

Document B

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR HOSTELS AND SHARED HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO)

This document is intended as a specific guide for persons who own, manage or control 'shared' - houses in multiple occupation (HMO). **It must be read as a supplement to document 'G' which outlines the general guidance for HMO's.**

Definition of a 'Shared' HMO - *Houses occupied on a shared basis by 3 or more people who belong to more than one household. These would normally be members of a defined social group, e.g. students or a group of young professional adults. The occupiers each enjoy exclusive use of a bedroom but would share other facilities such as a communal living room.*

The 'shared' HMO guidance also applies to HMOs that are hostels, guest houses and bed and breakfast accommodation used as the main place of residence by persons who are homeless or experiencing other social problems.

1.0 Fit and safe for habitation

- 1.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System is used to identify hazards resulting from defects and deficiencies in the property. Refer to section 1.0 of document G.

2.0 Kitchen facilities

Shared Houses

- 2.1 One set of kitchen facilities to be provided for every five occupants.
- 2.2 In shared houses occupied by 6 or 7 people, one kitchen with an additional microwave oven and standard size (1.2m) worktop/food preparation surface in the kitchen will be accepted as meeting the standard.

Note should be taken of the requirements for storage and preparation of food detailed under section 2.0 of the general document G standard.

- 2.3 Where there are 8 or more persons sharing the house the required ratio is 1 set of kitchen facilities to every 5 persons (e.g. 8 persons – 2 kitchens, 11 persons – 3 kitchens).

Hostels

Hostels fall into one of two categories:

- Self-catering premises
- Premises providing meals.

The following outlines the required standards for each.

2.4 Self catering

- 2.4.1 Each unit should have the use of a kitchen separate from the sleeping area.
- 2.4.2 For premises housing single persons there should be a minimum of 1 set of kitchen facilities for every 5 persons.
- 2.4.3 It is acknowledged that many occupants, particularly single persons in such establishments choose not to cook their own food. Therefore, where it can be satisfied to the authority that the practices and arrangements are such that the facilities can be used freely during the day without congestion, the authority may consider, on application, dispensing with the minimum requirements contained in 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 (above).
- 2.4.4 In such circumstances outlined at 2.4.3 at least one fully equipped kitchen with adequate dining facilities within or adjacent to the kitchen must be available at reasonable times for those occupants wishing to utilise the facilities.
- 2.4.5 Refer to document G for the general requirements

2.5 Non self catering (meals provided)

- 2.5.1 Kitchen provisions must meet the requirements of the current legislation relating to food safety in commercial premises.
- 2.5.2 Where limited catering is provided (Bed and Breakfast or Bed/Breakfast and evening meal) there should be the facility for occupants placed there, to make a hot beverage at any time and to have easy access to facilities to prepare cooked food at reasonable hours e.g. microwaveable food which has been brought in by the resident.

2.5.3 An alternative is to provide a kitchen for sole use by the residents.

2.6 Refer to document G for other general kitchen requirements

3.0 Personal washing and sanitary facilities

3.1 The number of washing/bathing facilities, Water Closets (WCs) and Wash Hand Basins (WHB) in relation to the number of persons is as follows:

No of persons	Bath or Shower	WC	WHB	Notes
3-4	1	1	1 for use with the WC	All facilities can be in the same room
5	1	1	1 for use with every WC	A WC separate to the bath or shower room must be available. Minimum 2 rooms.
6-10	2	2	1 for use with every WC	One WC may be in the same room as the bath or shower. Minimum 3 rooms.
11-15	3	3	1 for use with every WC	Two WCs may be in the same room as the bath or shower. Minimum 4 rooms.

Please note that the requirements for the wash hand basins in the bedrooms are only specific to those HMOs that require a licence.

3.2 Refer to 3.0 of document G for the general personal washing and sanitary requirements.

4.0 Space standards

4.1 Kitchen – The dimension of the kitchen or kitchen area should be sufficient to enable the safe provision and use of all the

necessary facilities taking into account the possibility of simultaneous use by the residents.

- 4.2 Where dining facilities are provided within the same room, the size of the room must be sufficient to allow safe simultaneous practices of dining and preparation of food.
- 4.3 Bedrooms – where a separate living room is provided. A single person room should be of minimum 6.5m² and increasing to 10m² for 2 persons.
- 4.4 Bedrooms – without any separate living room provided. A single person room should be of minimum 8.5m² and increasing to 12m² for 2 persons.
- 4.5 Communal living rooms should be of a minimum size 10m² which may serve up to a maximum of 8 persons. Properties with more than 8 residents should consult the department for further guidance.

5.0 Means of escape in case of fire and other fire

The following standards are only applicable to houses where the main route of exit/entry is not via a risk room e.g. lounge or kitchen. Reference should be made to the document B2 which specifies the standards for back to back properties occupied as shared HMOs where the exit/entrance is via a risk room.

5.1 Means of escape and other fire precaution requirements for a HMO occupied as a shared house that is 5 or 6 storeys / any Hostel Accommodation (Non LACORS classification)

As the Lacors Guidance does not recognise Hostel type accommodation it is suggested that this is the closest equivalent.

5.1.1 Fire Detection

To give early warning of fire there should be provided a fire detection and alarm system in the premises to British Standard 5839-Part 6: 2004 Grade A type LD2 system. This system is primarily for the protection of life.

Areas to be covered:

- i. Heat detectors – Kitchens
- ii. Smoke detectors - All other risk rooms, stairway enclosures and any basement/cellar

- iii. Location for manual call points - Adjacent to each final exit door. The need for additional call points should be risk assessed

5.1.2 Emergency lighting – emergency lighting should be provided as well as conventional

5.1.3 Escape Route

Full 30 minutes fire protection. All risk room doors leading onto the escape route to be FD30S (intumescent strips and smoke brushes). Travel distances not to be excessive.

Five storeys

Lobby protection to all floors except top floor and secondary means of escape to be provided from top floor.

Six storeys

Lobby protection to all floors except top floor and secondary means of escape from the top two storeys

5.1.4 Fire Separation

No requirement for additional fire resistance generally, but walls and floor should be of sound, traditional construction

Lateral fire-resisting separation is required of the top floor of a five storey and top two floors in a 6 storey from the rest of the house.

Where there is an unused cellar or basement the escape route above should be protected by 30 minutes fire-resisting materials. The entire ceiling in occupied basements should be capable of providing 30 minutes of fire resistance.

5.1.5 Fire Safety Signs

Only if escape route is complex or secondary means of escape is present

5.1.6 Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire Blanket in Kitchens, simple multiple purpose Fire Extinguisher in each hallway

5.1.7 Surfaces and floor Coverings

Refer to 5.4.5 of Document G

5.1.8 Management

Recommend that all doors are kept closed at night.

5.1.9 General

Whole Stair Lighting - the staircase lighting should be such that the operation of a switch at any floor level operates the whole stairway lighting. This may be on a timing device.

5.2 Means of escape and other fire precaution requirements for a HMO occupied as a shared house that is 3 or 4 storeys

5.2.1 Fire Detection

To give early warning of fire there should be provided a fire detection and alarm system in the premises to British Standard 5839-Part 6: 2004 Grade D type LD2 system. This system is primarily for the protection of life.

Areas to be covered:

- i. Heat detectors – Kitchens
- ii. Smoke detectors – Escape route at all levels, lounge and any basement/cellar

5.2.2 Emergency lighting

Conventional artificial lighting is required. The requirement for emergency lighting should be based on a risk assessment taking account of travel distances and/or complex layout.

5.2.3 Escape Route

Full 30 minute protection route required with FD30 doors (no smoke seals) to all risk rooms.

5.2.4 Fire Separation

No requirement for additional fire protection but walls and floors should be of sound traditional construction. 30 minutes fire protection to basement required

Where there is an unused cellar or basement the escape route above should be protected by 30 minutes fire-resisting materials. The entire ceiling in occupied basements should be capable of providing 30 minutes of fire resistance.

5.2.5 Fire Safety Signs

Only if escape route is complex

5.2.6 Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire Blanket in Kitchen, simple Multiple Fire Extinguisher in hallway recommended

5.2.7 Surfaces and floor Coverings

Refer to 5.4.5 of Document G

5.2.8 Management

Recommend that all doors are kept closed at night.

5.2.9 General

Whole Stair Lighting - the staircase lighting should be such that the operation of a switch at any floor level operates the whole stairway lighting. This may be on a timing device.

5.3 Means of escape and other fire precaution requirements for a HMO occupied as a shared house that is no more than 2 storeys

5.3.1 Fire Detection

To give early warning of fire there should be provided a fire detection and alarm system in the premises to British Standard 5839-Part 6: 2004 Grade D type LD2 system. This system is primarily for the protection of life.

Areas to be covered:

- iii. Heat detectors – Kitchens
- iv. Smoke detectors – Escape route at all levels, lounge and any basement/cellar

5.3.2 Emergency lighting

Conventional artificial lighting is required. The requirement for emergency lighting should be based on a risk assessment taking account of travel distances and/or complex layout.

5.3.3 Escape Route

No requirement for full 30 minute protection but escape route should have sound traditional construction and not pass through a risk room. No requirement for fire doors but sound close fitting conventional doors.

Alternatively, suitable escape windows from bedrooms and living rooms

NB: where construction standards poor, travel distances long or other high risk factors, 30 min protected route required

5.3.4 Fire Separation

No requirement for additional fire protection but walls and floors should be of sound traditional construction.

Where there is an unused cellar or basement the escape route above should be protected by 30 minutes fire-resisting materials. The entire ceiling in occupied basement should be capable of providing 30 minutes of fire resistance.

5.3.5 Fire Safety Signs

No requirement

5.3.6 Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire Blanket in Kitchen, simple Multiple Fire Extinguisher in hallway recommended

5.3.7 Surfaces and floor Coverings

Refer to 5.4.5 of Document G

5.3.8 Management

Recommend that all doors are kept closed at night.

5.3.9 General

Whole Stair Lighting the staircase lighting should be such that the operation of a switch at any floor level operates the whole stairway lighting. This may be on a timing device.

6.0 Management

- 8.1 Refer to 6.0 of document G for summary of the general management responsibilities.