



**North  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

# **Housing Standards for Temporary Accommodation**

**A guidance document to inform providers of temporary  
accommodation to North Northamptonshire Council of the  
expected standards and conditions to be achieved**

**Please note this document covers the full range of premises types and  
providers should have regard to the relevant standards in relation to the type  
and occupancy of the unit to be supplied**

## 1. PROPERTY CONDITIONS

There should be no Category 1 or serious Category 2 hazards, as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), present in the accommodation.

For information and guidance relating to Category 1 and 2 hazards, and the HHSRS please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-hhsrs-guidance>

### 1.1 Damp and Mould Growth (HHSRS Hazard 1)

Dwellings should be warm and dry and well ventilated. The relative humidity should be between 40% and 60% to limit mould growth and avoid conditions favourable to House Dust Mites. The structure and finishes should be free from rising and penetrating dampness and from persistent condensation. There should be sufficient and appropriate means of ventilation to deal with moisture generated by normal domestic activities and there should be provision for the removal of moisture-laden air from kitchens and bathrooms. If there is any evidence of excessive condensation or mould growth kitchens and bathrooms may require (humidistat) extractor fans.

### 1.2 Excess Cold (HHSRS Hazard 2)

The premises should be capable of being heated to and maintained at a temperature of 21°C when the outside temperature is -1°C. The heating must be controllable within each room and it must be available at all times. Heating systems and/or heating appliances should be regularly maintained. Windows and doors should be maintained in good repair to prevent excessive draughts from entering the premises.

### 1.3 Excess Heat (HHSRS Hazard 3)

The premises should be so ventilated, insulated, and screened that the occupants do not suffer from exposure to excess heat during summer. Windows should be kept in good repair so they open and allow rooms to be provided with natural ventilation. The heating must be controllable within each room.

### 1.4 Asbestos (HHSRS Hazard 4)

Asbestos should not be present. However, if it is found, as removal is likely to result in an increase in airborne fibre levels, it should be managed in situ if it is undamaged, in good condition, in a location where it is not likely to be damaged, worked upon or disturbed. Where existing asbestos is damaged or is likely to be damaged or disturbed, an assessment should be made and action taken to repair, seal, enclose or remove it. Work on asbestos insulation, asbestos insulating board and lagging, including sealing and removal, must only be done by a contractor licensed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

### 1.5 Biocides (HHSRS Hazard 5)

This hazard concerns threats to health from chemicals used to treat timber and mould growth. If such a scenario is encountered it will be necessary to identify the biocide(s) used and determine whether the precautionary procedures and recommendations for use of the product have been followed. If not, a risk assessment should be carried out and the appropriate action taken.

### 1.6 Carbon Monoxide & Fuel Combustion products, Uncombusted fuel gas (HHSRS Hazards 6 & 9)

Gas appliances must be serviced annually and a gas safety check must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. A copy of the most recent gas safety certificate should be available for inspection.

### 1.7 Lead (HHSRS Hazard 7)

Lead was widely used in paintwork up until the 1960's. The main hazard arises from paintwork which has deteriorated and is flaking or damaged. All paintwork should be in good condition.

### 1.8 Radiation (HHSRS Hazard 8)

This hazard is unlikely to be encountered in this type of accommodation.

### 1.9 Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) (HHSRS Hazard 10)

VOCs include formaldehyde. They produce vapours at room temperatures. Sources typically within buildings include urea formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI), particleboard, chipboard, plywood, paints, glues, solvents etc. There are many other (non-building) sources of VOCs, such as cleaning products, tobacco smoke, furnishings and wall and floor coverings. Typical levels of VOCs found in UK buildings do not present a risk to health. However, exposure to higher levels may be found, for example, during painting for extended periods of time.

### 1.10 Crowding and Space (HHSRS Hazard 11)

This is of particular concern in this type of accommodation and is considered separately and in detail in Appendix 1: Space Standards.

### 1.11 Entry by Intruders (HHSRS Hazard 12)

The premises should be secure so as to prevent unauthorised entry by intruders. Secure locks must be fitted to the main access door, individual room doors (where the accommodation is not let to a single household) and on all accessible windows including those in communal areas. Locks should be kept in good working order.

### 1.12 Lighting (HHSRS Hazard 13)

All habitable rooms and common areas should be provided with adequate natural and artificial lighting. Lighting should also be provided on external staircases so that occupiers can enter and exit the property safely in the dark. Occupiers should be able to carry out domestic and recreational activities without suffering eyestrain. Lighting systems should be maintained.

### 1.13 Noise (HHSRS Hazard 14)

Noise from external sources such as roads, railways, aircraft, industrial or commercial premises may present a problem. Where a problem is encountered adequate insulation may be required. As homeless persons will spend large amounts of time in the accommodation, premises located close to excessive external noise sources may be unsuitable for this use. Excessive internal noise sources such as noisy plumbing, boilers, lifts, extract fans etc. should be attenuated and where this is not possible rooms may be deemed unsuitable for use.

### 1.14 Food Safety (HHSRS Hazard 16)

Kitchen facilities should be designed and laid out to allow for the safe and hygienic storage, preparation and cooking of food to reduce the risk of food poisoning. Food preparation surfaces, food storage areas, wall and floor coverings should be impervious and capable of being cleaned. Kitchen facilities should be maintained in good repair so that the risk of harbourage for pathogenic organisms is reduced.

### 1.15 Water Supply (HHSRS Hazard 18)

All occupiers should have ready access to a cold potable supply of water for drinking and cooking purposes at all times.

### 1.16 Domestic Hygiene, Pests and Refuse, Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage, Falls associated with baths (HHSRS Hazards 15, 17 & 19)

There should be suitable and sufficient personal washing, and clothes washing facilities available to the occupiers. There should be adequate drainage and sanitation at the premises. Sanitary ware should be maintained in a good condition to reduce the risk of infection to the occupiers. These hazards are considered separately and under Amenities Para.4, Pest Control Para. 5.3, and Standards of Management Para. 5.1.

### 1.17 Falls on level surfaces, Falls associated with stairs and steps (HHSRS Hazards 20 & 21)

All internal flooring, external yards and paths should be level, unobstructed and free of projections. Internal floor coverings must be in good repair and securely fixed. There should be adequate artificial lighting throughout. External yards and paths should be effectively drained. Staircases should not be excessively steep or winding. They should be maintained in good repair and there should be no projections, such as nosings and no loose elements. Adequate handrails should be fitted and should be securely fastened. There should be a secure balustrade on the open side. There

should be adequate artificial lighting provision and in vulnerable areas safety glazing should be fitted.

#### 1.18 Falls between levels (HHSRS Hazard 22)

Occupants should be protected from falling between one level and another. Windows should be kept in a good state of repair including the frames, catches, hinges and opening limiters. Guarding to balconies and accessible roofs should be of adequate strength and securely fixed. Low windows, balconies or balustrades present a risk that young children may sustain injuries and so must be adequately guarded. Where window sill height is less than 1100mm, the window should be guarded and fitted with safety glass. In habitable rooms, physical guards should be used rather than casement stay locks. Guards should be constructed using a robust material (preferably mild steel or similar) and the vertical bars should be not more than 100mm apart. The guarding should not extend to a height that would impede rescue in case of fire but should be not less than 1100mm from floor level. Balustrades/edge protection should be provided to all accessible balconies, roofs and landings. Guarding should be at least 1100mm high and there should be no openings to the guarding which would allow a 100mm sphere to pass through. All guarding must be designed so as not to encourage children to climb on it (i.e. no horizontal rails) and it must be strong enough to support the weight of people leaning against it.

#### 1.19 Electrical Hazards (HHSRS Hazard 23)

The electrical system should be free from disrepair and installed in such a way so as to protect the occupiers from electric shocks or burns. All parts of the installation, such as meters, fuses, wiring, sockets, light fittings and switches should be in good repair. The system should meet current standards and there should be an adequate number of sockets and outlets suitably located. All exposed metal parts of the electrical installation must be earthed as should gas and water pipes. A periodic electrical inspection and test should be carried out at least every five years and the test certificate in accordance with the most current IET Wiring Regulations (BS 7671) should be available for inspection.

#### 1.20 Fire (HHSRS Hazard 24)

This is of particular concern in this type of accommodation and is considered separately and in detail in Para.2.

#### 1.21 Flames, Hot surfaces etc. (HHSRS Hazard 25)

There should be adequate guarding of any open flame to space or water heating appliances. The temperature of exposed surfaces of radiators, pipework and storage heaters should be no more than 43°C.

### 1.22 Collision and Entrapment (HHSRS Hazard 26)

The design and construction of architectural parts of the premises should be such that occupiers are not at risk of physical injury through collision or entrapment. Doors and windows should be maintained in good repair, with particular attention to sash cords. Door closers should not be excessively powerful. Safety glazing should be provided in doors and windows in vulnerable positions.

### 1.23 Explosion (HHSRS Hazard 27)

Gas appliances must be serviced annually and a gas safety check must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. A copy of the most recent gas safety certificate should be available for inspection. Portable Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) appliances should not be used. Hot water systems should be correctly installed to meet the requirements of safety regulations. Hot water storage tanks of more than 15 litres (3 gallon) capacity should not be connected directly to the mains water supply. For ventilated hot water systems, there should be an adequately sized vent pipe sufficient to allow steam to escape in case of thermostat failure. Unvented systems should be provided with both a non-self-resetting thermal cut-out and one or more temperature relief valves. These safety devices should be regularly tested.

### 1.24 Position and Operability of Amenities (HHSRS Hazard 28)

The design, positioning and location of amenities, fittings and equipment has an effect on convenience and safety of use. Inappropriate positioning of amenities and equipment may cause physical strains and inadequate functional space such as low headroom, inadequate space around bathroom or kitchen facilities, or inappropriate siting of facilities can present hazards. The layout of kitchens and bathrooms should be such as to make use convenient and easy, as well as safe, and should facilitate cleaning. Wash hand basins, sinks, worktops, sanitary basins, baths and showers should be located at an appropriate height, and with sufficient free user space to facilitate use without strain. Cupboards and shelves should be sited where they can be easily reached, but without posing collision hazards. See Para.4: Amenities.

### 1.25 Structural Collapse and Falling Elements (HHSRS Hazard 29)

The property both internally and externally should be maintained in such a condition so that occupants are not at risk from being struck by falling elements, such as chimney pots, roof coverings, rainwater goods, cracked sills, collapsing ceiling plaster, defective internal walls etc.

## 2. FIRE SAFETY

2.1 Owners/Managers have a duty to carry out a fire risk assessment, which must be recorded if there are 5 or more persons employed by the company or if an HMO licence is in force. It is good practice to have a written risk assessment in all cases.

2.2 The level of fire precautions required will depend on the type of accommodation and the risk it presents. Temporary accommodation for homeless persons will generally be considered higher than normal risk due to the mode of occupation. The fire precautions considered necessary and appropriate will vary with accommodation type.

2.3 The standards expected are generally those recommended in the Home Stamp Guide to Fire and Security Protection in multi occupied Residential Properties <https://homestamp.com/landlords-fire-and-security-protection/> but for commercial bed and breakfast hotels (B&B) the appropriate guidance is the Home Office: *Sleeping Accommodation Guide*. A useful concise guide for proprietors of small bed and breakfast accommodation is *HM Government: Do you have paying guests?* <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/payingguests>

2.4 The Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service are the lead enforcement authority for this commercial type of premises generally but where exclusively used for homeless persons placements, premises will likely constitute a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and may require a licence in which case North Northamptonshire Council will be the lead authority. When considering the adequacy of fire precautions a simple summary is given in Table 1. This is in relation to well managed accommodation with no unusual or additional risk. It is given as a simple yardstick and for detailed assessment regard must be had to the guides mentioned as well as seeking professional advice.

Table 1: A simple guide to fire precautions

AFD= Automatic Fire Detection and Warning System (Fire alarm)

<p>Commercial B&amp;B.  HMO accommodation, with shared kitchen facilities and no cooking within rooms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Grade A, LD2 system of AFD</li> <li>• Emergency lighting throughout escape route</li> <li>• Emergency Fire Exit signs throughout escape route</li> <li>• Fire blankets in shared kitchens</li> <li>• Fire instruction notices (in appropriate languages)</li> </ul>
<p>HMO accommodation with cooking facilities within bedrooms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Mixed AFD system, (Grade A, LD2 system with smoke detectors throughout except sleeping rooms containing cooking</li> </ul>

	<p>facilities which will have heat detectors plus a Grade D, non-interlinked smoke alarm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency lighting throughout escape route</li> <li>• Emergency Fire Exit signs throughout escape route</li> <li>• Fire blankets inside bedrooms and any shared kitchens</li> </ul>
House converted to self-contained flats with separate kitchen. (Single household occupancy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Grade A, LD2 AFD system – no detection required in bedroom</li> <li>• Emergency lighting throughout common escape route</li> <li>• Emergency Fire Exit signs throughout common escape route</li> <li>• Fire blankets in kitchens</li> <li>• Fire instruction notices (in appropriate languages)</li> </ul>
Buildings of 3 or more storeys converted to self-contained studio flats with cooking facilities within living/bedrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Mixed AFD system, (Grade A, LD2 system with smoke detectors throughout except sleeping rooms containing cooking facilities which will have heat detectors plus a Grade D, non-interlinked smoke alarm)</li> <li>• Emergency lighting throughout escape route</li> <li>• Emergency Fire Exit signs throughout escape route</li> <li>• Fire blankets inside living/bedrooms and any shared kitchens</li> </ul>
Buildings of no more than 2 storeys converted to self-contained studio flats with cooking facilities within living/bedrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Mixed AFD system, (Grade D, LD2 system with smoke detectors throughout except sleeping rooms containing cooking facilities which will have heat detectors plus a Grade D, non-interlinked smoke alarm)</li> <li>• Fire blankets inside bedrooms and any shared kitchens</li> </ul>
Self-contained flat in building of more than 3 storeys and with separate kitchen. (Single household occupancy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Mixed AFD system: Grade A: LD2 coverage in the common areas and a heat detector in each flat in the room/lobby</li> </ul>

	<p>opening onto the escape route (interlinked); plus Grade D: LD3 coverage in each flat (non-interlinked smoke alarm in the room/lobby opening onto the escape route)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency lighting throughout common escape route</li> <li>• Emergency Fire Exit signs throughout common escape route Fire blanket in kitchen</li> </ul>
Self-contained flat in building of no more than 2 storeys and with separate kitchen. (Single household occupancy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full 30 minute protected escape route to an ultimate place of safety</li> <li>• Mixed AFD system: Grade D: LD2 coverage in the common areas and a heat detector in each flat in the room/lobby opening onto the escape route (interlinked); plus Grade D: LD3 coverage in each flat (non-interlinked smoke alarm in the room/lobby opening onto the escape route) Fire blanket in kitchen</li> </ul>
House occupied by a single household (no more than 3 storeys in height)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No requirement for full 30-minute protected route but the escape route should have sound, traditional construction and should not pass through risk rooms</li> <li>• No requirement for fire doors but sound, well-constructed and close-fitting conventional doors are required</li> <li>• Grade D, LD3 AFD system: interlinked mains wired smoke alarms with integral battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels; additional interlinked heat alarm with integral battery back-up located in the kitchen; additional interlinked smoke alarm with integral battery back-up located in the lounge</li> <li>• Fire blanket in kitchen</li> </ul>
NB. In all cases where cooking facilities are located in rooms used for sleeping a mixed AFD system is required to avoid nuisance alarms and protect sleeping occupants	

2.5 Annual service and maintenance certificates are required for fire safety installations. They should be in accordance with the following British Standards:

- Automatic fire detection and warning systems: BS 5839: part1 or Part 6 (as appropriate)
- Emergency escape lighting: BS 5266-8: 2004 (BS EN 50172: 2004)
- Fire Extinguishers where provided: BS 5306-3 and with the manufacturer's recommendations.\*

*\*Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue service do not recommend the installation of fire extinguishers (with the exception of premises where residents or resident/24 hour staff are fully trained in their use*

2.6 Effective management of fire precautions is essential. See Para. 6.4 “Management arrangements” for guidance.

2.7 Owners/Managers must ensure all units meet the requisite standards as set out in Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and other applicable legislation.

### **3. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE**

3.1 This section concentrates on health and safety issues arising from the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations but there is cross-over with hazards that are assessed under HHSRS. See Part. 1: Property Conditions.

3.2 There are a wide range of health and safety issues to consider. Some examples are given below but this list is not meant to be exhaustive. Health and safety documentation should be kept available on site to demonstrate that Owners/Managers are not putting their staff, residents and visitors at risk from poor health and safety practices.

The following checklist of documentation should be used as necessary to assess compliance with the specific health and safety requirements listed below it:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Risk Assessments
- Annual Gas Safety Certificate
- COSHH assessments
- Asbestos Survey report
  - Legionella risk assessment
  - Fire Risk Assessment
  - RIDDOR accident book
  - Health and Safety Information for Employees notice
  - Periodic Electrical Inspection report
  - Electrical Appliances PAT testing record.
  - Fire alarm system test certificate (BS5839: Part 1, section 6).
  - Annual test certificate for emergency lighting system (BS5266-8 : 2004)

#### 3.3 Health and Safety Policy

Owners/Managers must provide a Safety Policy to safeguard the health and safety of employees and visitors to the premises if there are 5 or more persons employed by the company. An individual hotel premises may have less than 5 staff but the requirement to provide a Safety Policy relates to the company as a whole, not individual premises.

#### 3.4 Health and Safety Risk Assessments

Owners/Managers also have a duty to carry out health and safety risk assessments which must be written down if there are 5 or more persons employed by the company. These should cover all activities which take place on the premises. An assessment under violence at work and/or lone working may be appropriate for receptionists or night staff.

### 3.5 Gas Safety

Owners/Managers are required to service all gas appliances annually. Only competent installers are allowed to fit or work on gas appliances. They must be Gas Safe registered. The Owner/Manager is required to keep a record of all contractors who work on the gas installations.

### 3.6 Hazardous substances

Owners/Managers are required to assess and control any hazardous substances at their workplace (COSHH Regulations). Any hazardous substance cannot be used without first making an assessment of its risk and necessary control measures to eliminate or minimise that risk. These requirements apply to substances classified as “harmful”, “irritant”, “toxic/very toxic” or “corrosive”. Consideration should be given particularly to cleaning materials and pesticides used on site. The absence of a suitable COSHH assessment and the use of hazardous substances in an unsafe manner would normally be classified as a “major deficiency”. It is important that all hazardous substances such as cleaning chemicals are stored securely to prevent access to them by occupiers. Note: some hazardous substances may also feature in the Fire Safety Risk Assessment (see Para. 2.1).

### 3.7 Asbestos

Owners/Managers are required to undertake a survey to detect the presence of asbestos within the premises. If any asbestos is present, the potential risk to occupiers should be assessed and if necessary, remedial works undertaken. Any asbestos removal must only be undertaken by a specialist contractor licenced by the Health and Safety Executive. The presence of asbestos which constitutes a risk to occupiers would normally be classified as a “major deficiency”.

### 3.8 Legionella

Owners/Managers are required to undertake a risk assessment for legionella.

This should:

- Identify and assess sources of risk;
- Prepare a scheme (or course of action) for preventing or controlling the risk;
- Implement and manage the scheme – appointing a person to be managerially responsible, sometimes referred to as the “responsible person”;
- Keep records and check that what has been done is effective; and If appropriate, notify the local authority that you have a cooling tower(s) on site

### 3.9 Child safety

Issues around child safety should be picked up under HHSRS in respect of hazards such as Damp and Mould, Lead, Personal Hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage, Falls Between Levels, Electrical Safety, Flames and Hot Surfaces and Collision and Entrapment. These are the hazards for which children under 5 are the specified vulnerable age group.

### 3.10 Children in need and children in need of protection.

The Children Act 1989 created the threshold of Significant Harm to mark the point at which compulsory state intervention in private family life can be justified. If there is any reasonable cause for concern that a child in temporary accommodation may be at risk of significant harm there is a duty under The Children Act 2004 to share this information with children's social care services.

Various scenarios can amount to significant harm and providers should be aware of how it can be recognised. An appropriate level of advice/training should be sought from the Local Authority's safeguarding service.

### 3.11 General Health and Safety

Health and safety legislation places a number of other responsibilities on employers, such as the reporting of certain injuries or dangerous occurrences (RIDDOR) and the provision of information for employees. A fire risk assessment should be available and also electrical safety certification.

## **4. AMENITIES**

4.1 Generally, amenities must be provided in sufficient numbers and at least to the minimum standards in this guide. This is to facilitate safe use and ready availability. They must be available for residents' use at all times. The standards below provide a yardstick to assess suitability. They should not be regarded as an absolute prescriptive standard. A decision to accept or not to accept a property which falls short in some way may be taken on the basis of risk. However, the standards in this guide are regarded as minimum basic requirements and will generally be expected.

### 4.2 Kitchen facilities

Ideally a kitchen should be provided for the exclusive use of each household. Where this is possible the minimum standards in 4.2.1 apply. In practice, kitchens for exclusive use will not always be practicable. In such cases the minimum standards in 4.2.2 apply.

#### 4.2.1 Kitchens for exclusive use

A separate kitchen should have a minimum floor area of 4.5m<sup>2</sup>. For space standards for kitchens provided within a bedroom see Appendix 1, Table 3.

Each set of kitchen facilities should comprise:

- Cooker with 4 burners, oven and grill (an appliance with 2 burners, oven and grill is acceptable in a single person letting)
- Sink and drainer set on a base unit (1000mm x 600mm)
- Worktop (minimum 1000mm x 600mm) including 300mm of clear worktop either side of each cooker hob and sink.
- Storage cupboard (minimum capacity 0.14m<sup>3</sup>)
- Refrigerator (minimum capacity 0.14m<sup>3</sup>)
- Two double 13 amp electrical power sockets

#### 4.2.2 Shared Kitchens

There should be a minimum of one set of kitchen facilities for every 5 households or single residents.

Kitchens should be reasonably located and not more than one floor distant from the rooms that they serve. A relaxation is reasonable for smaller premises of not more than approximately 30 bed spaces and three storeys in height, where cooking facilities may be provided in one area, in association with adequate dining facilities.

Each set of shared kitchen facilities requires a minimum kitchen floor area of 7.0m<sup>2</sup>. No more than 2 sets of cooking facilities may be provided in a kitchen and for 2 sets a minimum kitchen floor area room of 10m<sup>2</sup> is required. Where 2 sets are provided the design and layout of the kitchen should be such that each set of facilities is grouped together and separately from the other to avoid conflicts in use.

A set of shared cooking facilities should comprise:

- Gas/electric cooker with 4 burners, oven and grill
- Stainless steel sink/drainer reasonably located (minimum size 1000mm x 600mm) with hot and cold water and a tiled splashback.
- 2 double 13 amp power sockets
- A suitable worktop (minimum area 1000mm x 600mm) including 300mm of clear worktop either side of each cooker hob and sink.
- Lockable [ideally] storage cupboards within the kitchen

Kitchens provided should be properly designed and laid out so as to avoid any Category 1 hazards under HHSRS. Particular attention should be paid to Position and Operability of Amenities (See Para.1.28)

Kitchens are to be restricted for residents' and staff use only. Other guests are to be excluded. Kitchens used by staff to prepare food for commercial purposes should not be available to residents and are not considered to contribute towards the amenities provided for residents.

#### 4.3 Bath/Shower rooms

Ideally bathing facilities should be provided for the exclusive use of each household. In practice, this will not always be practicable and in such cases the minimum standards below apply to shared facilities:

- There should be a minimum of one set of bathing facilities for every 5 residents.
- Facilities should not be located more than one floor distant from the rooms they serve.
- Baths housed in a bathroom with adequate dressing and drying space.
- Showers housed in a shower room with adequate dressing and drying space.
- Where most/all lettings have en-suite showers, a shared bath must be provided in the premises if children are to be accommodated.
- Where only shared facilities are provided, at least half the baths/showers should be baths.

#### 4.4 Water Closets

Ideally WCs should be provided for the exclusive use of each household. In practice, this will not always be practicable and in such cases the minimum standards below apply to shared facilities:

- There should be a minimum of two WC for every 5 residents.
- One WC can be contained within the bath/shower room the other must be separate from the bathroom where there are 5 residents.
- WCs should not be located more than one floor distant from the rooms they serve.
- All WC compartments should be provided with a wash hand basin.
- WC compartments should be not less than 1.2m<sup>2</sup> in floor area.
- No more than half the WCs provided should be located in a bath/shower room.

#### 4.5 Wash hand basins

Wash hand basins must be provided in all shared WC compartments and in all shared bath/shower rooms that contain a WC.

#### 4.6 Accessibility standards

Where accommodation is required for persons with disabilities the accommodation must be suitable for their requirements. This may amount to full access throughout, partial access to a room(s), associated amenities and common areas or no access. An assessment will be required to determine suitability for a disabled person.

#### 4.7 Gardens, Yards and Appurtenances

All gardens, yards and appurtenances in relation to any unit of accommodation must be free from hazards, well managed and tidy. Boundaries must be clearly defined, safe and secure.

#### 4.8 Other facilities

In addition to the health and safety and amenity requirements there may be additional facilities offered in the premises e.g. laundry room, children's play areas, doctors' visiting room etc. If provided they must meet all statutory requirements for such facilities.

## **5. MANAGEMENT STANDARDS**

### 5.1 Standard of repair, cleanliness and decoration

A cleaning schedule should be in place for the entire property. The frequency of the cleaning should be appropriate to the type of accommodation and level of occupation.

Shared kitchens, bathrooms and WCs should be cleaned at least weekly.

Individual room lettings should be cleaned at a frequency appropriate to need. The cleaning schedule should be adequate to ensure that all parts of the property are maintained in good, clean decorative repair.

### 5.2 Management of overcrowding

Owners/Managers are required to ensure that the crowding and space standards are not contravened and to deal with any unauthorized occupancy as soon as it is noted. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action which may harm their "fit and proper person" status under any HMO licence condition and if persistent may result in NBC reviewing the business partnership arrangements.

### 5.3 Pest Control

The property should be free from pest infestations throughout. Where an infestation is present steps shall be taken to eradicate the infestation having full regard to statutory requirements and processes. Where treatment is absent or inadequate, the Owner/Manager will be instructed to engage the services of a reputable pest control operator to eradicate the problem at source and undertake periodic routine inspections. The Owner/Manager should then keep a log book of periodic pest control treatments and keep it available for inspection by the local authority. Enforcement action, although a last resort will be taken where necessary.

### 5.4 Food Safety (catering)

Where staff prepare food for residents, the kitchen should comply with the Food Hygiene Regulations. Local Authority food safety officers will inspect the kitchen under the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 and the Food Safety Act 1990 and will take any necessary action.

Private Sector Housing Officers will not undertake a full food hygiene inspection however they may carry out a visual check of the kitchen and note any obvious defects. Items to be assessed include:

- Structure and condition of the kitchen

- General cleanliness
- Waste disposal facilities
- Equipment i.e. provision of sinks, wash hand basin, refrigerators, food storage cupboards, etc.
- Hot and cold water supplies
- Ventilation
- Design and layout e.g. too small, too cramped, poor access to wash hand basin etc.

If serious deficiencies are noted the Council's food team will be informed.

Kitchens used for catering for residents must not be made available for residents' use and will not be considered to contribute towards the amenities provided for residents.

### 5.5 Maintenance of installations and equipment

Owners/Managers are required to ensure that:

- A service and gas safety check is carried out on all gas appliances annually. Only engineers who are Gas Safe registered are permitted to undertake this.
- The electrical installation is inspected and tested at least every five years. Only a suitably qualified contractor, registered as a 'Competent Person' with a scheme that has been approved by The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) are permitted to undertake this.
- The fire alarm system is serviced, maintained and tested in accordance with the BS5839: Part 1 (Hotels and hostels), or Part 6, (dwellings and HMOs). In practice, for a Grade A system, this will mean a six monthly service by a competent person and routine testing by the Owner/Manager. For grade D systems alarms should be cleaned annually and tested by the Owner/Manager monthly.
- The emergency lighting system is serviced, maintained and tested in accordance with the BS 5266-8: 2004, as amended by BS5266, Part 1: 2011. In practice this will mean an annual discharge test by a competent person and routine testing by the Owner/Manager. Council officers may ask to see the log book and annual test certificate which must be provide by a "competent person".
- Any fire extinguishers (which are not recommended by Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service) and Fire Blankets provided should be checked periodically by the Owner/Manager to ensure they are in place and extinguishers have not been discharged
- It is the responsibility of the Owner/Manager to have a valid EPC. The property should have an energy efficiency rating of E as a minimum. The EPC must be made available to the Council on request.

The log book and all statutory certification relating to the above must be kept and made available for Council Officers to see on request. For servicing and testing by a

“competent person”, the Owner/Manager will normally be expected to have an on-going maintenance contract in place.

#### 5.6 Refuse storage facilities

The Owner/Manager must ensure that sufficient bins/receptacles are provided that are adequate for the requirements of all residents for the storage of refuse and litter pending disposal and make satisfactory arrangements for its collection and disposal with the Local Authority or a reputable commercial waste disposal contractor.

#### 5.7 Display of ownership and management details

The name, address and contact number of the Owner/Manager of the premises must be clearly displayed in a prominent position in the reception or entrance hall.

#### 5.8 On-site management

The Owner/Manager, in liaison with the Council’s Temporary Accommodation Team, shall take such appropriate action where occupiers are acting or behaving in a way which creates hazards or frustrates the management of the property in accordance with these standards.

Larger premises of over 12 rooms should have 24 hour on-site management.

### **PART 6: ADDITIONAL FACILITIES**

#### 6.1 Furniture and fittings

Furniture and fittings should be of an acceptable standard and well maintained. All soft furnishings provided must comply with the requirements of the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988

#### 6.2 Cots

Cots should be readily available.

#### 6.3 Laundry facilities

Laundry facilities should ideally be available within the premises.

There is no presumption that the establishment should bear residents’ personal laundry costs and pay/slot machines are acceptable provided the rate is set only to cover costs and is not excessive in comparison with commercial establishments in the locality.

### **APPENDIX 1: SPACE STANDARDS**

a. Nightly-rate temporary accommodation for homeless persons will usually be limited to sleeping rooms plus amenity rooms. Additional living rooms, dining rooms,

store-rooms etc. are uncommon. It is essential, therefore, that there is adequate space within the allocated rooms and that the property overall is not overcrowded.

The following space standards are regarded as an absolute minimum for sleeping rooms and are based on the Statutory Overcrowding provisions in Part X of the Housing Act 1985. Where the property comprises a licensed HMO, the licensing standards adopted by the Council will take precedence.

b. The council's homelessness officers will check existing levels of occupancy in a property before making new placements so as not to create or worsen overcrowding.

Table 2: Sleeping rooms not containing cooking facilities

Floor Area of Sleeping Room	Maximum Number of Persons
Less than 6.51 m <sup>2</sup>	Nil
Not less than 6.5 m <sup>2</sup>	1
Not less than 10.22 m <sup>2</sup>	2
Not less than 14.9 m <sup>2</sup>	3
Not less than 19.6 m <sup>2</sup>	4
Not less than 24.2 m <sup>2</sup>	5
No more than 5 persons should be required to occupy any room	

A room with a useable floor area between **4.64m<sup>2</sup>** and **6.5 m<sup>2</sup>** may be occupied as sleeping accommodation by a child under the age of 10, provided the room is let or occupied in connection with the letting or occupation of an adjacent room with a useable floor area of or in excess of **6.51m<sup>2</sup>** to a parent or guardian of the child.

Table 3: Sleeping rooms containing cooking facilities

Floor Area of Sleeping Room	Maximum Number of Persons
Less than 10.0 m <sup>2</sup>	Nil
Not less than 10.0 m <sup>2</sup>	1
Not less than 13.9 m <sup>2</sup>	2
Not less than 18.6 m <sup>2</sup>	3
Not less than 23.2 m <sup>2</sup>	4
Not less than 27.9 m <sup>2</sup>	5
No more than 5 persons should be required to occupy any room	

c. Rooms must have a minimum floor to ceiling height of at least 2.1m over not less than 50% of the room area. Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.5m should be disregarded.

d. In addition to measuring the gross floor area of rooms, consideration must also be given to the shape and usable living space to determine whether rooms are suitable for occupation and to what occupancy level.

- e. The space standards specified in this guide are low, reflecting the temporary nature of the accommodation. When making an assessment for suitability the Owner/Manager should not allow the room size to be reduced further by including floor space which does not contribute practically towards the useable space.
- f. The floor area taken up by a solid chimney breast should be discounted.
- g. Built in storage space (cupboards, wardrobes etc.) should be counted as this would occupy the room's main floor space if it were not present.
- h. Account should be taken of entrance lobbies/corridors within rooms. Owners/Managers should make an assessment of whether areas such as these contribute to useable space or simply give access to the room. Where the room door opens into a narrow space, the floor area covered by the swing of the door should be discounted. No deduction should be made where the door opens directly into the room itself or into a lobby area/corridor of more than 1800mm width.
- i. In addition to the net floor area consideration should be given to the shape of the room. Single rooms should have a minimum width of 1.8m. Rooms for two or more persons should have a minimum width of 2.3 m.