SRBC Enforcement Policy](#).

33. Table 5 - HMO management legislative requirements

Duty	Requirement
Provide Information to Occupiers	Ensure your name, address and telephone number are available to each household.
	Display these details prominently within the HMO.
Take Safety Measures	Keep all fire escape routes free from obstruction and in good repair.
	Maintain firefighting equipment and fire alarms in working order.
	Display fire escape notices clearly (unless the HMO has four or fewer occupants).
	Protect occupiers from injury related to the HMO's design, structure, and occupancy levels.
	Ensure unsafe roofs or balconies are made safe or inaccessible.

	Provide safeguards on windows with sills at or near floor level.
Maintain Water Supply and Drainage	Keep water supply and drainage systems in good, clean and working condition.
	Protect water storage containers and fittings from contamination and frost damage.
	Do not unreasonably interrupt the water or drainage supply used by any occupier.
Supply and Maintain Gas and Electricity	Provide the latest gas safety certificate to the local housing authority within seven days of a request.
	Do not unreasonably interrupt gas or electricity supplies used by any occupier.
Maintain Common Parts, Fixtures, Fittings, and Appliances	Keep common parts in good repair, clean and free from obstruction.
	Maintain handrails, banisters, stair coverings, windows, ventilation and lighting in common parts.
	Ensure fixtures, fittings and appliances used in common are in good repair and working order.
	Maintain outbuildings, yards, forecourts, gardens and boundary walls/fences in good condition.
	Keep unused parts of the HMO clean and free from refuse.
Maintain Living Accommodation	Ensure each unit of living accommodation and its furniture are clean at the beginning of a tenancy.
	Maintain the internal structure, fixtures, fittings and ventilation in good repair.
	The manager's duty excludes repairs needed due to tenants' negligence or misuse.
Provide Waste Disposal Facilities	Provide adequate bins or receptacles for refuse and litter.
	Arrange for refuse and litter disposal as necessary, considering local authority services.
Occupiers' Responsibilities	Do not hinder or frustrate the manager's duties.
	Allow the manager reasonable access for duty-related purposes.
	Provide necessary information to the manager.
	Avoid causing damage to the property or supplied items.

	Dispose of litter as per the manager's arrangements.
	Follow fire safety instructions and use fire equipment responsibly.
Heating	Ensure each unit of living accommodation has adequate space heating.
Washing Facilities	Provide an adequate number of bathrooms, toilets and wash-hand basins.
	Ensure baths, showers and wash-hand basins have a constant supply of hot and cold water.
	Bathrooms must be suitably heated, ventilated, adequately sized, fit for purpose and suitably located.
Kitchens	Provide a suitably located and adequately equipped kitchen for shared use.
	Kitchen equipment should include sinks with draining boards, hot and cold water, cooking appliances, electrical sockets, worktops, storage cupboards, refrigerators, refuse disposal facilities, extractor fans, fire blankets and fire doors.
Self-contained Units	Equip each unit with its own kitchen facilities, including cooking appliances, a sink, worktop, electrical sockets, storage cupboard and refrigerator.
	Provide an enclosed room with a toilet and bath/shower, hot and cold water and adequate ventilation if shared washing facilities are not available.