

Standards for Licensable Houses in the Private Rented Sector

This document sets out the Council's minimum standards required in all licensed houses in the private rented sector within the London Borough of Lewisham. The Council will refer to these standards when deciding the maximum number of households or persons that can occupy a property.

Kitchens

Location, layout and condition

- Unless kitchens contain a suitable dining area, they must be positioned within 2 floors of any bedroom or unit of accommodation and must be directly accessible from the communal areas. The kitchen size and layout must enable the occupants to safely use the kitchen and to store, prepare and cook food in a safe and hygienic way.
- All floor surfaces must be reasonably smooth and impervious and capable of being readily cleansed. All corners and wall/floor junctions must be properly sealed.
- All wall surfaces must be smooth and capable of being readily cleansed. Where possible, a two course tiled splash back shall be provided behind the sink, worktop and cooker. A proprietary mastic sealant shall be used to seal all joints between the sink or worktop and the adjacent walls.
- All kitchen areas must be provided with adequate lighting, particularly over the cooking and food preparation areas.
- All kitchen areas must be properly ventilated to the external air (with particular regard to the cooking area), either by an operable window or suitable mechanical ventilation system.
- All facilities and equipment must be fit for the purpose.

Sinks- Shared use

- A sink and drainer of adequate size and set on a stable base must be provided for every six occupants (or part thereof) that share the kitchen. Consideration will be given to the use of a dishwasher for additional occupants. The surface of the sink and drainer must be smooth, impervious and capable of being readily cleansed. Each sink must be provided with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water and must be properly connected to the mains drainage system. The cold water supply shall be direct from the mains supply.

Sinks- Exclusive use

- A sink and drainer of adequate size and set on a stable base, the surface of the sink and drainer being smooth, impervious and capable of being readily cleansed. The sink must be provided with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water and must be properly connected to the mains drainage system. The cold water supply shall be direct from the mains supply.

Cookers- Shared use

- A gas or electric full sized cooker with four burners\hobs, and oven for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property. Consideration will be given to the use of a micro wave with built in oven for addition occupants.

Cookers- Exclusive use

- A gas or electric cooker with at least two burners\hobs, and an oven or micro wave.

Electrical sockets- Shared use

- Two double electrical sockets are required, plus one additional socket for each major appliance (e.g. cooker, refrigerator, freezer, washing machine), for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property. The two double electrical sockets must be positioned within the food preparation area, at worktop level and in a safe position.

Electrical sockets- Exclusive use

- Two double electrical sockets are required, plus one additional socket for each major appliance (e.g. cooker, refrigerator, freezer, washing machine). The two double electrical sockets must be positioned within the food preparation area, at worktop level and in a safe position

Worktop- Shared use

- A securely fixed worktop of smooth impervious material, minimum size 1500mm X 600mm deep (excluding any area covered by a major appliance) for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property.

Worktop- Exclusive use

- A securely fixed worktop of smooth impervious material, minimum size 1000mm X 600mm deep (excluding any area covered by a major appliance).

Storage- Shared use

- A dry goods storage cupboard of minimum capacity 0.15m³ (500 x 600 x 500mm) per occupant, finished internally and externally with smooth impervious surfaces. The space in any cupboard below a sink will not be considered acceptable for this purpose. In relation to shared kitchens, the dry goods storage cupboard can either be positioned within the shared kitchen or a separate cupboard can be placed within each unit of accommodation

Storage- Exclusive use

- A dry goods storage cupboard of minimum capacity 0.15m³ (500 x 600 x 500mm), finished internally and externally with smooth impervious surfaces. The space in any cupboard below a sink will not be considered acceptable for this purpose.

Refrigerators- Shared use

- A refrigerator with a freezer compartment (or where there is no freezer compartment, provide a separate freezer), for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property.

Refrigerators- Exclusive use

- A refrigerator with a freezer compartment (or where there is no freezer compartment, provide a separate freezer).

Refuse

- Landlords must ensure there are appropriate facilities for storing rubbish their properties generate. All licensed properties will need to comply with the scheme issued by the local authority (which may be subject to change) for the storage and disposal of domestic refuse pending collection. A licence holder's failure to comply with the scheme is a breach of the licence and a criminal offence.

Bathroom and Toilet Facilities

Location, layout and condition

- All facilities should be located in enclosed rooms of an adequate size and layout within 2 floors of any bedroom or unit of accommodation and directly accessible from the communal areas unless provided as en-suite facilities for the exclusive use of that occupant. Facilities should be inside the main building. All bathroom and toilet facilities must be sited in a hygienically designed and constructed room which is provided with appropriate wall and floor surface finishes.

All bathrooms and toilets must be suitably heated, lighted and ventilated.

All baths, showers and wash hand basins must be fitted with taps and supplied with a cold and constant supply of hot water and properly connected to the mains drainage system.

All wash hand basins and baths must be provided with a two course tiled splash back and shower cubicles fully tiled or be complete self-standing cubicles.

All baths, toilets and wash hand basins must be fit for the purpose.

Baths or showers and toilets- Shared use

- There must be at least one fixed bath or shower available for every five occupants (or part thereof) and at least one toilet separate to the bathroom for every five occupants (or part thereof).
- A wash hand basin shall be provided in each bathroom and compartment containing a toilet.

Baths or showers and toilets- Exclusive use

- A fixed bath or shower and toilet with wash hand basin shall be provided either within the unit of accommodation or within reasonable proximity of the living accommodation. The room must have an unobstructed area of a minimum of 450mm diameter on plan for use of the facilities.

Heating

Fixed heating

- The minimum level of energy efficiency provisions required in this standard are designed to ensure that, unless an exemption applies, a licenced HMO has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E or more efficient (ratings of F or G will not be excepted).
- All units of accommodation must be equipped with adequate means of space heating which is capable of maintaining a temperature of 21°C when the outside temperature is -1°C. Electrical heating appliances must have a dedicated electrical socket. If the heating is provided by instantaneous electrical type it must be capable of being controlled by a room thermostat.
- The heating must be available at all times and must be under the control of the occupant. The method of heating must be safe and should be efficient and affordable.
- Where heating is provided by a gas or electric central heating system, the fuel supply must be via a quarterly credit meter and not a key or card meter (except where a system is exclusive to a unit of accommodation or the HMO is let by a single tenancy agreement).

Fire Precautions and Safety

Fire Risk Assessments

- You are required to have a Fire Risk Assessment by the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005. Please provide us with a copy of your Fire Risk Assessment.
- The London Fire Brigade are the lead authority enforcing the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005
<https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-workplace/fire-risk-assessments-your-responsibilities/>

Portable Appliances

- All portable electrical appliances provided by the landlord must be maintained in a safe condition and proper working order. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) should be carried out every twelve months with records kept for at least five years. Any necessary maintenance or repair work must be undertaken by a competent electrical engineer. Copies of all maintenance records and PAT testing may be provided to the Council on request.

Electrical Safety

- The electrical installation must be maintained in a safe condition and proper working order. A full electrical safety inspection must be carried out at least every five years and an NICEIC or other equivalent electrical safety certificate obtained. Any necessary maintenance or repair works must be undertaken by a competent electrical engineer in accordance with Part P of the Building Regulations. Copies of the electrical certificate must be provided to the Council on request.

Gas Safety

- If gas is supplied to the property, a Gas safety certificate must be submitted annually to the Council. The gas safety certificate must relate to the whole gas installation and include all gas appliances. It must demonstrate that all appliances have been serviced and safety checked within the previous twelve months. Any defects noted on the certificate must be rectified.

Room Sizes

- All units of accommodation shall be large enough to provide sufficient space for living, sleeping, food storage and preparation (except where a separate shared kitchen is provided).
- The room sizes specified below are the minimum sizes that will be accepted within licensed HMOs. In calculating the floor area, the Council will not normally include the space occupied by corridors, bath/shower rooms, toilet compartments, and chimney breasts. All habitable rooms, bathrooms and WCs shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.14m, except in the case of existing attic rooms, which shall have a minimum height of 2.14m over not less than 75% of the room area. Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.5m shall be disregarded.

Bedsit- type accommodation

- Each single-person bedsit which contains exclusive kitchen facilities shall be minimum 13m². The bedsit can be reduced to minimum 10.22m² if there is a separate shared kitchen
- Each double-person bedsit which contains exclusive kitchen facilities shall be minimum 18.5m². The bedsit can be reduced to minimum 15m² if there is a separate shared kitchen.

Shared- type houses or flats

- Each single bedroom shall be minimum 6.51m² (assuming there are separate kitchen and bathroom facilities and that there is a separate living area)
- Each double bedroom shall be minimum 10.22m² (assuming there are separate kitchen and bathroom facilities and that there is a separate living area).

Shared kitchens

- Kitchens shared by up to **five people must be at least 6.51m²**.
- Kitchens shared by up to **ten people must be at least 11m²**.

Pest control

- The licence holder must take reasonable step to proof the property from rats & mice and if the license hold become aware of an infestation take steps to eradicate all pests in a timely manner. A list of pests that fall within this responsibility, please see “definitions” section below.

Application of Standards

- All facilities in this standard must be available to the occupants at all times
- When a licensing application is received, the Council will check whether the property complies with these minimum standards.
- These standards may be varied at the discretion of the Licensing Officer.
- If the property does not fully comply, any necessary remedial works will become a licence condition.
- When setting licence conditions, the Council may set a timescale for the work to be completed.
- Even if a property complies with these standards, the Council may still require other works to be carried out. Within five years of the licence being granted, a Council Officer may carry out a full inspection of the property. The Officer will decide whether any further work is required to bring the property up to a reasonable standard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The Officer will also check that the property is being properly managed and maintained in accordance with the [Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Definitions

“Bedsit”	Traditionally an exclusive rooms or room(s) with the sharing of one or more amenities
“Shared use”	Where one or more basic amenities (e.g. bathroom, toilet or kitchen facilities) are shared by two or more households.
“Exclusive use”	Where one or more basic amenities are provided for the sole use of a single household
“Occupant(s)”	Everyone living in the property regardless of age
“Single household”	Person(s) of the same family group. If a group of people share a property, each person is defined as a single household unless they are all members of the same family.

“Family”	Includes husband, wife, partner, child, step-child, step-parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, aunt, uncle, niece, cousin, foster child.
“Pests”	Examples of pests are Rats, Mice, Bedbugs, Flees, cockroaches, wasps, and pharaoh ants.
“Unit of accommodation”	Part of the HMO occupied by a single household. This includes bedrooms in shared houses or flats, bed-sitting rooms or self-contained flats.
“Shared- type houses or flats”	Traditionally occupied by a defined social group, namely student lets

Further Information

Should you require any further information, please contact:

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