



Breckland
COUNCIL

Amenity Standards

Private Sector Housing

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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Definitions	5
3. Heating.....	6
3.1.....	6
3.2.....	6
3.3.....	6
3.4.....	6
3.5.....	6
3.6.....	6
4. Insulation and Draught proofing	7
4.0.....	7
4.1.....	7
4.2.....	7
4.3.....	7
4.4.....	7
4.5.....	7
5. Ventilation and Damp.....	8
5.0.....	8
5.1.....	8
5.2.....	8
6. Bathroom Facilities	9
6.0.....	9
6.1.....	9
6.2 Minimum standards for bathroom facilities.....	9
7. Kitchens.....	11
7.1 Shared kitchens	11
7.2 Kitchens which are not shared.....	13
8. Occupancy levels	14

1. Introduction

All licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) need to be supplied with amenities such as heating, insulation, kitchen facilities, washing facilities and toilets.

The number and type of amenities depend on the type and size of the house. This document contains the minimum requirements for HMOs licensed by Breckland Council. The full requirements will be listed in each individual license.

This document can be used by landlords and letting/managing agents as a guide to amenities expected in all HMOs. For some homes it is possible that there may be additional requirements.

All dwellings may be subject to an assessment using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under Part 1 Housing Act 2004.

2. Definitions

- House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) – as defined in the Housing Act 2004 section 254.
- Unit of accommodation – A living area occupied by one household eg a bedsit.
- Licensed HMO – An HMO which requires a licence under the Housing Act 2004 part 3

3. Heating

Each unit of living accommodation must be equipped with an adequate means of space heating. The heating system must be of appropriate design and layout to heat the whole of the house adequately and efficiently.

3.1 All habitable rooms and bathrooms must be provided with a fixed heating appliance in a suitable position. The heating must be capable of maintaining a room temperature of 21°C even when the outside temperature is -1°C.

3.2 Heating must be available at all times and be under the control of the occupier. If the heating system is controlled from a central location the system must be provided with controls to allow each occupant to regulate the temperature in their unit of accommodation.

3.3 Suitable methods of heating are: a) central heating b) electric storage heaters. These must be a fixed installation and capable of being run on economy tariffs with minimum standards of auto charge control in accordance with Building Regulations Part L1 and manual back up. c) fixed gas heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet.

3.4 Portable heating appliances must not be provided as the main form of heating.

3.5 Any portable electrical appliance provided by the landlord must be PAT tested every 12 months. A certificate showing the results of the test must be made available to the council on request. a) Portable heating appliances using either paraffin oil or LPG (bottled gas) must not be provided by the landlord.

3.6 The heating system must be safely and properly installed and must be maintained by a suitably qualified person.

4. Insulation and Draught proofing

4.0 The house must be adequately insulated in order for the tenant to heat the room to an adequate temperature without excessive cost.

4.1 Where there is a loft there must be a minimum 270mm of loft insulation or equivalent.

4.2 Cavity walls must be filled (except in flats where the leaseholder is unable to insulate).

4.3 Attic rooms and dormer windows must be insulated to a standard equivalent to the minimum energy efficiency values set out in approved document L1B. If the current insulation does not meet this standard, then additional insulation must be fitted. Care should be taken not to block any ventilation at the edges (eaves).

4.4 The house must be draught free and, where necessary, have draught proofing to prevent excessive draughts. This includes draught proofing of windows, doors and floors. Care must be taken where gas appliances are installed. The correct ventilation must be provided for gas use.

4.5 In houses of solid brick construction the external brick walls must be insulated. Where plaster and render is stripped from solid external walls the walls should be boarded with insulated dry lining board to meet the requirements of Part L1B of the Building Regulations (or an alternative agreed with building control) before finishing with a smooth skim coat of plaster. In some instances, this is not possible.

All bedrooms and living rooms where wall insulation is not possible must have a heating source with the capacity to ensure that the room can be effectively heated and must be fitted with double glazing.

5. Ventilation and Damp

5.0 There must be means to provide low level background ventilation without excessive draughts.

5.1 Each habitable room must have a window which is in good repair and is capable of being opened and shut.

5.2 Kitchens, toilets and bathrooms must have mechanical extractor fans. The mechanical extraction rate in bathrooms and toilets must be a minimum of 15 litres per second and in kitchens a minimum rate of 30 l/s (where adjacent to cookers – 60l/s everywhere else in a kitchen).

6. Bathroom Facilities

6.0 Bathroom facilities must be available within 2 floors of each bedroom. Communal facilities must be accessible from communal areas. All facilities must be inside the building.

6.1 The number of facilities must be provided in accordance with the following table:

	Washing facilities Provision of amenities for the number of people
1-4 people	Minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one fixed bath or shower and • a toilet with wash hand basin The toilet may be located separately or may be in the bathroom
5 people	Minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one fixed bath or shower and • one separate toilet with a wash hand basin. This is so there is a toilet available for the occupiers when the bathroom is in use.
6-10 people	Minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two fixed baths or showers and • two toilets with wash hand basins. At least one toilet must be located separately. This is so there is a toilet available for the occupiers when the bathrooms are in use.
11-15 people	At least <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three bathrooms and • three toilets with wash hand basins At least one toilet must be located separately. This is so there is a toilet available for the occupiers when the bathrooms are in use.

6.2 Minimum standards for bathroom facilities.

A) All baths, toilets and wash hand basins must have a smooth and impervious surface and be easy to clean.

B) Each bathroom must either have a bath or a shower.

c) All baths, showers and hand wash basins must provide an adequate supply of both hot and cold water. Hot water may be provided by any of the following methods:

i. Piped from a boiler

ii. An immersion heater

iii. A fixed gas appliance (eg a multipoint)

iv. An instantaneous heater (only to basins and electric showers).

D) Bathrooms should be adequately heated, insulated and draught free.

E) Bathrooms and toilet compartments must have adequate ventilation. Mechanical extraction must be provided (in addition to a window to the outside air) at a minimum extraction rate of 15 litres per second.

F) If the toilet is in a separate compartment there must be a wash hand basin in the compartment.

G) The splash backs to baths, wash hand basins and sinks must extend to at least the width of the basin or bath. All joints must be sealed and watertight. All tiling must be fixed with waterproof adhesive and joints filled with waterproof grouting.

H) In showers the tiling or splash back must extend above the head of the shower. Where a shower screen is used the tiling/splash back must extend to the edge of a fixed shower screen. Where a shower curtain is used, the tiling should extend beyond the curtain.

I) Bathroom fitments and the water supply must be installed in compliance with Building Regulations: Approved Documents G and appropriate British Standards.

J) Drainage to bathroom and toilet fitments must be installed in compliance with Building Regulations: Approved Document H and appropriate British Standards.

7. Kitchens

7.1 Shared kitchens

The kitchen must be suitably located in relation to the living accommodation. If kitchens do not have a suitable dining area space dining must be provided within one floor distance (this may be a living room, bedsit or bedroom of suitable size). The kitchen layout and size must be adequate to enable each occupier to safely prepare food.

The table below shows the minimum requirements for shared kitchens, depending on the number sharing.

Facility	Minimum Standard	Up to and Including 5 people sharing	6-8 people sharing	9-12 people sharing
Sink	A sink with constant hot and cold water, a draining board and splash back	1 sink for up to 5 people	2 sinks A dishwasher will be acceptable as a second sink	3 sinks A dishwasher will be acceptable as a second sink
Hob	A fixed electric or gas hob (not portable)	1 hob with four rings	6 rings	8 rings
Oven and grill	A fixed oven and a fixed grill (not portable)	1 fixed oven and 1 fixed grill	2 fixed ovens and 2 fixed grills or 1 fixed oven 1 fixed grill plus 1 portable combi oven/grill/microwave	3 fixed ovens and 3 fixed grills or 2 ovens and 2 grills Plus 1 portable combi oven/grill/microwave
Electric sockets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supply for an electric cooker (if supplied) • Dedicated sockets for the fridge and for a washing machine set at a convenient height and safe position • 3 double sockets at worktop height 	3 double sockets at worktop height	4 double sockets at worktop height. If a portable combi oven is supplied then these sockets are in addition to the one supplying the combi oven.	4 double sockets at worktop height If a portable combi oven is supplied then these sockets are in addition to the one supplying the combi oven.
Worktops for food preparation	Work tops must be secure, fixed and of an impervious material	minimum length 1m	Minimum worktop 6-7 people: 1.5m 8 people: 2m	minimum worktop 2.5m
Cupboards for the storage of food and cooking utensils The space below the sink is not counted	A floor based food storage cupboard 500mm wide and standard depth and height or a wall mounted food storage cupboard 1000mm wide and standard depth and height should be provided per person	1 cupboard per person	1 cupboard per person	1 cupboard per person
Refrigerators and freezers	A standard fridge-freezer or A separate	1 fridge-freezer or 1 separate	2 fridge-freezers or 2 separate fridges and 2 separate freezers	2 fridge-freezers or 2 separate fridges and 2

	standard size fridge and a separate freezer	fridge and 1 separate freezer		separate freezers for 6-10 people 3 fridge-freezers or 3 separate fridges and 3 separate freezers for 10+ people
Appropriate refuse disposal facilities	A sufficient number of bins must be provided for the storage of refuse awaiting collection both inside and outside	As standard	As standard	As standard
Appropriate extractor fans	Extraction must be provided in accordance with approved document F under Building Regulations	As standard	As standard	As Standard
Appropriate fire blankets	To be supplied in accordance with fire guidance*	To be supplied in accordance with fire guidance*	To be supplied in accordance with fire guidance*	To be supplied in accordance with fire guidance*
Appropriate fire doors	Please see fire guidance*	Please see fire guidance*	Please see fire guidance*	Please see fire guidance*
Appropriate finishes	Kitchen floors must be able to be cleaned. Kitchen walls adjacent to cookers, sinks and food preparation areas must have impervious splash-backs. Kitchen ceilings must be in good repair	As standard	As standard	As standard

7.2 Kitchens which are not shared

Kitchens which are not shared are usually provided within a bedsit. If the kitchen is somewhere else, it must be suitably located in relation to the living accommodation.

If the kitchen does not have a suitable dining area dining space must be provided within one floor distance (this may be a living room, bedsit or bedroom of suitable size).

Any portable electrical appliance provided by the landlord must be PAT tested every 12 months. A certificate showing the results of the test must be made available to the council on request.

The table below shows the minimum requirements for kitchens that are not shared.

Facilities	Minimum standard
Cooker and hob	A hob with at least two rings and an oven
Sink	A sink with constant hot and cold water, a draining board and tiled splash back
Sufficient electric sockets	4 sockets (2 doubles), plus dedicated sockets for a cooker and refrigerator Points must be set at a convenient height and safe position
A worktop for the preparation of food	At least 500mm length The worktop must be secure, fixed and of impervious material
Cupboards for the storage of food and cooking utensils. The space below the sink is not counted.	A floor based storage cupboard of 500mm wide and standard depth and height or A wall mounted food storage cupboard of 1000mm wide and standard depth and height
A refrigerator	A standard refrigerator
Refuse and Disposal facilities	A sufficient number of bins must be provided for the storage of refuse awaiting collection both inside and outside
Extractor Fans	Extraction must be provided in accordance with Building Regulations approved document F
Appropriate fire blankets	To be supplied and sited in accordance with fire guidance*
Appropriate fire precautions	See fire guidance*
Appropriate finishes	Kitchen floors must be able to be cleaned. Kitchen walls adjacent to cookers, sinks and food preparation areas must have impervious splash-backs. Kitchen ceilings must be in good repair.

8. Occupancy levels

The minimum bedroom sizes are as follows:

for bedrooms with cooking facilities	a minimum of 13m ² for one person a minimum of 20m ² for two people sharing
for bedrooms where kitchen and dining facilities are provided elsewhere in the house	a minimum of 6.51m ² for one person a minimum of 11.22m ² for two people sharing
for bedrooms where there the kitchen is provided elsewhere but there are no other dining facilities provided	a minimum of 10m ² for one person a minimum of 15m ² for two people sharing
for people under 10 years old	a minimum of 4.64m ²

