

The London Borough of Bexley

STANDARDS FOR LICENSABLE HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Under the Housing Act 2004 certain Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) must be licenced. The Act also gives local housing authorities the power to extend the scope of licensing within their own Borough.

Bexley Council will, under mandatory (compulsory) Licensing, licence all HMOs comprising of THREE or more storeys and occupied by FIVE or more persons (comprising at least TWO households).

This document sets out the minimum standards required in licensable HMOs within the London Borough of Bexley.

The Council will refer to these standards when deciding the maximum number of persons or households that can occupy the property.

If the property does not fully comply with these standards, any necessary remedial works will become a licence condition. When setting licence conditions, the Council will set a reasonable timescale for the works to be completed.

Even if a property complies with these standards, the Council may still require other works to be carried out to bring the property up to a reasonable standard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Part 1 Housing Act 2004).

The property must also be properly managed and maintained under the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006.



Location, layout and condition	General	<p>Unless kitchens contain a suitable dining area, they must be positioned within 1 floor 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>All wall surfaces must be smooth and capable of being readily cleansed. Where possible, a two course tiled splashback 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.</p> <p>All kitchen areas must be provided with adequate lighting, particularly over the cooking and food preparation areas.</p> <p>All kitchen areas must be properly ventilated to the external air (with particular regard to the cooking area), either by an openable window or suitable mechanical ventilation system.</p> <p>All facilities and equipment must be fit for the purpose.</p> <p>In relation to hostels where all main meals are provided, a reduced kitchen standard may be applied. Please contact the Environmental Health Residential Team to discuss.</p>
Sinks	Shared use	<p>A sink and drainer size 1000mm x 600mm and set on a stable base must be provided for every five occupants (or part thereof) that share the kitchen. 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.</p>
	Exclusive use	<p>A sink and drainer size 1000mm x 600mm 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.</p>

Cookers	Shared use	A gas or electric full sized cooker with four burners\hobs, an oven and a grill for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property.
	Exclusive use	A gas or electric cooker with at least two burners\hobs, an oven and a grill.
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.
	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 1000mm X 600mm deep (excluding any area covered by a major appliance) for every five occupants (or part thereof) within the property.
	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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
	Exclusive use	A dry goods storage cupboard of minimum capacity 0.15m ³ (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.

	Exclusive use	A refrigerator with a freezer compartment (or where there is no freezer compartment, provide a separate freezer).
Refuse	General	Suitable and sufficient provision for refuse disposal, both within the unit of accommodation and outside.
Bathroom and toilet facilities		
Location, layout and condition	General	<p>All facilities should be located in enclosed rooms of an adequate size and layout within 1 floor 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>All bathrooms and toilets must be suitably heated, lighted and ventilated.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>All wash hand basins and baths must be provided with a two course tiled splashback and shower cubicles fully tiled or be complete self standing cubicles.</p> <p>All baths, toilets and wash hand basins must be fit for the purpose.</p>
Baths or showers and toilets	Shared use	<p>Where there are four or fewer occupants sharing bathroom and toilet facilities, there must be at least one fixed bath or shower, and a toilet (which may be situated in the bathroom).</p> <p>Where there are five or more occupants sharing bathroom and toilet facilities, there must be at least one fixed bath or shower for every five occupants (or part thereof) and at least one toilet separate to the bathroom for every five occupants (or part thereof).</p> <p>A wash hand basin shall be provided in each bathroom or compartment containing a toilet.</p>
	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.

Wash hand basins	Shared use	In properties with five or more occupants, there must be a separate wash hand basin within each unit of accommodation unless the unit of accommodation already has a sink for the exclusive use of the occupants.
	Exclusive use	There must be a separate wash hand basin within each unit of accommodation unless the unit of accommodation already has a sink for the exclusive use of the occupants.
Heating		
Fixed heating	General	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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).</p>
Fire Precautions		
Fire detection	General	An automatic fire detection and alarm system shall be provided to ensure early warning in the event of a fire. The actual works required in any particular case will depend on the size and layout of the property and will be specified by the Council following consultation with the Fire Authority. In all cases, kitchens will require an appropriate heat detector. The electricity supply to the automatic fire detection and alarm system shall be from a landlord's supply.
Emergency lighting	General	An emergency lighting system shall be provided with luminaries provided in such numbers and locations so as to adequately illuminate the staircase enclosure in the event of failure of the main lighting. The electricity supply to the emergency lighting system shall be from a landlord's supply. The installation must comply with BS5266: Part 1: 1999.
Fire blankets	General	All kitchens and kitchen areas shall be provided with a properly mounted fire blanket.
Fire extinguishers	General	A 9 litre water type extinguisher shall be provided on each floor level within the staircase enclosure. A 2kg carbon dioxide fire extinguisher shall be provided in all shared kitchens.

		All fire extinguishers must be properly fixed to the wall in a suitable location and easily accessible to the occupants at all times.
Fire doors	General	All rooms containing kitchens or kitchen areas must be provided with a 30 minute fire door. Fire doors to risk rooms/areas (e.g. living rooms, bedrooms, and cupboards within the protected escape route) will also be required. The Council will provide full details of all additional requirements after inspecting the property and consulting with the Fire Authority.
Room Sizes		
Room Sizes	General	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).
	General	The room sizes specified below are the minimum sizes that will be accepted within licensed HMOs. In calculating the floor area, the Council will discount space occupied by corridors, bath/shower rooms, toilet compartments, chimney breasts and those areas with sloping ceilings where the floor to ceiling height is less than 1.5m (5ft).
Shared-type houses or flats	Single bedrooms	Each single bedroom shall be minimum 6.5m ² (assuming there are separate kitchen and bathroom facilities and that there is a separate shared living room).
	Double bedrooms	Each double bedroom shall be minimum 10m ² (assuming there are separate kitchen and bathroom facilities and that there is a separate shared living room).
Bedsit-type accommodation	Single bedrooms	Each single-person bedsit which contains exclusive kitchen facilities shall be minimum 13m ² . The bedsit can be reduced to minimum 10m ² if there is a separate shared kitchen.
	Double bedrooms	Each double-person bedsit which contains exclusive kitchen facilities shall be minimum 18.5m ² . The bedsit can be reduced to minimum 15m ² if there is a separate shared kitchen.
Shared kitchens	Up to five people	Kitchens shared by up to five people must be at least 6.5m ² .
	Up to ten people	Kitchens shared by up to ten people must be at least 11m ² .
	Over ten people	Kitchens shared by more than ten people will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. For further advice, please contact the Environmental Health Residential Team on Tel 020 8303 7777 option 2.

Access		
All facilities described in this standard must be available to the occupants at all times.		
Definitions		
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.	
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.	

Further advice regarding these standards can be obtained from:

Environmental Health
 Bexley Council
 2A Hadlow Road
 Sidcup
 Kent DA14 4AF

Tel: 020 8303 7777 select option 2
 Fax: 020 8308 1300
 Email: environmentalhealth@bexley.gov.uk