



HOUSING SUPPORT APPROVED **ACCOMMODATION STANDARDS**

INTRODUCTION

The term Housing Support covers the commissioning of support to a variable degree in a range of accommodation. As the commissioned services support users with aspects of independent living and have the ultimate aim of reducing support to the lowest level required, the environment where the support is delivered is a fundamental part of the process.

Supported housing accommodates some of the most vulnerable people in our society; it is therefore essential that it is safe, of good quality, meets user's needs and fits with the local community.

Accommodation quality ultimately contributes to determining outcomes – higher quality means individuals are more likely to experience better outcomes, whether that means successfully living independently, navigating and staying out of crisis or managing their health effectively.

Working collaboratively is crucial. We would encourage providers to engage with their local council to demonstrate the safety, quality and value of their service.

All organisations involved in the delivery of supported housing have a role to play in achieving safe and high quality housing, including:

- **Providers**, in making sure housing is safe, well managed, of a good standard and costs are fair
- **LBN** in assuring the suitability, safety and quality of accommodation.
- **Service users and carers**, it is important that residents are consulted and content with the placement. LBN should follow up with individuals or their carers to ensure that the accommodation meets their expectations and needs.

In Newham the type of accommodation varies from a large hostel to street properties occupied communally. The standards will cover the full range of property types.

These accommodation standards cover the minimum standard that service users should expect when they move into a new Housing Support service. The standards are progressive, that is the minimum standards will not be the full extent of the aspiration for quality. In time there will be an expectation that standards such as full wheelchair accessibility are achieved.

All properties to be used to deliver supported housing will be inspected by LBN officers who will also carry out regular re-inspections in order to maintain the list. If applicable inspection reports will include a list of additional works required for properties to reach the required standard. A property will not be admitted or removed from the list if it does not meet the standards. Dependent on the severity of the issues the landlord and support provider will be given time to rectify the issues. Once the standard is reached the property will be re-admitted to the approved list.

Adherence to these standards will form part of the Selection Questionnaire for mini competitions under the forthcoming DPV. No tender to provide housing support will progress without confirmation that the support will be provided in an approved property.

In recognition that they are subject to a rigorous quality regime Registered Housing Providers will have a light touch inspection process which will cover categories not covered by the Regulator of Social Housing.

THE STANDARDS

Landlords are responsible for ensuring a minimum standard of accommodation quality evidenced through the following;

- Meet the Decent Homes Standard;
- Be free from Category 1 and significant Category 2 hazards with regard to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced by the Housing Act 2004;
- Comply with all other legislation relating to the health and safety of residential occupants;
- Be in such a condition so as not to cause nuisance to any neighbouring properties.
- Be in sound condition and all necessary statutory checks and tests will be carried out prior to a new tenant moving in to the property.
- All gas appliances and services shall comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.
- There is a robust and regularly reviewed Fire Risk Assessment in place
- There is Fire Safety Certificate
- Any work carried out at the property, which requires either Building Regulation approval or Development Control consent should have such approval.
- Properties should be energy efficient with consideration given to total energy use, carbon dioxide emissions and likely energy performance particularly in relation to the "Heating & Thermal Comfort" section below.
- An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) must be obtained before a property is rented and must be renewed every 10 years. All rented properties must have an EPC rated at E or above. See further information in the "Heating & Thermal Comfort" section below. The landlord will provide an up to date copy of the current Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- The landlord will provide an up to date copy of the current Gas Safety Certificate & a copy of the NICEIC certificate.

GENERAL

The accommodation must be managed in a way which reflects that it is a home;

- Residents should be given the most secure form of tenancy compatible with the purpose of the housing and their needs and circumstances.
- All relevant information relating to the tenancy is given in a form and use language which is clearly understandable by the tenants – e.g. community languages, Makaton, Easy Read
- The communal areas must be clean and tidy. All furniture and fittings to be in a good state of repair. They should be clean and of good quality and to reflect

service user's tastes and be tailored to their needs.

- Service users' bedrooms should be personalised – evidence that service users have chosen the wall colours/curtains/furniture etc where possible and have personal belongings.
- Service users have their own bedroom and where service users share the process of this is recorded (for example, service users' choice around this and who they share with) and that their dignity whilst sharing is observed.
- Service users are able to lock their doors and have their own key to their rooms. Where this is not applicable there should be clear documentation as to the reasons why. There should be no institutional practices such as numbered rooms.
- Staff should knock to request entry and wait for the Service user to respond before entering or ask service users if they can go in their room.
- Service user's rooms should be uncluttered and safe and reflect their needs. Where individual preferences do not match health and safety, such as where an individual hoards items/poses fire risks, this has been risk assessed.

INTERNAL

Doors - External

- Doors, door frames and furniture (including door closers where appropriate) will be safe, secure and operational
- A new five-lever lock will be provided to the front door (unless a multi locking arrangement is installed). At least two sets of keys and an entryfob will be provided (where applicable)
- Any key operated letterbox will be provided with a new lock and twokeys.
- Where the unit entrance door opens onto a communal hallway then an FD30S rated fire-resisting door set will be fitted

Doors - Internal

- All internal doors will function correctly. They will be adjusted to ensure a minimum reasonable gap between the door and frame
- All defective handles will be replaced.
- Glazed doors will be removed unless safety glass is fitted.

Floors

- Floors and stairs will be safe and free of loose floorboards, treads and risers.
- Floors will be free from defects, safe and in a sound condition.
- Floorboards will be secure and free from protruding nails.
- The kitchen and bathroom floors will have a waterproof (washable) finish that is in reasonable condition and is hygienic, easy to clean and slip resistant.
- Skirting boards will be in place throughout and securely fixed.

Walls & Ceilings

- Ceilings and walls will be in a sound condition and free from structural defects.
- Wall and ceiling plaster will be in reasonable condition and free from major cracks and holes.

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- Any polystyrene ceiling tiles and coving plus any wooden wall boarding will be removed.

Roof

- Roofs will have been subject to a visual check and will be safe and watertight.
- Roof, gutters and rain water pipes will be sound, well maintained, and free from leaks or blockages.
- A minimum of 300 mm of insulation will be provided in the roof space (if applicable). All water pipes in the roof space will be insulated.
- Roof spaces/lofts will be clear of former and current tenants' belongings

Stairs

- All parts of a staircase should be in good condition and free from defects and any damaged or missing handrails, banisters, etc. will be repaired or renewed as required.
- Appropriate handrails and balusters will be in place and will be secure.
- All stair carpet grippers will be removed.

Windows

- Windows are safe, secure, and operational.
- Windows will open safely and easily and restrictors (if applicable) are working properly.
- All glazing and putties (if applicable) are intact
- If the windows have security locks 2 sets of keys are supplied.

KITCHEN, DINING and LIVING FACILITIES

The kitchen should be of satisfactory layout and have adequate provision for hygienic storage, preparation and cooking of food, so preventing the risk of infection to occupants.

The occupants should not be exposed by reason of layout, size, design or other feature to risk from hot surfaces or risk from burns or scalds caused by contact with flames or hot liquids.

Kitchen units and appliances should be free from defects and in good working order. In general, kitchen facilities should be less than 20 years old.

Kitchen facilities used by a **single household** should comprise:

- a cooker (4 cooking rings), oven and grill (suitably restrained and located);
- a sink with integral drainer set on a 1000mm base unit;
- constant hot and cold water supplies to the sink;
- a fixed impervious and readily cleansable work surface, minimum 1000 x 600mm;
- an adequate tiled splash-back to a height of at least 300mm above any sink or work surface;
- a direct drainage connection to the sink with a suitable water trap;

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- adequate storage cupboard units, minimum 0.3 cubic metres;
- a suitable sized refrigerator;
- a minimum of 2 double electrical sockets above work surfaces (excluding appliance sockets).

Joints around sinks and worktops should be sealed with silicone sealant.

Waste pipes and taps should be defect free with no leaks or drips. Taps should be easy to operate.

A kitchen must not be the sole access to a room used for sleeping.

Kitchen facilities must not be installed in a hallway.

A humidistat-controlled mechanical extractor must be provided where there is inadequate ventilation by means of a window. Newly converted kitchens must have a mechanical extractor regardless of whether there is an openable window.

Where kitchen facilities are shared by more than one household then the facilities should be no more than one floor away from the letting. Where this is not practicable, a dining room area of a size suitable for the number of occupiers should be provided.

In shared accommodation kitchens must be of an adequate size and shape to enable safe use of food preparation by the number of occupiers and the following guidelines for shared kitchens apply:

Number of sharers	Room size
Up to 3	5.5 sq m
4 – 5	7.5 sq m
6- 7	9.5 sq m
8 – 10	11.5 sq m

Where all or some of the lettings within the shared accommodation do not contain cooking facilities, they must be provided for sharing with other households. There should be one full set of facilities per 5 persons. Some flexibility may be considered in well-managed properties where there are 6 or 7 persons, subject to a risk assessment carried out by the local authority.

Where there are 8 – 10 persons, either an additional full set of cooking facilities must be provided, or additional facilities must be provided in an appropriate number of individual lettings where the room is large enough.

A set of cooking facilities in shared accommodation is comprised as follows:

Facilities	Number of Occupiers	Specifications
Cooker	One	In one-person bedsits only, a cooker with a 2-ring hob, oven and grill. Must be permanently and safely installed on a fixed worktop
	Up to 5	Four-ring hob, oven and grill

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	6 – 7	Four-ring hob, oven and grill and an additional combined microwave oven and grill
Sink / Drainer	Up to 5	1000 mm sink/drainers set on base unit, provided with a constant supply of hot and cold water and properly connected to the drainage system
	6 – 7	A double sink/drainers installed as above <u>or</u> A single sink/drainers plus a dishwasher
Worktop	Up to 5	1000 mm x 600 mm. Worktop must be fixed, and made of suitable impervious material.
	6 – 7	2000 mm x 600 mm provided and fitted as above, plus additional space for extra appliances
Splashback	All	300 mm tiled splashback or its equivalent to be provided to the sink/drainers, worktop and any cooker without an integral splashback.
Electrical sockets	Up to 5	One suitably located electrical socket for each dedicated appliance such as a cooker, refrigerator and washing machine. In addition, 4 sockets (in either double or single combinations) to be provided above the worktop
	6 – 7	An additional 2 sockets as above.
Floor covering	All	Impervious and washable floor covering to cover the floor area of the kitchen.
Food storage cupboard	Per household	One double wall cupboard or One single base cupboard. May be provided within individual lets.

		The base unit below the sink/drainage is not acceptable for food storage.
Refrigerator	Per Household	Where provided in individual lets, a small fridge freezer
	Up to 5	Where provided in a shared kitchen, equivalent of 2 worktop height refrigerators both with freezer compartments, or 1 worktop height fridge and 1 worktop height freezer
	6 - 7	Where provided in a shared kitchen, the equivalent of an additional worktop height refrigerator with freezer compartment

Kitchen facilities, where provided in a bedsit, should be sited remote from the entrance door. The cooker should not be situated below a window.

BATHROOM AND WC FACILITIES

There should be adequate provision for personal hygiene.

Bathroom facilities should be in good working order and free from defects and, in general, should be less than 30 years old.

Bathrooms and WC's should be within one floor of lettings, and where shared, must be accessible from a common area. They must be fitted with a suitable lock and the surface should be impervious and readily cleansable.

The bath and shower should be positioned to prevent falls and where necessary handles and grab rails should be provided. Sharp edges or projections should be removed and non-slip surfaces should be provided where necessary.

Sanitary facilities (in total throughout a dwelling) should include:

- a fixed bath or shower and wash hand basin with a constant supply of hot and cold water and a direct drainage connection with suitable trap (minimum sizes: wash hand basin 500 x 400mm, bath 1700 x 700mm and shower 800 x 800mm);
- A WC properly connected to the drainage. The WC cistern overflow should discharge externally;
- Dwellings with over five occupants should have a WC which is separate from the bathroom;
- Adequate tiled splash-back should be provided to the bath and wash hand basin (300mm high);
- Showers should have tiling of sufficient height to protect the decoration of the wall (minimum of 1.80m) which is properly sealed and a shower screen or curtain of a sufficient standard to prevent water damage to floor;
- Plugs and chains will be provided unless an integral 'pop up' waste is provided

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- Wash hand basins, baths and showers will have a waterproof seal between them and the wall. All such mastic sealant will be in good condition.
- The toilet seat will be new, and regularly replaced.
- Any extractor fans provided will be cleaned and operational

Joints around baths and wash hand basins should be sealed with silicone sealant.

Facilities should be provided with adequate lighting.

Bath/shower rooms must be adequately ventilated and heated (electric bar heaters are not permitted).

There should be adequate space for access adjacent to the facilities. Bathrooms located off a kitchen should have a wash hand basin. Bathrooms should not be accessed through a bedroom except for one bedroom flats.

The facilities provided for the number of occupiers and households should be adequate and the following is the standard to be applied where facilities are shared by 2 or more households (external WC's are not counted);

Number of Occupiers	Facilities	Specifications
1-4	1 bath with wash hand basin WC can be in bathroom	Standard size bath with 450 mm splashback Full-size wash hand basin with tiled splashback. Both to have constant supply of hot and cold water. If the WC is separate, it must have an additional wash hand basin & tiled splashback within the compartment.
5	1 bath with wash hand basin in room 1 WC with wash hand basin 1 wash hand basin in each sleeping room (where practicable)	As above WC may be in the same room as the bath/ wash hand basin Wash hand basins in bedsit rooms (where practicable).
6-10	2 bathrooms with hand basins in each 2 WCs, one in own compartment with wash hand basin 1 wash hand basin in each sleeping room (where practicable)	As above Wash hand basins in bedsit rooms where practicable. WCs may be in the same rooms as the bath/ wash hand basin

Note: Where a shower cubicle is provided, it must be of a sufficient size that the user can bathe and dress without injury.

HEATING AND THERMAL COMFORT

All premises should have effective insulation and efficient heating. Heating should be matched to the thermal capacity and performance of the structure. The heating system should comprise of either full gas central heating or electric storage heaters at off peak or low cost rates.

The premises should be capable of being heated to a temperature of 21°C in living areas and 18°C in bedrooms when the outside temperature is - 1°C.

The heating should be controllable by the occupants i.e. have a timer and/or thermostat and should operate independently from the hot water system.

The heating should be properly installed and regularly maintained by a Gas Safe or NICEIC registered engineer. Copies of their certificates should be provided.

All rented properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rated at E or above. If you are unable to achieve a rating of E or above then the Landlord must register an exemption on the 'PRS Exemption Register'. For further information on how to do this please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-rented-sector-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-exemptions/guidance-on-prs-exemptions-and-exemptions-register-evidence-requirements#contents>

GAS INSTALLATION

All gas appliances should be properly fixed and ventilated, Gas Safe approved and should be certified as safe by a Gas Safe registered engineer on an annual basis. There should be no evidence of the production of Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Dioxide, Sulphur Dioxide or un-combusted fuel gas.

A Landlord Gas Safety Record or Gas Safety Certificate, with details of all the checks that were carried out, will be provided to you by the Gas Safe registered engineer once the annual check has been completed. This document can also be referred to as CP12 certificate. A copy must be given to the current tenants or any new tenants within 28 days.

SPACE STANDARDS

Occupants should not be exposed to health risks caused by lack of space within the dwelling for living, sleeping and normal family life.

The following tables should be used to calculate the permitted number of occupants for the dwelling.

Maximum number of occupiers per room based on floor space in all privately rented accommodation	
6.51 sqm to 10.21 sqm	1 person
10.22 sqm or more	2 persons

Maximum number of occupiers per room based on floor space in shared accommodation with exclusive kitchen facilities within the room and self-contained studio bedsits/flats with kitchen facilities within the room	
13 sqm to 17.99 sqm	1 person
18 sqm or more	2 persons

NOTE:

Any room with a floor area of less than 4.64 square metres should not be used as sleeping accommodation.

Any part of the floor area of a room to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.5 metres is not to be taken into account in determining the floor area of that room.

Communal space, hallways, corridors, landings, kitchens, W.C's or bathrooms cannot be used as sleeping accommodation.

Fire Safety and Smoke Detection

- There is a robust and regularly reviewed Fire Risk Assessment in place
- Occupants must not be exposed to threat from uncontrolled fire and associated smoke, adequate means of escape from fire shall be provided and will be well signposted.
- As minimum, hard wired mains operated smoke alarms, with a tamper proof battery backup, to BS 5839-6:2019 should be provided to the ceiling in the dwelling hallway, on each landing area and any high risk room (e.g. living room, lounge room). A heat alarm should be installed in any kitchen.
- At least one smoke alarm should be provided on each floor level. Larger properties with corridors in excess of 5m in length will require additional smoke alarms.
- The smoke and heat alarms must be interlinked so that they all sound continuously in the event of a fire.
- Smoke and heat alarms shall be tested monthly and serviced every 12 months to ensure their proper operation.
- Fire extinguishers are in place on every floor
- There are fire blankets in the kitchen and staff are trained in how to use them and in fire safety.
- Fire extinguishers and other fire equipment is serviced annually.
- Full fire evacuations take place regularly and are recorded – including amount of time taken for evacuation

Decorative Standard

- All surfaces that require redecoration will be completed prior to letting.
- All surfaces must be clean, free of any marks and or previous signs of decoration (old wallpaper, poorly decorated finishes).
- All surface finishes to be bright and clean

Furniture

- Any furniture supplied shall comply with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993).
- Furniture should meet the BS EN 16139, BS 8474, and BS EN 1725 standards.

Waste Disposal and Storage

- Occupants must have adequate facilities for the disposal of household refuse and recycling.

Cleaning

- The property will be clean and cleared of all furniture, former tenant belongings,

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lampshades and general rubbish.

- Flooring will be swept and cleared regularly
- All woodwork will be cleaned regularly
- The floors in the bathroom and kitchen will be cleaned regularly
- All sanitary ware in the bathroom or W.C. will be cleaned regularly
- The kitchen sink, worktops, wall tiles and kitchen cupboards will be cleaned regularly

EXTERNAL

- Where tenants have use of a garden it will be cleared of any rubbish and left in a neat and tidy condition.
- Fences belonging to the property will be safe and in a reasonable condition
- Paths, steps and patios will be free from significant trip hazards.
- Any garages, brick-built or integral sheds will be cleared of rubbish and doors and windows will be intact.
- Any holes or gaps to external walls, such as those around waste pipes, will be sealed with mortar
- External redecoration will be carried out as part of programmed works.

Drainage

- Above ground drainage (soil and waste pipes) will be checked and repaired, if necessary, to leave in a watertight condition.
- Drains will be in good working order and free of blockages.
- Manhole covers will be replaced if broken.
- Gullies and grids will be in place, clear and free of obstruction.