

Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Housing Act 2004

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This document describes the standards that Islington Council will use to assess the suitability for occupation of an HMO. It reflects the requirements specified in The Licensing and Management of HMO's and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provision) (England) Regulations 2006 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018.
- 1.2. Islington Council may decide that the house is not reasonably suitable for occupation by a particular maximum number of households or persons even if it does meet prescribed standards for occupation by that number of households or persons.
- 1.3. Any landlord who wishes to provide accommodation that does not meet the standards may apply in writing for a deviation from the standard to the address in section 7 below.

2. Minimum Room Sizes

- 2.1. Islington Council has had regard to the legal minimum room standards specified in the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018 and determined that the room sizes described in this document will be applied to all HMOs in the borough.
- 2.2. The minimum floor areas for sleeping and living accommodation are listed in the table below. These minimum sizes will only be acceptable if the room is large enough to accommodate essential furniture and facilities and to enable their safe use.

Maximum number of occupants in a room with shared kitchen facilities in a separate room	
8m ²	1 person of any age
11m ²	2 persons of any age in one household

Maximum number of occupants in a room containing kitchen facilities	
12m ²	1 person of any age
15m ²	2 persons of any age in one household

2.3. General requirements for room sizes:

- The minimum acceptable room size does not include any area taken up by bathroom facilities.
- No more than two people can share a bedroom.
- A child is considered a person regardless of age.
- Shared sleeping accommodation is only considered suitable for adults who are married, cohabitees, consenting friends or relatives.
- No two persons of the opposite sex and over the age of twelve can sleep in the same room, unless they are married or cohabitees.
- Floor to ceiling height to be a minimum of 2.3m over 75% floor area. Any floor area where ceiling height is less than 1.5m shall be disregarded. Where bunk beds are used, there shall be a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.5m.
- When measuring the size of a room floor areas under fitted cupboards, kitchen units and other furniture are included. The space occupied by chimney breasts or lobbies is excluded.

3.0 Kitchens

3.1 The size and layout of shared kitchens should enable those sharing facilities to store, prepare and cook food safely. The minimum sizes of kitchens are specified in the table below:

Number of sharers	Minimum size of Kitchen
Up to 3	5.5 m ²
4-5	7.5 m ²
6-7	9.5 m ²
8-10	11.5 m ²

3.2 A separate kitchen with kitchen facilities will be required for every 5 residents sharing. No more than two sets of kitchen facilities can be provided in one room

3.3 The kitchen must be equipped with the following equipment, which must be fit for purpose:

Kitchen Facility	Number of Sharers	Minimum Standard
Cooker	Exclusive use	An oven and grill or combination 900-watt microwave oven and two inset hotplates fitted in an integrated worktop or a conventional cooker with integrated hobs.

		A portable hob or worktop oven with integral hotplates is not acceptable.
	Up to 5	Four-ring hob, oven and grill and an additional microwave oven. A splashback above any cooker without an integral splashback Cookers must be positioned as far away from the room door as practicable. No furniture, bedding, curtains etc. shall be located within 600 mm of cooking appliances
Sink/Drainer	Up to 5	One full-size sink/drain set on base unit, provided with a constant supply of hot and cold water. A 300 mm approximate splashback fitted above the sink and drainer worktop, sealed with waterproof mastic to the work surface
Worktops	Exclusive use	A fixed impervious worktop measuring 1000 mm x 600 mm
	Up to 5	A fixed impervious worktops measuring 1500 mm x 600 mm
Electrical Sockets	Up to 5	One dedicated suitably located electrical socket for each fixed appliance and four sockets (in either double or single combinations) above the worktop.
Floor and wall covering	All kitchen areas	All finishes are to be non-absorbent and readily cleansable including the floor covering which will must be provided under all appliances and must extend at least 1000 mm under the appliances.
Cupboards for the storage of food, kitchen and cooking utensils	Per occupant	A single kitchen base unit W600 x H1000 x D600 or a double wall unit W1000 x H800 x D300mm The base unit below the sink/drain set is not acceptable for food storage. Kitchen units must be securely fixed to a wall
Refrigerator	Exclusive use	An A rated 100 litre fridge with freezer compartment
	Up to 5	An A rated 200 litre fridge with an adequate freezer compartment (or where the freezer compartment is not adequate a separate freezer)

Refuse and recycling facilities	All rooms containing kitchens	Suitably located containers for the storage of waste and recyclable material. that are sufficient for the number of occupants
Extractor fans	All rooms containing kitchens	A mechanical extractor must be provided, ducted to the open air, with the outlet positioned away from any adjacent windows
Fire blankets	All rooms containing kitchens	A fire blanket to be provided in the kitchen within reach of the cooker
Fire doors	All rooms containing kitchens	A 30-minute fire door of fire resistant construction with intumescent strips and an overhead type door closer must be installed to all rooms with containing kitchen facilities. Where the room is a bedsit a smoke seal must also be fitted.

4.0 Washing facilities

4.1 Where exclusive use of bath/shower room and toilet facilities are not provided the sharing arrangements should be as follows:

1-4 sharing occupiers	1 bath/shower 1 toilet 1 wash hand basin The toilet can be located within the bath/shower room
5 sharing occupiers	1 bath/shower 1 toilet 1 wash hand basin The toilet and wash hand basin must be provided in a separate room to the bath/shower room
For every 5 sharing occupiers	1 baths/showers 1 toilet 1 wash hand basin The toilet and wash hand basin must be provided in rooms separate to the bath/shower room
Where there are 5 or more occupiers of an HMO	Provide a wash hand basin with appropriate splash back in every unit of accommodation. Wash-hand basins in bedrooms are not required in shared houses or where listed building requirements prohibit it.

- 4.2 Baths, showers, wash hand basins should be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water
- 4.3 Baths, showers, toilets and wash hand basins but be an adequate size and fit for purpose.
- 4.4 A tiled splash-back shall be provided to every wash hand basin with a minimum height 200 mm sealed with waterproof mastic to the basin. A tiled shower surrounds shall be provided to a minimum height of 1800 mm
- 4.5 An adequate, screen, door or impervious shower curtain to be provided to all showers.
- 4.6 Bathroom and toilets must be of an adequate size and layout with a minimum clear area outside the bath/shower of 700 mm x 700 mm for drying and changing.
- 4.7 Bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated. Fixed heating appliances to achieve a recommended temperature of 22°C.
- 4.8 Bathrooms must be suitably and adequately ventilated If there is no openable window to the bathroom then a humidistat controlled mechanical ventilation with low noise level should be provided.
- 4.9 Bathrooms and toilets must be suitable located in relation to the living accommodation and ideally within one floor of the living accommodation they serve.
- 4.10 The walls and floors to any bathrooms and toilet to be non-absorbent and readily cleansable.

5.0 Heating

- 5.1 Each unit of accommodation must be provided with an adequate means of fixed space heating which is economic to run and controlled by the occupier.
- 5.2 A suitable heating system will usually be a full central heating system, with a programmable A-E rated boiler and thermostatic radiator valves
- 5.3 Where central heating cannot be installed, modern fan assisted electric storage heaters may be an acceptable alternative, providing there is efficient wall insulation present e.g. dry lining or cavity wall insulation, loft insulation.

6.0 Fire safety

- 6.1 Appropriate fire precautions, facilities and equipment must be provided of such a type, number and location as considered necessary
- 6.2 The HMO must be provided with appropriate smoke detection and alarm system. As a minimum, interlinked mains wired smoke alarms (with battery back-up) must be kept maintained in proper working order and installed to:
 - each landing level of any staircase
 - the circulation space inside any flat or house
- 6.3 Each kitchen should be provided with a heat detector linked to the alarm system

7.0 For more information, contact Residential Environmental Health by:

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