



HMO

Amenity Standards

A guide for landlords of bedsits, shared housing and other housing in multiple occupation

City and County of Swansea
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HMO LICENSING - AMENITY STANDARDS

Legislation

The Housing Act 2004 means that it is a legal requirement for certain Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to be licensed in order to operate legally.

Whilst not all HMOs need a licence to operate, they must comply with minimum legal standards for means of escape in case of fire and amenities.

Before issuing a licence or ensuring a property is compliant with legislation the Council has to look at certain factors, one of them being the amenities at the property, to ensure that the house is suitable for occupation by the number of occupiers.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The Housing Act 2004 significantly increases the amenity standards for houses in multiple occupation with the overall aim of improving standards generally in this type of accommodation.

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

These Regulations prescribe the standard amenities required in HMOs.

If you are responsible for the management of an HMO you must pay particular attention to the requirement of these Regulations.

Minimum Bedroom Sizes

The Council has adopted guidance for minimum floor areas for certain types of bedrooms in licensed HMOs.

- Single bedroom (where there is a separate lounge provided) - 6.5m²
- Single bedroom (where no separate lounge is provided) - 10m²
- Double bedroom (where there is a separate lounge provided) - 10.2m²
- Double bedroom (where no separate lounge is provided) - 15m²
- Single person bedsit - 13m²

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WASHING FACILITIES AND SANITARY CONVENIENCES

Unless the individual unit of accommodation i.e. bedroom, bedsit, self-contained flat, etc contains bathing and toilet facilities for the exclusive use of that individual household*, then washing and toilet facilities must be provided in the following ratios:

NB 'Bathroom' - means a room with bath or shower

'Full bathroom' - means a room containing a bath or shower, WC and wash hand basin.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

1-4 persons	1 full bathroom: containing bath or shower, wash hand basin and WC
5 persons	1 bathroom: containing bath or shower AND 1 separate WC: with wash hand basin (or a second bathroom which contains a WC)
6-10 persons	2 bathrooms: each containing bath/shower AND At least 2 WCs: one of which must be separate and contain a wash hand basin, the second may be contained within one of the bathrooms

- ◆ All baths, showers and wash-hand basins **must** have taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water.
- ◆ All bathrooms **must** be suitably and adequately **heated** and **ventilated**
e.g. central heating radiator
ventilation in the form of openable window of adequate size and/or mechanical ventilation, having an overrun device.
- ◆ All bathrooms and toilets must be of adequate size and layout to be safe to use. (HHSRS requirement).
- ◆ All baths, toilets, wash hand basins and showers must be 'fit for the purpose' i.e. in good repair and safe to use and capable of being easily cleaned.
- ◆ All showers, baths and wash hand basins must have suitable splashbacks.
- ◆ All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be suitably located within the house.

NB

- ★ **A Household** - is persons who are members of the same family, i.e. married couples, relatives, co-habiting partners.
- ◆ All facilities listed in the above table must be capable of being shared for bedsits and shared house HMOs.

The table overleaf gives optional layouts for bathrooms and WCs for numbers of occupants of HMOs in order to comply with legal requirements.

Total No. of occupiers		Options Available			
4	1 'full' bathroom				
	1 bath/shower room AND 1 separate WC with wash hand basin	OR	A 'full' bathroom (i.e. with WC & wash hand basin) AND 1 shower/bathroom	OR	2 'full' bathrooms containing bath/shower, WC and wash hand basin
5	1 bathroom containing bath/shower AND 1 full bathroom containing bath/shower, WC and wash hand basin AND 1 separate WC with wash hand basin	OR	2 'full' bathrooms each with bath/shower, wash hand basin and WC AND 1 shower/bathroom	OR	2 'full' bathrooms each with bath/shower, wash hand basin and WC AND 1 separate WC with wash hand basin/bathroom
	3 full bathrooms each containing bath/shower, WC and wash hand basin.		2 shower/bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with wash hand basin.		2 shower/bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with wash hand basin.

NB Full bathroom - bath/shower, WC and wash hand basin
 Bathroom - room containing bath or shower
 All separate WCs should have a wash hand basin

KITCHEN FACILITIES - SHARED ACCOMMODATION

Unless the unit of accommodation, i.e. bedroom, bedsit, self contained flat, etc., contains facilities for cooking food, then kitchen facilities must be provided, as follows:

KITCHEN SIZE/LAYOUT

- ◆ There must be a kitchen of suitable size and layout and having such facilities so as to enable those sharing it to store, prepare and cook food.

Generally, the size of kitchens should be:

kitchen used by 1 - 5 persons	~	minimum 7m²
kitchen used by 6 - 10 persons	~	minimum 10.5m²

EQUIPMENT

- ◆ The kitchen **must** have the following equipment, which must be fit for the purpose and supplied in sufficient quantity for the number of people sharing the facilities:
 - o **Sink units** (with draining board)

used by 1 – 5 persons	~	1 sink unit
used by 6 – 10 persons	~	2 sink units (or double bowl sink with drainer)

Each sink unit **must** be provided with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water and have an impervious splashback.
NB For a maximum of 6 persons ~ 1 sink unit **and** a functional full size dishwasher will be accepted.
 - o **Cooker** (i.e. 4 ring hob plus oven)

used by 1 – 5 persons	~	1 full size cooker
used by 6 persons	~	2 full size cookers or 1 cooker with 6 ring hob plus a microwave
used by 7 – 10 persons	~	2 full size cookers

(A work surface of at least 500mm must be sited adjacent to each cooker).
 - o **Fridges**

used by 1 – 4 persons	~	1 standard under-counter fridge
used by 5 – 8 persons	~	2 standard under-counter fridges (or equivalent large fridge)
used by 9 – 12 persons	~	3 standard under-counter fridges
 - o **Freezers**

To be provided in **addition** to fridges in the same ratio and size if no freezer compartment within the fridge.

NB ice boxes will **not** be counted as freezer compartment.

- o **Storage Cupboards (for food & utensils)**
1 x 500mm standard base/wall unit per occupier.
NB Cupboards below sink units will not be counted as food/utensil cupboard.
- o **Work surfaces (for food preparation)**
Minimum size 1m x 0.6m - to have an impervious splashback of 0.45m height.
NB A work surface of at least 500mm must be sited adjacent to each cooker.
- o **Electrical Sockets**
It is recommended that a minimum of **3 double power sockets** are provided in each kitchen adjacent to work surfaces, in addition to the cooker socket.
- o **Refuse disposal facilities**
Provide suitable receptacles in kitchen for kitchen waste.
- o **Extractor fans**
Should be fitted where appropriate and will always be necessary if kitchen has no natural ventilation.
- o **Fire Blankets & Fire Doors**
To be fitted in accordance with the LACORS Quick Reference Guide (on Council's website) or as specified in schedules of work attached to Licence or Statutory Notice.

SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION

A) Kitchen Facilities

Where kitchen facilities are for the **exclusive use** of an individual household. **i.e.** in a self contained flat, or individual bedsit, the following **must** be provided as a minimum:

- A **cooker** of adequate size to include 2 to 4 ring hob with oven or a microwave.
- A **sink unit** (with drainer) with adequate supply of cold and constant hot water.
- A **work top** for food preparation, of minimum size 1m x 0.6m
NB A work surface of at least 500mm must be sited adjacent to each cooker.
- A standard under-counter size **fridge** as a minimum.
- A freezer to be provided in addition to the fridge
NB One standard fridge/freezer would meet this requirement.
- A **cupboard** for food and utensil storage, of minimum size 500mm standard base or wall unit.
- Sufficient **electrical sockets**. It is recommended that at least 2 double sockets are provided **in addition** to the cooker socket.

B) Bathroom Facilities

Where bathroom facilities are for the **exclusive use** of an individual household, i.e. in self contained flats or individual bedsits, the following **must** be provided as a minimum:

- A toilet
- A bath or shower with adequate supply of cold and constant hot water.
- A wash hand basin

These must be provided in an enclosed and adequately laid out and ventilated room, either

- within the living accommodation, **or**
- within reasonable proximity to the living accommodation.

HEATING

Each unit of living accommodation in an HMO must be equipped with adequate means of space heating, i.e. a system that can be controlled by the occupants, that has been safely and properly installed and maintained and can heat the whole dwelling. The occupiers must be able to regulate the temperature.

Example: *A gas fired / oil fired central heating system with individual radiators throughout the property with a thermostat centrally located (or on individual radiators) that the occupiers can adjust themselves, or electric storage heaters with individual thermostatic controls.*

All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated.

FURTHER ADVICE

Contact: Housing and Public Health Division
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