



Amenity Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

The fact sheets provided give advice to anyone involved with letting out housing in the private rented sector, whether as an individual letting or as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Please be aware higher risk HMOs require licences and this guidance may well form the basis of conditions attaching to a licence.

This leaflet tells you:

- Legislative Background of the standards
- Definitions and categories of properties
- Fact sheet standards information

Legislative Background

Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 introduced a new method of assessing whether housing conditions are a risk to the health of the occupiers, called the Housing Health & Safety Rating System, or '**HHSRS**'.

It looks at **29 hazards**, for example falls on stairs. The **HHSRS** assesses the likelihood of an incident occurring that causes harm, and the possible severity of that harm to occupants of the property.

If the local authority assesses a hazard as a **Category 1 (severe)**, the authority has a duty to take action to reduce the hazard to an acceptable level.

In less severe cases, referred to as **Category 2**, the authority has the power to take action, rather than a duty. The range of actions available include requiring the owner of a property to carry out improvements, prohibiting the use of parts of a property, the authority taking emergency action itself, serving an

enforcement notice or, where appropriate, requiring the demolition of the property.

HHSRS applies to all residential property irrespective of how it is occupied. In privately rented property, it will be the main method of the authority making judgements about whether enforcement action is needed to remedy unsatisfactory conditions, and action to be taken.

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 (SI2006/372) sets out the responsibilities of the manager of **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)** properties.

Section 17 gives further information and the actual regulations are on the form on the web page as [Appendix A](#).

Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 requires the licensing of higher risk **HMOs**. When considering an application, the authority must be satisfied that the property is reasonably suitable for occupation by the number of people proposing to live there.

Some standards are prescribed in **The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI2006/373)**. The Authority also has power to specify other standards.

Section 67 of the Housing Act 2004 enables a local authority to issue a licence subject to conditions.

This guidance has been based on those recommended by the [Chartered Institute of Environmental Health](#) and subsequently amended following changes in the law. They have been prepared in co-operation with all local authorities in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire to provide a consistent approach to housing across the counties. This authority has considered local needs before adopting them for use in this borough.

Definitions and categories of properties

House in Multiple Occupation

A house which is occupied by people who do not form a single household and share basic amenities such as bathroom, toilet and kitchen facilities.

House

'House' is not conclusively defined in legislation but includes flats, blocks of flats and the grounds, outbuildings and boundaries.

Household

Each of these is a single household

- a single person;
- co-habiting couples whether or not of the opposite sex; families of related people.

Licensable HMO

- Any rented property with five or more people living across two or more households and sharing common facilities is classed as a house in multiple occupation (HMO) and must be licensed.

There is more information on the government's web page:

[House in Multiple Occupation Licence](#)

Fact sheet standards information

The Council has produced a fact sheet for each standard needed in your private rented property along with:

- Management duties
- Enforcement
- Prosecution

For in depth information please click on each tab on the website, which will provide a drop down information box with an attached fact sheet.

For more information, please contact the Private Sector Housing team by email: pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk or call **01442 228000** and ask for **Private Sector Housing**.