

PRESTON CITY COUNCIL

LANDLORDS' INFORMATION PACK

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Category B: Houses occupied on a shared basis normally by students, fully self-catering, possibly not needing planning permission, and not “self-contained”.

STANDARDS OF AMENITY AND FITNESS FOR HABITATION

1.0 REPAIR

1.1 The property shall be in a good standard of repair having regard to its age, character and locality and, in particular, shall be free from any disrepair which may prejudice the health and safety of the occupiers.

2.0 STABILITY

2.1 The property must be in a structurally sound condition. Properties which have previously experienced slight settlement but are now structurally stable are normally considered to be acceptable. However, if the building is considered likely to further instability or, if previous movement has left it substantially weakened, then it may not be considered to be in a satisfactory condition.

3.0 DAMPNESS

3.1 The property shall be substantially free from dampness so that neither the personal comfort nor the health and safety of the occupier is prejudiced. This includes dampness caused by a missing or defective damp proof course, any form of disrepair or condensation.

4.0 NATURAL LIGHTING

4.1 All habitable rooms shall be provided with an area of clear glazing situated in either a window and/or a door, equivalent in total area to at least one-tenth of the floor area of the room.

4.2 Where practicable all kitchens, bathrooms and rooms with toilets shall comply with 4.1 above. Where this is not practicable, adequate artificial lighting shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of Part 5. All glazing to windows in bathrooms and rooms containing toilets shall be frosted.

4.3 Where practicable all staircases, landings and passages shall be provided with an area of clear glazing in a window. Where this is not practicable, adequate artificial lighting shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of Part 5.

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4.4 Underground rooms used as habitable rooms shall comply with the Council's guidance note, 'Standards for Underground Rooms', available as part of the landlords' Information Pack.

5.0 ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

5.1 All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, rooms with toilets, staircases, landings and passages shall be adequately lighted by electricity. All wiring and fittings should be maintained in a safe condition.

6.0 VENTILATION

6.1 All habitable rooms shall be ventilated directly to the external air by a window, the openable area of which shall be equivalent to at least one-twentieth of the floor area of the room and some portion of this should be at least 1.75m above floor level. Neither an openable door giving access directly to the external air nor a louvered opening in such a door will be acceptable for the purpose of this requirement.

6.2 Where practicable all kitchens, bathrooms and rooms with toilets shall comply with 6.1 above, but where this is not practicable, mechanical ventilation providing a minimum of three air changes per hour shall be provided. Such an installation shall be fitted with an overrun device and be connected to the lighting circuit of the room. All wiring and fittings shall be maintained in a safe condition.

6.3 Permanent means of ventilation in the form of a flue, air brick, louvered window or equivalent shall be provided in all dining/ kitchens, kitchens, bathrooms, rooms with toilets and any other rooms containing either cooking and/or washing facilities.

7.0 WATER SUPPLY

7.1 A supply of cold running water suitable for drinking purposes shall be provided for the use of the occupants at each washing point, and in the kitchen. Where the supply is provided at a common washing point, the tap shall be marked "drinking water".

8.0 PERSONAL WASHING FACILITIES

8.1 Preferably, each bedroom/study shall be provided with a wash hand basin complete with its own supplies of hot and cold running water. Shared facilities will be accepted as follows:

- for houses occupied by up to five persons, a wash hand basin in the bathroom;
- for houses occupied by six or more persons, a wash hand basin in each bathroom, together with such additional wash hand basins as the Strategic Housing Services may require, situated in either the study bedrooms or bedrooms or at common washing points. As a guide, one wash hand basin will suffice for three persons.

Regardless of its location, each wash hand basin shall be of adequate size for hand and face washing purposes.

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8.2 A readily accessible bathroom or shower room, being not more than one floor distant from any user, shall be provided in the following ratios:

- 1 - 6 persons 1 bathroom or shower room.
- 7 - 12 persons 2 bathrooms or shower rooms.
- 13 - 18 persons 3 bathrooms or shower rooms, etc..

Hot water supplies to every bath, shower and wash basin shall be available at all times. This includes supplies which are exclusive to the individual appliances and circumstances where there is a common supply to more than one appliance, which is paid for as part of the rent or some other charge.

8.3 Baths and showers shall not be provided in kitchens.

9.0 DRAINAGE AND TOILETS

9.1 All above and below ground drainage should wherever possible in existing houses in multiple occupation, comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations currently in force.

9.2 There shall be sufficient toilets on each floor for the number of users on that floor, or not more than one floor distant, in the following ratios:

- 1 - 6 persons 1 water closet.
- 7 - 12 persons 2 water closets.
- 13 - 18 persons 3 water closets, etc..

Outside toilets shall not be counted for this purpose.

9.3 Toilets shall be located separate from bath/shower rooms except in the case of houses occupied by five persons or less when a toilet in the shared bathroom will suffice.

9.4 For houses occupied by more than five persons, each toilet shall be situated away from the bathroom or shower room and, in or near the room containing the toilet there must be a wash basin with hot and cold running water.

9.5 Toilet compartments should not open directly onto the area of a kitchen immediately adjacent to where food is prepared.

10.0 FACILITIES FOR STORAGE, PREPARATION AND COOKING OF FOOD AND FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE WATER

General

10.1 Where the letting is occupied by one person only, shared kitchens are acceptable and shall not be located more than one floor away from the letting.

10.2 All walls, ceilings and floors should be generally non-porous and reasonably smooth such that they can be cleaned effectively.

10.3 There should be an adequate number of suitably located electrical power points for the safe use of kitchen appliances. Normally there should be at least two power points in each kitchen, plus an additional point for each extra household sharing the kitchen not including any socket for an electric cooker

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or oven. They must be installed to comply with current Institute of Electrical Engineers (I.E.E.) Regulations and they should be positioned immediately adjacent to the work surface.

10.4 In the case of houses occupied by five or less persons, only one cooking appliance, one food storage facility and one sink will be required.

Food Storage

10.5 For the purposes of this section, a proper food store shall consist of:-

10.5.1 refrigerator of 0.13m³ minimum capacity. In practical terms, the standard indicates that each HMO occupier should be provided with a dedicated shelf slot within a conventional fridge of typical 550-600mm width. The space above the shelf needs to be of a usable height, typically 125-150mm.

10.5.2 Dry goods storage of 0.3m³ minimum capacity. Any cupboard or space below a sink will not be accepted.

10.6 In the case of houses occupied by five persons or less, a food storage facility as specified in 10.5 above will suffice.

10.7 Where houses are occupied by more than five persons, each separate letting shall be provided with a proper food storage facility either within the unit of accommodation or in the kitchen. If in the kitchen, the facility shall be lockable.

Food Preparation

10.8 Worktops of 0.6m² per letting shall be provided and securely fixed, at least 0.6m depth, impervious and capable of being easily cleaned.

Cooking

10.9 Each letting shall be provided with a safely located cooking appliance. The minimum acceptable will be:

10.9.1 two rings or hot plate, together with a grill and oven for a one person unit of accommodation, OR

10.9.2 a cooker with four rings or hot plates, together with a grill and an oven for units of accommodation for more than one person.

10.10 In the case of houses occupied by five persons or less, a cooking appliance in accordance with 10.9.2 above in the shared kitchen will suffice.

10.11 In the case of houses occupied by more than five persons, each separate letting shall either be provided with a safely located proper cooking appliance or such facilities shall be provided in shared kitchens. In shared kitchens, one cooking appliance shall be provided for each user in accordance with 10.9.1 above, or, a cooking appliance in accordance with 10.9.2 above shall be shared by not more than three, one person lettings.

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Disposal of Waste Water

10.12 For the purposes of this section, the minimum acceptable will be:

10.12.1 a sink complete with drainer and provided with its own supplies of hot and cold running water within the unit of accommodation, OR

10.12.2 in shared kitchens, sinks shall be provided in the ratio of one sink per three lettings, comprising of a single person each. A sink should include at least one drainer or a second bowl.

10.13 In the case of houses occupied by five persons or less, a sink provided in accordance with 10.12.1 above in the shared kitchen will suffice.

10.14 In the case of houses occupied by more than five persons, sinks shall be provided in accordance with 10.12 above.

11.0 SPACE HEATING

11.1 All habitable rooms shall be adequately heated by a fixed space heating appliance of either gas or electricity. The appliance must comprise a reasonably efficient and safely designed and installed fixed heating source. Solid fuel will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be shown that there is no risk to safety. For example, access to the coal store must be in a safe condition and well lit at all necessary times.

11.2 All heating systems shall be of a sufficient output so as to adequately heat the rooms they are designed to serve.

11.3 Portable paraffin or oil fired heaters (except sealed radiators of the Dimplex type) and liquefied petroleum gas, shall not be acceptable.

12.0 REFUSE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

12.1 Refuse storage containers shall be provided sufficient for the needs of the house and type acceptable to the Council.

12.2 All containers to be located on hard standing with suitable access for cleansing of area and removal of containers.

13.0 MEANS OF ESCAPE FROM FIRE AND OTHER FIRE PRECAUTIONS

13.1 Please see separate Leaflet, "Guidance on Means of Escape from Fire in Houses in Multiple Occupation".

14.0 SPACE STANDARDS

14.1 All floor areas are the minimum to be achieved. In rooms with sloping ceilings, the floor area will only be measured for the portion where the ceiling height exceeds 1.5m. All other rooms will be expected to have a reasonable ceiling height, generally not less than 2.3m.

14.2 In calculating room areas, parts of the room which provide insignificant amenity to the occupants must be disregarded. In particular, narrow corridor space which is only useful for access should be disregarded.

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ONE PERSON UNITS OF ACCOMMODATION

Each bedroom/study 10.00m² except where a separate living room is provided, which is not a kitchen or a kitchen dining room, in which case the bedroom shall be 6.50m².

TWO PERSON UNITS OF ACCOMMODATION

Each bedroom/study 15.00m² except where a separate living room is provided which is not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room, in which case the bedroom shall be 11.00m².

COMMON ROOMS

Kitchens:	used by 1 - 5 persons	6.00m ² .
	used by 6 - 10 persons	9.00m ² .

Not normally suitable for use by more than ten persons.

Dining/Kitchens:	used by 1 - 5 persons	9.00m ² .
	used by 6 - 10 persons	15.00m ² .

Not normally suitable for use by more than ten persons.

15.0 FURNISHINGS, ELECTRICAL AND GAS SAFETY.

- 15.1 Where provided, furnishings shall comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988.
- 15.2 Where provided, all electrical appliances shall comply with the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- 15.3 Where provided, gas appliances and installations shall comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994 (as amended).
- 15.4 The legislation is not enforced by Preston City Council but by Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Department (15.1 and 15.2) and the Health and Safety Executive (15.3). Separate leaflets are available as part of this information pack

Note: This is a guidance note only and is not a statement of law. If you are not sure about your legal position in any respect you should seek expert legal advice.