



## Property Guidance's

The guidance's is provided in line with the Housing Regulate, Council and Registered Providers standards. We recommend that all individuals who wish to work within this field conduct self-research.

### 1.1 Principle of Refurbishment

The residents we work with shall be deemed from a vulnerable background. As such the specific needs of the residents shall require consideration to be given during the design and specification of any refurbishment works. Whilst determining any refurbishment project / design specification, full consideration should be given to the individual requirements of the resident or overall cohort of residents. These considerations should focus on the minimisation of risk, to both individual and group; maximisation of personal progression and life-enhancement; and also, the longevity of use for the accommodation, whilst minimising ongoing maintenance costs.

The core base level of refurbishment should be maintained in all cases, this will include certain elements without exception. These shall include, but not be limited to legislative fire protection system; emergency lighting; security and safety locking mechanisms; flooring suitable for high wear and non-slip use; lighting and heating systems that are low-tamper and easy-maintenance; fall from height protection (window restrictors); and door locking mechanisms that minimize lock-out scenarios.

### 2.1 Building Standard and Requirements

- **Room Sizes** - With a wide variety of property types in use it is impossible to fully detail all relevant legislative requirements within this section. However, as a general set of guideline principles the following set of specifications should be applied, as a minimum;
  - Bedroom in Shared House with Communal Living Room @ 6.5m<sup>2</sup>
  - Bedroom in Shared House with No Communal Living Room @ 10m<sup>2</sup>
  - Kitchen in Shared House for up to and including 5 Persons @ 6.5m<sup>2</sup>
  - Kitchen in Shared House for up to and including 6 Persons @ 7.5m<sup>2</sup>
  - Kitchen in Shared House for up to and including 7 Persons @ 8.5m<sup>2</sup>
  - Kitchen in Shared House for up to and including 8 Persons @ 9.5m<sup>2</sup>
  - Living Room for up to and including 5 Persons @ 11m<sup>2</sup>
  - Living Room for up to and including 6 Persons @ 13m<sup>2</sup>
- **Windows and Window Locks** - The style of windows at a property is not mandatorily specified, however consideration should be given to the environmental and economic benefits of a double-glazed system. In all cases however all windows should be provided with a suitable locking mechanism to provide adequate security protection. Additionally, all windows above ground- floor level should be fitted with a restrictor to prevent excess opening.
- **Kitchen Facilities** - The provision of adequate kitchen facilities shall be in line with current legislative requirements (to be verified by external supplier or contractor). As a general rule however the following rules shall apply:-
  - **Cooking** – All properties shall as a minimum be provided with a single cooker (min 4 hobs, oven and grill), preferably of an electric rather than gas design. There are then specific requirements that are dependent on the number of

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residents designated at the property, these being:- 0 – 5 require 1 cooker; 6 – 10 require 2 cookers; 11 – 15 require 3 cookers. There may on some occasions be an exception that for 6 – 7 residents a 20+ liter microwave may be acceptable.

- Sinks – All properties shall be provided with a full size sink, with trapped waste and a supply of hot and cold running water. Where a property is designated for up to and including 7 persons the sink should have a double bowl and drainer area. Where a property exceeds this, and is designated for 8 – 10 persons a second sink must be provided, and for 11 – 15 a third sink.
  - Work Surface – All properties must have adequate work surface provided, which as a guide should be approx. 0.5m for each designated resident at the property. This surface should be free from major defect and provide for hygienic food preparation.
  - Electrical Supply – All kitchens should have provision of at least 2 twin electrical sockets per 5 designated residents, although Concept Housing Association CIC would consider this as an absolute minimum and prefer a minimum of at least 4 sockets per 5 residents at all properties.
  - Refrigeration – All properties shall be provided with a minimum of one standard size under counter fridge (with freezer compartment included). Where a property is designated for more than 3 persons there must be a minimum of at least one tall upright free standing fridge-freezer. There should be an additional tall upright fridge freezer per additional 5 residents.
  - Dry Food Storage – There should be adequate storage space for all residents within a property, however as a minimum there should be one cupboard space (or equivalent) per resident. As a note, the space underneath a sink cannot be utilised for this purpose.
- **Bathroom / WC Facilities** - The provision of adequate bathroom / WC shall be in line with current legislative requirements (to be verified by external supplier or contractor). However, as a general rule one full bathroom containing toilet, basin and shower or bath shall be provided for every 5 residents. In all cases the bathroom should be of adequate size to enable ease of use and to enable residents to safely dry themselves and get dressed. It should also be adequately ventilated, the preferred method being that of a mechanical extraction system of adequate capacity. In some limited circumstances, where it proves impossible or impractical to provide a mechanical extraction solution, an opening window will be considered. Where a property is provided with a separate WC this must include a separate hand basin and means of ventilation. The door should lock should be a thumb lock mechanism and in the event the Bathroom/WC Facilities has a boiler unit with, then internal door should be followed.
  - **Heating System** - All habitable rooms must be provided with an appropriate and affordable form of heating. This heating system must be capable of achieving a room temperature of 21 degrees C, when the outside air temperature is at - 1-degree C. The preferred heating system is that of Gas Fired Central Heating, however Electric Storage Heaters are also acceptable. All heating systems must be of a fixed nature and (with the exception of water filled radiators) must not be positioned less than 2 meters from any bedding or soft furnishings. Additionally, all bathrooms must be provided with some form of suitable fixed heating provision. Where a property presents with a Gas Fire, this should be removed or not accessible and flu to be appropriately sealed and blocked off. The boiler location should be in an area which is safe and a Carbon Monoxide detector should be located within the vicinity of the boiler to ensure the safety of those living within the property; Although a wired monitor is preferred a securely located battery unit is also acceptable.
  - **Emergency Control Equipment** - In order to ensure ease of access in the case of emergencies full consideration must be given to the location of emergency control equipment and shut off valves. As such, under no circumstances can such items be located within locked bedrooms, and they must be accessible easily from communal areas, including:

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- Gas Meter and Gas Isolation Valve
- Electrical Distribution Board / Isolators
- Water Stop Cock

The location of these items in communal areas, must be appropriate and accessible in terms of height of installation and there being no requirement for additional access equipment (i.e. not within locked areas).

- **Meters** – In order for a smooth operation, it works well to have meters outside of resident’s bedrooms, this is not a mandatory requirement but more of a preference.

### 3.1 Safety Structural Standards

- **Safety signs** – Each bedroom should have its own individual numbered door, to be able to identify in the event of an emergency. Fire exit signs and fire door signage throughout the property.
- **Fire Protection System** – The system is used to sound an alarm in the deduction of smoke or fire, the property should be equipped with a “wired” and fully linked fire alarm system and a minimum of a single Fire Blanket in the kitchen area. This system shall be installed in compliance with all current legislation. If the building is 3 levels plus, a fully interlinked panel-based system is mandatory.
- **Emergency Lighting** – The emergency light support residents to enable safe evacuation if an issue should arise. During placement, consider the layout of any property to ensure that no prevention from the illuminated light ceases a direct access route to the exit point. In the event it does, an additional emergency light or lights should be located in the area adjacent to the bedrooms and additionally as required to provide for safe exit in the case of an emergency. It remains the responsibility of the external organisations and landlord who supplies the property and installation to confirm and validate the most appropriate and compliant system to be installed.
- **Doors**
  - External** - The external doors must be of any appropriate construction, so long as to be in keeping with the style of the property and such that they provide adequate security protection. They must be easy to operate and be fitted with a single satisfactory euro style barrel locking mechanism with key entry, with an internal thumb-turn fitted as standard; for references a key-less means of opening in case of emergency.
  - Internal** - All internal personal threshold doors should be fitted with a minimum of a 30-minute Fire Door to meet current legislative requirements. The door should be fitted with intumescent smoke seal protection as standard, self-door closer and a door handle fit for purpose. For bedroom doors only, a suitable and robust lock, key entry, within internal thumb-turn mechanism to be used. Glazed panel doors can be used in communal rooms only, and this should be of a pyroglass nature and in line with current legislations.
  - Bathroom/WC** – fitted with appropriate doors, and a privacy lock to be fitted, with “coin turn access”, to be able to gain entry from the outside in the event of an emergency. Only if the bathroom/WC, has a boiler located within, then the above internal methods should be followed.

### 4.1 General Décor

All walls, ceilings and woodwork should be free from major cracks, holes and damages, with a clean and simple paint finish. A suitable window covering such as safety blinds or/and curtains which block out general day light when in use must be satisfactory. Appropriate floor covering is required, and consideration should be given to the individual nature of the areas to be covered, the fitting of floor coverings should be done to a standard whereby trip hazards, resulting from loose or poorly fitted coverings, are eliminated. Additional consideration should be given to ensuring the longevity (and easy cleaning) of floor coverings, so as to minimise ongoing costs and maintenance requirements. As a recommendation:

- Kitchen, bathrooms or laundry areas (wet areas) - non-slip vinyl
- Stairs and bedrooms – a hardwearing carpet in a dark color

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- Communal areas, lounges and entrances ways – a vinyl or laminate flooring

### 5.1 Goods and Furnishings

All of our properties require suitable standard items in both residents' bedrooms and communal areas. This furniture must be of an acceptable and legislatively compliant standard and provide for an adequate length of service for the individual/cohort be provided the accommodation. The minimum general specification requirements for furniture provision are as detailed below:-

- **Bedroom** – Bed, mattress, single wardrobe, bedside table, set of 3 draws.
- **Communal Area** – Sofa, dining table and chair (all of suitable size and quantity for designated number of residents), Notice Board.
- **Bathroom** - Toilet Brush, Anti-slip Mat and Shower Curtain/Screen (if applicable).
- **Kitchen** - Electric Toaster; Electric Kettle; Microwave; Bin; Fire Blanket; Dustpan and Brush; Mop and Bucket; Washing Machin (and Dryer where applicable).

### 6.1 - Additional Recourses

As noted above, it is a mandatory requirement for all suppliers, landlords, agents and contractors that are involved with the provision of properties or any individual elements of them to be fully aware of current legislation. Their supply service and/or work should be fully compliant with this legislation.

The key resources utilised within the preparation of this document include:-

- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Housing Act 2004) Operating Guidance
- Property and Management Standards Applicable to Houses in Multiple Occupation (Housing Act 2004)
- Guide to Fire and Security Protection in Multi-Occupied Residential Properties

*\*Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the details contained within this document, where any external organisations become aware of a legislative requirement beyond that noted please feel free to let us know without delay. It is always recommended to conduct research and become knowledgeable within your own right on legislations and HMO style standard properties. This is not an exhaustive list of requirements, and we shall work with you to ensure both parties are in line with the required standards and specifications. \**