



Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council
Accommodation Standards for
Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)
Guidance Notes

The following document is intended as guidance for landlords and agents to assist them in bringing their properties to the minimum standards that will be applied in assessing the suitability of a property as a HMO. Additional 'recommended standards' have also been included in the guidance, and landlords are encouraged to consider adopting these higher standards in order to provide a better quality accommodation for tenants in the county.

The guidance applies to all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) that require licensing within the Mandatory and Additional Licensing schemes currently in operation within the County. In addition to HMO properties meeting the standards as set out in this guidance, under the current Mandatory and Additional HMO licence schemes in Ceredigion, the proposed licence holder or managing agent at each property must be an 'Accredited' member of the 'Landlords Accreditation Scheme'. More information on this can be found on our website at www.ceredigion.gov.uk

The guidance has been designed to cover a wide range of the most common types of properties, but please contact us if you feel your individual property type is not covered as it may need a separate assessment.

If the standards in this guidance document are not met, further investigations will be carried out to ensure properties are free from hazards and safe and secure for tenants. Ceredigion County Council will use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Housing Act 2004) to determine whether further action is necessary.

A higher standard than is contained in this document may be required by Building Control or Planning or where Housing Health and Rating System indicate otherwise. Ceredigion County Council retains the discretion to waive from the standards in exceptional cases.

The minimum requirements adopted by the Council take into regard various pieces of legislation and approved codes of practice. (see appendix)

The aims of the guidance are to:

- Improve and promote private sector housing conditions
- Provide tenants with confidence in the quality of accommodation in the County
- Improve the image of the private rented sector
- Recognise and encourage landlords who provide good quality accommodation

In all cases, rented housing is expected to be structurally stable, free from serious disrepair and otherwise in a reasonable state of repair, having regard to its age, character and the locality in which it is situated. In addition, the house shall be free from dampness prejudicial to the health of the occupants.

For the purposes of the HMO Licence fee, a habitable room is a bedroom or a living room. Combined kitchen/ diners or kitchen/ living rooms will not be classed as habitable rooms unless the living or dining space within them is required in order to meet the space standards requirements.

For example:

1. where 4 single bedrooms are greater than 10m² (no lounge) the kitchen/ diner will not be classed as a habitable room. 4 no. habitable rooms will be charged for as part of the HMO licence fee application.
2. where one or more of 4 single bedrooms is less than 10m² there will be a requirement for further living space (eg either a living room of 9.5m² or a kitchen/ diner of 15.5m²) will be required and 5 no. habitable rooms will be charged for.

The guidance has been developed in consultation with landlord representatives of the private rented sector and was approved in xxxx 2012.

We may revise these standards from time to time, to reflect changes in practice, policy, guidance and the law. Any future revisions will be clearly dated and will be made in consultation with interested parties.

Date of Agreement: xxxxxxxx

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Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
Space Standards		
Kitchen	3 persons 5m ² extra 1m ² per person	Kitchen meets acceptable standards and also contains table and chairs for dining (where there is no separate dining room). Dining furniture to be provided for minimum of 1/2 of occupants.
Kitchen/ living combined	3 Persons 13.5m ² 4 – 6 persons, extra 2m ² per person 7 persons 21m ² 8+ persons, extra 1.5m ²	As minimum
Bathroom (room containing bath or shower)	Min 1m ² block of free space for changing, drying etc.	Min 1m ² block of free space for changing, drying etc.
Separate WC		2m ²
Bedroom Where living area is provided elsewhere	Min 6.5m ² single bedroom Min 10.2m ² double bedroom Please see note regarding sloping ceilings	Min 8m ² single bedroom Min 12m ² double bedroom
Bedroom/ living area combined	Min 10m ² for single room Min 15m ² for double room	Bedroom is not combined with living space. Property has a separate living room.
Living	3 person 8.5m ² 4 – 6 persons, extra 1m ² per person 7 persons 12m ² 8+ persons, extra 0.5m ² per person	Soft seating provided comfortably in the lounge to accommodate two thirds of occupants in the house at full occupancy.

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
Dining area		Dedicated area for dining, whether within kitchen or in lounge or separate room with furniture to accommodate half of occupants at any one time.
Sloping ceilings	Floor area where ceiling height is below 1.5m will not be counted as useable space. In addition, a minimum of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the remaining (useable) space should have a minimum head height of 2.14m.	
Kitchens	Location - Kitchens should be located not more than two floors away from bedrooms/ lounge/ dining area.	Dedicated area for dining, whether within kitchen or in lounge or separate room with furniture to accommodate half of occupants at any one time. Dining area not more than 1 floor away from any kitchen.
	Cupboards - Adequate cupboard space should be provided of not less than one single base unit and one single wall unit for each 2 persons. Storage under sink units will not be counted.	As minimum
	Worktop - Securely fixed, smooth, impervious worktop (600mm deep) with 150mm splashback for food preparation should be provided, excluding any worktop covered by major appliances. Min 300mm to be provided to the side of the cooker and hob. 3 - 5 persons 1.5m 0.5m extra per additional person	As minimum

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>Cold storage – Adequate fridge and freezer storage to be provided to the ratio of one full height fridge/freezer per five occupants.</p>	As minimum
	<p>Washing - A sink and drainer should be provided on a stable base. Sinks and drainers must be easily cleaned, smooth and impervious. Each sink should have constant supply of hot and cold water and should be properly connected to the mains drainage. There should be adequate splashback to the rear of all sinks.</p> <p>5 occupants - One sink and drainer.</p> <p>6 -7 occupants - One sink and drainer plus one dishwasher or Two sink/ drainers.</p> <p>8 -10 occupants - Two sinks/ drainers</p> <p>11 – 15 occupants – Two sink/ drainers plus one dishwasher or Three sink/ drainers</p>	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <p>The provision of a washing machine and tumble dryer or outdoor drying facility.</p>
	<p>Cooking – Cooking facilities may be electric or gas. One cooker comprises of 4 hobs, a full sized oven and a grill and may be combined or separate units.</p> <p>5 occupants – One cooker.</p> <p>6 -7 occupants - One cooker and one combination microwave (min capacity 27 litres) or extra 2 ring hob.</p>	As Minimum

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>8 -10 occupants - Two cookers.</p> <p>11 – 15 occupants – Three cookers.</p>	
	<p>Electrical sockets – Three adequately positioned (above work surface) double electrical sockets should be provided in addition to sockets utilised by major appliances.</p> <p>Where dining area is combined, extra 2 no double sockets to be provided in this area also.</p>	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <p>Kitchens providing for more than 8 persons to have four double sockets in addition to sockets utilised by major appliances.</p>
	<p>Ventilation – All kitchens should be properly ventilated to the external air either by an operable window (min 1/20th of floor area) or suitable mechanical extractor system (min 60l/s with 20 min overrun.)</p>	<p>Operable window (min 1/20th of floor area) in addition to</p> <p>Mechanical extractor fan with humidistat sensor or movement sensor for automatic operation.</p>
	<p>Surfaces - Floor and wall surfaces should be maintained in good order and be capable of easy cleaning. Splashbacks should be provided to all work surfaces.</p>	<p>As minimum.</p>

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
<p>Personal hygiene</p>	<p>Baths/ showers One bathroom containing bath or shower (bathroom) for every 5 occupants. This should be located not more than one floor away from all living accommodation. Floor and wall surfaces should be maintained in good order and be capable of easy cleaning.</p> <p>1 – 5 persons One bathroom</p> <p>6 -10 persons Two bathrooms</p> <p>11 – 15 persons Three bathrooms</p> <p>(bedrooms with en suite facilities should not be included in the above)</p>	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <p>Shower cubicles are a min 850 x 850mm, the bathrooms all contain operable obscure glass windows and the bathrooms are adequately heated and vented to ensure minimum mould growth.</p>
	<p>WC's – There should be adequate toileting facilities provided in relation to the number of occupants. Toilets should be of solid construction, securely mounted and easy to clean. Each room with a toilet should also have a wash hand basin with cold and hot running water. Floor and wall surfaces should be maintained in good order and be capable of easy cleaning.</p> <p>1 - 4 persons One wc, may be located in main bathroom.</p> <p>5 persons One wc located in separate room to bathroom.</p> <p>6 – 10 persons Two wc's one of which should be located in a separate room to the bathrooms.</p> <p>11 – 15 persons Three wc's,</p>	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <p>All wc rooms contain mechanical extractor fan (min 15l/s) operable with the light switch and having min 10 min overrun.</p>

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	one of which should be located in a separate room to the bathrooms.	
	Ventilation bathrooms – All bathrooms should be properly ventilated to the external air either by an operable window (min 1/20 th of floor area) or suitable mechanical extractor system operated with light switch (min 15l/s with 20 min overrun.)	Operable window (min 1/20 th of floor area) with obscure glass in addition to Mechanical extractor fan with humidistat sensor and/ or movement sensor for automatic operation.
	All bathrooms must be adequately heated and vented (see Heating and Ventilation)	
Electrical	All electrical installations should be in sound, safe condition. There should be adequate number and position of electrical sockets to ensure occupiers are not unnecessarily using extension cables. Copies of current certificates should be displayed in a prominent position within the communal area.	
	Kitchen Three adequately positioned (above work surface) double electrical sockets should be provided in addition to sockets utilised by major appliances. Where dining area is combined, extra 2 no double sockets to be provided in this area also. Pendant/ strip light and switch, with extra pendant for kitchen/ dining room or large area.	As minimum plus: Kitchens providing for more than 8 persons to have four double sockets in addition to sockets utilised by major appliances. Spot lights or task lighting for food preparation areas.
	Living room Three double electrical sockets to	Four double electrical socket, with two of these together in one area for tv and associated appliances.

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>living area.</p> <p>Pendant light and switch.</p>	<p>Aerial or satellite provision with connection next to two double sockets.</p> <p>Pendant light and switch.</p>
	<p>Bedroom</p> <p>Two double electrical sockets to each bedroom.</p> <p>Pendant light and switch.</p>	<p>Three double electrical sockets to each bedroom.</p> <p>Pendant light and switch.</p>
	<p>Bedroom/ living combined</p> <p>Three double sockets required.</p> <p>Pendant light and switch.</p>	<p>Bedroom is not combined with living space. Property has a separate living room.</p>
	<p>PAT testing</p> <p>All electrical appliances provided should be PAT tested annually in accordance with national requirements.</p>	<p>As minimum.</p>
	<p>Telephone connection</p> <p>Not required.</p>	<p>Telephone connection to property to enable internet connection by occupiers.</p>
	<p>Consumer Unit</p> <p>Electrical consumer unit (fuse box) must be accessible by any occupier in the event of a tripped switch, or emergency. This should be in a communal area of the property which does not compromise tenants security. Should this not be practicable ensure you consult with a local authority officer.</p>	<p>As minimum.</p>

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
Lighting	All lounges, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, water closet compartments, staircases, landings and passages shall have adequate provision for artificial lighting.	
	<p>Natural lighting</p> <p>Bedrooms and living rooms All to contain adequate natural lighting (windows) to enable the normal activities of a household to be carried out safely and conveniently, without the use of artificial light during normal daytime conditions. (Advised that glazed area is min 1/10th of floor area) Windows can be located in the wall or the ceiling (attic rooms).</p>	<p>Bedrooms/ living rooms/ kitchens and bathrooms All to contain natural lighting (windows) to enable the normal activities of a household to be carried out safely and conveniently, without the use of artificial light during normal daytime conditions. (Advised that glazed area is min 1/10th of floor area) Windows can be located in the wall or the ceiling (attic rooms).</p>
	<p>Common landings/ staircases (between self-contained flats/hmo's)</p> <p>Lighting is provided, maintained and paid for by the landlord (or agent) via quarterly meter not a card meter. Time switches are allowable but should stay on for an adequate time to allow a person to climb the stairs, etc., and enter a room. There should be sufficient switches to operate the artificial lighting on each landing corridor or passage and each switch should allow adequate lengths of corridors, passages and stairways to be illuminated at the same time.</p>	<p>Lighting is provided, maintained and paid for by the landlord (or agent) via quarterly meter not a card meter.</p> <p>Lighting is not provided by time switches and can be operated by multi way switches from various suitable locations.</p>
	<p>Basements Adequate natural lighting should be provided to any habitable room in a basement. Natural lighting levels will be considered for the recommended room size (see room sizes above) in an area closest to the window and each basement will</p>	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>be assessed to ascertain conformity to acceptable standards.</p> <p>A minimum level of daylight will be required to the desk/ work area to facilitate reading and writing.</p> <p>In addition an average (lower) level will be required to the remainder of the room.</p> <p>If you are unsure about the levels achieved in your basement please contact the HMO section.</p>	
	<p>Emergency lighting Will be required for properties of 4 or more storeys or with complex escape routes. Reference to be made to Lacors Fire Safety Guidance.</p>	<p>All properties of 3 or more storeys to have emergency lighting installed.</p>
Ventilation		
	<p>Windows</p> <p>All bedrooms and living rooms must be adequately vented directly to the external air by an openable window.</p> <p>The openable area should be min 1/20th of the floor area.</p> <p>Windows that have an opening area below 800mm from floor height should have suitable restraint bar to prevent falling. The bar should not impinge on emergency escape.</p>	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <p>Kitchens and bathrooms are vented directly to the external air by an openable window, min 1/20th floor area.</p>
	<p>Mechanical ventilation</p> <p>Kitchens, bathrooms and wc's are adequately vented by mechanical</p>	<p>Kitchens and bathrooms have mechanical extractor fan (in addition to natural ventilation)</p>

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	ventilation where there is no openable window.	with humidistat or movement sensor for automatic operation. Wc rooms contain mechanical extractor fan operable with the light switch and having min 10 min overrun.
	Note: The provision of mechanical ventilation systems is more likely to ensure adequate ventilation levels are maintained as it is less reliant on occupier habits.	
Services		
Gas	Each gas installation and appliance installed in the property should have an annual gas safety check carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Copies of current certificates should be displayed in a prominent position within the communal area.	
Oil	Each oil installation and appliance installed in the property should have an annual oil safety check carried out by an Oftec registered engineer. Copies of current certificates should be displayed in a prominent position within the communal area.	
Water	The facility for provision of hot water should be provided. This can be by way of immersion heater on tank, conventional boiler/ tank system or combi system. Instantaneous hot water boilers will be acceptable in certain circumstances only. Needs to be suitable and sufficient) Back boiler systems from solid fuelled appliances will not be acceptable without an immersion backup. Hot water and cold drinking water must be available from each sink, basin, bath and shower.	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	Open storage tanks (whether lid remains closed or not) will not be accepted. Sealed systems only.	
Heating	<p>Each bedroom, living room and bathroom (room containing bath or shower) must be equipped with an adequate fixed system for space heating.</p> <p>Heating appliances/ systems should be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Controllable by each occupier - Safe and properly installed and maintained - Appropriate for the construction, design and layout of the dwelling. - Able to maintain ambient temperature adequately and efficiently to a minimum of 18^oc when outside temperatures are -1^oc. <p>Efficient and affordable.</p> <p>Free standing appliances of any kind are not acceptable.</p> <p>Solid fuel fires are not acceptable as the primary source of heating.</p> <p>Fixed electrical convector fires are not acceptable as the primary source of heating.</p>	
Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's)	Energy Performance Certificates meet a minimum Band E (39 – 54) and increasing to a Band D would be impracticable in the particular circumstances.	Energy Performance Certificates meet a minimum Band D (55 - 68)
Refuse	Suitable bins or facilities for the storage of refuse and recycling prior to disposal should be provided both inside and outside the property.	
	Suitable storage should be provided internally, equally divided into	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>recycling container and other refuse container.</p> <p>Externally, suitable, secure (from rodents etc) storage should be provided to the rate of 40 litres for each person by way of wheelie bins or other suitably protected enclosure such as secure shed. This to be provided to the rear of the property wherever possible.</p>	
	<p>If suitable storage facilities are not available externally, provision must be made within the property. The Council's HMO licencing team should always be consulted in this instance.</p>	
	<p>Waste of any kind is not permitted to accumulate within the curtilage of the property and the removal of such should be arranged by the licence holder or owner.</p>	
Thermal Insulation	<p>The fabric of the building should be of such design and construction to minimise heat loss and prevent serious condensation problems.</p>	
	<p>Where practicable insulation levels should be upgraded to current Building Regulations, in particular loft insulation. The hot water tank and associated pipework should be adequately lagged. Protection against frost damage to water pipes should be maintained.</p>	
Carbon Monoxide	<p>It is recommended that a carbon monoxide meter is installed to high risk areas. (Fuel-burning appliances that have a naked flame eg. cookers, heaters, gas boilers, hot-water heaters and fireplaces)</p>	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
Display of Information	<p>There should be facility for information to be easily displayed within the entrance hallway. This information should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on refuse and recycling arrangements including contact details for Local Authority waste management services. - Fire escape procedures including escape routes, proper use of any fire fighting equipment and procedures for dealing with false alarms. - Code of conduct for tenants, to include information on anti-social behaviour and its consequences. - Copies of all current service safety certificates. (Gas Safe, Oftec and Electrical) - Copy of a current periodic inspection certificate for the fire alarm system, and emergency lighting. - Copy of the HMO Licence and conditions. - Contact information for the licence holder. 	
	<p>Contact information for the licence holder or manager of the property should be clearly visible to persons outside the front of the property. This to include out of hours contact details.</p>	
Furniture	<p>Furniture provided as part of tenancy, should be in clean and safe condition and comply with Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1998 (as amended).</p>	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
<p>Security</p>	<p>The property shall be provided with appropriate security measures including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All windows and doors to be robust and securely fitting to minimise forced entry. - All windows to have security latches to prevent opening from the outside. - External communal entrance doors should be fitted with a suitably robust lock which does not require a key to unlock from the inside. (Thumb turn opener) - Wired or laminated glass to any panes situated within or close to exit doors. - Rim locks to all bedrooms/ bed sitting rooms with thumbturn opening from inside the room.. - Sliding doors and windows fitted with anti-lift devices. - All door locks fitted must be capable of being opened from the inside in an emergency. (Thumb turns, exit bars or permanent keys etc.) It must be ensured that such provision does not compromise fire safety within the building. 	<p>As minimum plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Door viewers (spy holes) to flat entrance doors. - External lighting to property entrances and access routes, operated by automatic sensor, where street lighting is poor or intermittent. - Rollerbolt rimlocks to bedroom doors.

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
Fire Safety	<p>Fire safety is an important consideration in any residential building. The general principles for residential HMO accommodation are laid out below, however for further and more detailed information, please see LACORS Housing Fire Safety guidance. Each property should be considered individually as the layout, construction type and occupation can all play a part fire safety.</p>	
	<p>Each property shall be provided with adequate means of escape from fire. Travel distance should not be too long or pass through risk rooms.</p> <p>Early warning alarm systems should always be present. Fire detection systems should be provided with a constant and permanent electricity supply. Token or card meters are not permitted.</p> <p>The property construction should be such as to resist the rapid spread of fire.</p>	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
2 storey HMO	<p>Where the HMO only comprises of one or two storeys and the layout is not complex the following guidance will give an indication of what may be required.</p> <p>Doors - Solid close fitting doors to all rooms. Kitchen to have 30 min fire door (FD30) with self-closer.</p> <p>Walls/ ceilings/ floors – all to be of sound, traditional construction with limited ability for smoke and fire penetration.</p> <p>Fire equipment – Fire blanket to be provided to kitchen in accessible area. Recommended that 6 litre water extinguisher located in common parts on each floor.</p> <p>Alarm system – Minimum Grade D, LD3 alarm system to be installed. (Mains powered interlinked smoke alarms with battery backup to escape route/ hallway/ passages) Lounge to be fitted with interlinked mains powered smoke detector. Kitchen to be fitted with interlinked mains powered heat detector.</p> <p>Smoke seals to doorways – It is recommended that smoke seals are not installed to doorways in properties that only contain an LD3 alarm system as this can prevent smoke from a bedroom fire from activating an alarm system until the fire reaches an advanced stage and is beginning to breach the door.</p> <p>Emergency lighting – not required. Conventional artificial lighting required.</p>	
Basements	<p>Separation - 30 minute separation required between basement and other rooms, including 30 min fire door (FD30).</p> <p>Alarm system – Basements must contain interlinked mains wired smoke detector (with battery backup)</p>	
3 or 4 storey HMO	<p>Where the HMO comprises of three or four storeys and the layout is not complex the following guidance will give an indication of what may be required.</p> <p>Doors - 30 minute fire doors (FD30) required ensuring there is a 30 minute protected escape route.</p> <p>Walls/ ceilings/ floors – all to be of sound, traditional construction</p>	

Accommodation standards	Minimum standards	Recommended standards
	<p>with 30 minutes of separation.</p> <p>Fire equipment – Fire blanket to be provided to kitchen in accessible area. 6 litre water extinguisher located in common parts on each floor.</p> <p>Alarm system – Minimum Grade D, LD2 alarm system to be installed. (Mains powered interlinked smoke alarms with battery backup to all bedrooms, dining rooms or lounges and hallways) Kitchen to be fitted with interlinked mains powered heat detector.</p> <p>Smoke seals to doorways –Smoke seals recommended to all fire doors only where smoke detectors are present on rooms on either side of the door.</p> <p>Emergency lighting – only required for long or complex routes or where there is no effective borrowed light. Conventional artificial lighting required.</p> <p>Fire safety signs – Not required unless escape route is complex.</p>	
<p>5 or more storey HMO</p>	<p>Doors - 30 minute fire doors (FD30s) required ensuring there is a 30 minute protected escape route.</p> <p>Walls/ ceilings/ floors – all to be of sound, traditional construction with 30 minutes of separation.</p> <p>Fire equipment – Fire blanket to be provided to kitchen in accessible area. 6 litre water extinguisher located in common parts on each floor.</p> <p>Alarm system – Minimum Grade D, LD2 alarm system to be installed. (Mains powered interlinked smoke alarms with battery backup to all bedrooms, dining rooms or lounges and hallways) Kitchen to be fitted with interlinked mains powered heat detector.</p> <p>Smoke seals to doorways –Smoke seals required to all fire doors.</p> <p>Emergency lighting – Will be required along the escape route. Conventional artificial lighting required.</p> <p>Fire safety signs – Not required unless escape route is complex or there is a secondary escape route.</p>	

Appendix

Legislation and approved codes of practice referred to:

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

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2007

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Wales) Regulations 2006

The Housing Act 2004

The Housing Act 1985

Lacors Housing Fire Safety Guidance

CIEH Amenity Standards for HMO's 1994

CIEH HMO model licensing scheme