

The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard Consultation Response

Background

This document is in response to Cambridge City Council's consultation of The Private Sector Housing Standard that was launched on Tuesday 8th May 2018.

The consultation sought views from stakeholders on the proposed Private Sector Housing Standard document for Cambridge that contains proposed standards in relation to the following key areas associated with the provision of safe and suitable accommodation within the private rented sector in Cambridge City for adoption by Cambridge City Council:

The definition of house in multiple occupation (HMO) under the Housing Act 2004,
HMO licensing criteria,
fire safety standards,
amenities standards,
minimum space standards in terms of sleeping rooms.

This report details the specific responses to the consultation and sets out Cambridge City Council's final proposals in relation to this matter. Please note that this report should be read along-side 'The Housing Scrutiny Committee Report Item - Adoption of The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard' and 'The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard' which forms Appendix a to the Committee Report.

Consultation Process

The consultation included a copy of the proposed draft Private Rented Sector Housing Standard and sought views from any stakeholders that may be affected by the introduction of this new Standard document.

The consultation began on 8th May 2018 and closed on 29th May 2018 this was primarily web based being advertised and accessed via the Cambridge City Council website with a link to the Survey Monkey consultation questionnaire.

Care was taken to notify a number of those individuals who may be affected by the introduction of the proposed Standard of the launch of the consultation.

Proposed Space Standards from the draft Standard document were presented and discussed during the most recent Landlord Forum on 21st February 2018.

The proposed draft Private Rented Sector Housing Standard document was presented and discussed during the most recent Landlord Steering Group meeting on 10th May 2018.

All Landlords and property managers / agents from the Landlord List held by Cambridge City Council were notified by e-mail / post accordingly with regards to the launch of the consultation.

A combination of closed and open questions were used to assist analysis of the responses.

Cambridge City Council would like to thank all interested parties for taking the time to respond to the consultation following which we have carefully considered your views.

Profile of Respondents

Cambridge City Council received a total of 57 responses to the Survey Monkey consultation questionnaire.

Respondents were made up of:

I am a tenant renting privately in Cambridge (26%, 13 responses);
I am a tenant renting privately outside of Cambridge (0%, 0 responses);
I am a Landlord with at least one property in Cambridge (42%, 22 responses);
I am a Landlord with no property in Cambridge (1%, 1 response);
I am a property agent / manager managing at least one property in Cambridge, (5%, 3 responses);
I am a property agent / manager managing property outside of Cambridge, (1%, 1 response);
I live in Cambridge, (13%, 7 responses);
I am resident outside of Cambridge, (0%, 0 responses);
Other, (1%, 1 response);
I would rather not say, (5%, 2 responses).

Please Note: two of the Survey Monkey responses registered, (#5 & #21), were 'test surveys' submitted via Claire Adelizzi, Team Manager – Residential, Environmental Services and have therefore been discounted from the final accepted total from which individual responses have been analysed.

A more detailed breakdown of the responses to selected questions in the consultation survey can be found at Annex A.

Issues Raised During Consultation

A variety of individuals responded to the consultation via on-line survey submissions. Respondents represented the views of Landlords, property agents / managers, private sector rental tenants and local residents.

The following is a summary of specific comments raised in response to consultation survey questions:

Q1

Having taken the time to consider the proposed Private Sector Housing Standard - Do you feel that the standard document provides clear information in relation to it's content areas, please tick where you agree and where necessary provide details in relation to areas for which you disagree:

Specific Consultation Comments to question 1 by Standard Content Area, (I disagree to clarity in some or all of these areas, I wish to make these specific comments:)

(please note that # = respondent number):

Housing Definitions

#8 - Housing definitions shared house / bedsit type HMO definition don't see a purpose in attempting to define a property in this way

#35 - The definition of an HMO is poor the implication is that a family of 5 taking in a lodger under the rent a room scheme would automatically fall under the requirements of licensing. It further confuses in that it implies that a couple with one lodger become an HMO.

#42 - I have a problem with very high quality HMO's let to young professionals being classed as 'bedsits' - a word that conjures up cheap and nasty accommodation with cooking facilities in bedrooms. In my opinion it is just plain wrong to assume that tenants on individual AST's are somehow higher risk than those who are all on one tenancy agreement. In many cases tenants on individual AST's are far more of a cohesive group than, for example, a 'group' of students who were completely unknown to each other prior to moving in but who are nevertheless on just the one tenancy agreement.

Improvement of the definitions: To ensure that lodgings landlords understand this applies to them also. To be clearer on the term 'bedsit type HMO' many landlords consider themselves to just be a 'shared house HMO' and not a 'bedsit type HMO'.

Licensable HMO's

#15 – For licensable HMO's making it 6 or more not 5

Fire Safety Standards

#20 – Extra clarity in terms of fire safety standards around fire extinguishers and protected

escape routes and what these entail in different scenario's

#38 - The requirement for 30 min fire separation between kitchen and adjoining rooms; does the adjoining room have to be habitable or does that include a toilet or a bathroom? Having met with a Fire Risk Assessment Officer this week, he informed me that a fire extinguisher was not fit for purpose! Why are these still being asked to be installed? You mentioned "overhead" door closers; does this mean the internally fitted ones are no longer permitted? In my experience, tenants are more likely to try and remove the overhead ones. There is no mention of complete door frames and furniture to have 30min fire protection as well as the actual door. Is this NOT a requirement then? That makes having a fire door pointless! Installation in accordance with appropriate British Standards.

#42 - If I understand the proposals correctly the suggestion is that a two storey HMO let to young professionals on individual AST's will have to have more stringent fire safety precautions (e.g. smoke detector in every bedroom) than a 3 or even 4 storey property let to a 'group' of students (where smoke detectors are only required in the common areas). That seems to make little sense. Having had many years experience as a Landlord of both tenant types I can assure you that in practice issuing tenants with individual AST's does most certainly NOT automatically put them into a higher risk category. Yes, they will probably be individual locks on their bedroom doors - but many if not most of the properties let to 'groups' will likewise have bedroom door locks.

#54 - Fire extinguishers: many properties do not have these as they have been advised they want people to leave and not tackle fires, and let fire doors etc. do their job.

#59 - Fire Safety Standards - What is classified as a all risk room?

Amenities

Amenities 4 double plug sockets seems excessive within a kitchen

#31 – Expectations as to no of sockets I believe is far excessive, especially if tenants have no complaints in relation to st his issue.

#35 - There is a lack of clarity in the definition of the number of sockets required in a kitchen. As i understand it there is a requirement for 6 double sockets. Does that mean 12 plugging points and would single sockets and multiway extenders be permitted.

#37 - Omg insisting on how many double sockets are in a kitchen and going round with clipboard counting them is a bit much...

#59 - Services - How many double sockets do the bedrooms require?

Space Standards

#1 - Concern re reduction of choice and increase in rents. Some people's choice to save money and live in smaller accommodation.

#9 #11 – Additional Space provided by means for example of an en-suite facility / built in storage arrangement would be considered in addition to floor area measurement

#15 - Space Standards not to enforce minimum

#22 – I am a tenant in Cambridge ... I like my cheap room don't enforce minimum size

#25 – Please don't implement an additional licensing scheme that brings in new minimum room size to 4 or below tenants in a HMO

#26 – Don't bring in restrictive space standards.

#27 – We have a shortage of rented property in this country. So new rules will reduce supply of rental accommodation. Especially space restrictions.

#28 – No one is forced to rent a small room.

#32 – There is no comparison with the Government minimum space standards on pages 19 and 20.

#33 - No additional licensing is needed it's very severe. I've done a quick count on my comparables spreadsheet of 327 3 bedroom properties in this area for letting 96 (29.4%) have a third bedroom of less than 4.64m² and therefore be totally unlettable 63 (19.3%) have 3rd bedroom between 4.64m² and 6.51m² so can only be let to children under 10. Therefore 48.7% of all 3 bedrooms in this area could not be let to an adult. They are all marketed and priced as 3 bed letting. If the government thinks that it is so unreasonable for a child to sleep in a room under 4.64m² why don't they ban owner occupiers from putting their children in these rooms.

#34 - I am happy living in a smaller room sharing with 3 others. If you bring in additional licensing I will have to move and entail all the stress and expense that goes with it.

#35 - You appear to have increased the space standard by requiring rooms to be 100 sq feet and then requiring a communal area. In HMO's where everybody has a lock to their door mostly there is no demand for a communal area.

#36 - Minimum space standards should not apply to 4 or less rooms in a house.

#40 - Minimum bedroom size will reduce the number of Rooms available. So less housing for Cambridge which is a bad thing.

#48 - If a tenant and a landlord agree on a tenancy on a smaller room why, do the council have to get involved.

#49 - Space standards are too rigid.

#51 - New build houses are allowed to get smaller in private sector to keep building costs down so to make affordable to buy. So why is private rental sector being picked on about space standards.

#56 - The clause about living room/ dining room must be provided if any room is more than one floor distance away from a kitchen, will affect our portfolio.

#57- There should be some sort of a provision for a 5th small room given that so many houses have them and that clearly there is a demand.

Services

#1 - Issue re temperature ambiguity raised on page 22.

General Comments

#1 – Tenant section / guide to be considered separately

#1 - Re standards/safeguards/ regulations applying to accommodation owned by educational institutions, councils, housing associations

#1 - Raising concerns section

#1 - Overnight visitors within a room and status re this regarding overall no's in occupancy

#10 – Application of the PRS Housing Standard being applicable to temporary accommodation

#16 – “The information provided is general and is not definitive, it is a guide and therefore every property will have slightly different requirements” this is very confusing

#23 – More regulations means rents go up

#24 – I will be forced to rent out the whole house as 1 unit

#41 - There is a Housing Shortage don't put your collective heads in the sand.

#43 - This will make the housing crisis worse and push up prices.

#44 - Keep Room prices down.

#45- I will be forced out.

#46 - House should be considered on it's own merits rather than setting minimum standards.

#47 - Keep the already inflated room prices down. This will make it worse.

#52 - It will make Cambridges rooms prices skyrocket.

#56 - It will make more Landlords sell up.

#58 - The requirements are clear but unrealistic. Especially with regard to ceiling heights, bin volume (155 litres?), double socket provision, kitchen circulation space, 2 hobs, 2

ovens and 2 grills for 6 people - really? plus requirements for mains operated fire systems (previously allowing for interlinked battery operated systems) and all this with an implementation date of 1 October 2018 which would be amusing, if not actually proposed.

Q2) Historically HMO's have largely been utilised as single occupancy rooms. However over recent years due to high costs associated with renting in Cambridge City demand for housing has increased in terms of co-habiting couples and families occupying such accommodation. For many people renting a room(s) within an HMO represents the only affordable housing option.

With this in mind and having had time to consider the Private Sector Housing Standard document do you feel that the proposed space standards associated with sleeping rooms to be adopted by Cambridge City Council offer reasonable floor space? (Please note an option to provide further specific comments re this question & the issue of space standards was made available under Q5, these comments follow further on in this report).

Specific Consultation Comments to question 2 were as follows.

(please note that # = respondent number):

#1 – Reduction of choice to groups of house sharers.
Smart ways of using smaller rooms.

#23 – I will have to move out of Cambridge as this means only large rooms

#24 – Too much interference on space standards – consistency.

Q3) Housing is a key determinant of health, and poor housing conditions continue to contribute to health inequalities. The stock condition survey carried out in 2015 estimated that 18% of properties within the private rented sector in Cambridge have a serious category one hazard associated with them.

We want to continue to improve living standards for our residents in the private rented sector whilst also supporting landlords and property managers via an informal approach wherever possible.

Do you feel that the proposed property standards will assist with regards to the following, please choose from the following options and provide any further specific comments you wish to make:

Improving standards for our residents within the private rented sector.

Supporting landlords and property agents to comply with legislation & associated regulations.

Specific Consultation Comments to question 3 (I disagree with one or both of these statements. I wish to make specific comments:) were as follows.

(please note that # = respondent number):

#26 – Standards will mean I'm homeless.

#27 – It was my choice a smaller room.

#28 – If it aint broke don't fix it.

#29 – Standard setting can only be in place if you have the enforcement to make it happen.

#32 - Cambridge City Council should focus on bad Landlords rather than enforcing the law to the letter on relatively minor issues with good landlords.

#33 – Stopping choice.

#35 - Having a room below the minimum size is not a category one hazard. There is no direct evidence that small rooms are defacto injurious to health . This is particularly true if the room is only intended for sleeping and short term use. The standards will make renting more difficult and reduce supply unless supply side steps are taken in conjunction with this to ensure the minimum room sizes when new builds are made. perhaps requiring the Parker _Morris standards be applied to all new builds. .

#36 - Not in regards to space standards for 4 or less HMO local stakeholder.

#37 - This proposal is letting officials meddle in my accommodation needs.

#38 - Unfortunately, you are still going to have greedy landlords who neither care for regulations or the welfare of tenants. Inspections by the council or trained associates, need to be carried out more thoroughly.

#40 - Some standards yes like Fire Safety but not Room size definitions it's too draconian.

#41 - Space enforcement will spiral an even worse crisis.

#42- As was found to be the case with the accreditation scheme it is the good Landlords who come forward. The really bad Landlords who operate 'under the radar' will continue to house tenants in poor quality / hazardous accommodation.

#43 - Don't cut off your nose to spite your face with minimum space requirements

#44 - Backdoor Economic Cleansing.

#45 - Don't bring in draconian space requirements when there not needed.

#46 - Improved living standards that cut rooms out of housing stock. It is like having improved food or no food at all and going hungry.

#47 – It will mean more rent money and less rooms.

#48 - Too controlling interference between a tenant and a landlord.

#51 – Penalising

#52 – Don't get rid of small rooms.

#56 - How to make Cambridge more costly for Rooms.

#57 - I'll have to seal off 5th room like Tutankamun Tomb for 3,000 years.

#58 - Supporting landlords - that is very funny I'm almost falling off my chair. Whilst thinking about your new proposals I am only calculating the addition rent increases and my long term exit from this business (which is no longer treated as a business by HMRC. Tenants can ill afford the price increases coming their way already - they may think you're helping them but you are not.

#59 - Providing Cambridge City Council supply support for Landlords with Legislation & Associated Regulations.

Q5) You answered NO to Q2, please provide specific details in relation to why you feel that the proposed space standards to be adopted by Cambridge City Council do not offer reasonable floor space associated with sleeping rooms?

The proposed space standards are too big

The proposed space standards are too small.

Specific Consultation Comments to question 5 (I wish to make specific comments.) were as follows.

(please note that # = respondent number):

#26 – I chose a smaller room as I was sleeping rough and managed to get a job. I can't afford bigger so will be forced to go back to old lifestyle.

#27 – This will further reduce supply and choice of rooms in relation to my budget. Cambridge does need extra licensing.

#28 – Size is in the price.

#32 – It is understood that the Cambridge City Council minimum standards are greater than those of Government. This does not take account of the requirements of tenants and will have the effect of social cleansing as poorer people are pushed out of town because they cannot afford the rent. Real life examples: Person who travels the world, spends little time in Cambridge just needing a base when at head office Lorry driver who would rather stay in a small room than use his cab. Student otherwise commuting from Bedfordshire area who cannot afford anything bigger.

#33 - No additional licensing is needed it's very severe. I've done a quick count on my comparables spreadsheet of 327 3 bedroom properties in this area for letting 96 (29.4%) have a third bedroom of less than 4.64m² and therefore be totally unlettable 63 (19.3%) have 3rd bedroom between 4.64m² and 6.51m² so can only be let to children under 10. Therefore 48.7% of all 3 bedrooms in this area could not be let to an adult. They are all marketed and priced as 3 bed letting. If the government thinks that it is so unreasonable for a child to sleep in a room under 4.64m² why don't they ban owner occupiers from putting their children in these rooms, (This is a repeat of this respondents answer to question 1).

#34 - Minimum bedroom size and kitchen size are unrealistic. Eliminates flexibility.

#36 - Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) believes it is impossible to define a bedroom by a minimum size for the purposes of the Bedroom Tax. However the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) appear to have done so, at least for the private sector. Keep it 5 or above.

#37 - Isn't room size to do with my landlord and I, why should the state interfere? My landlord put advert in, I responded to advert saw size of room, liked size and cheapness. Job done till now. Keep licence for bigger Houses in Multiple Occupation. Let me keep my room.

#40 – Housing stock will diminish.

#41 - It's taking rooms out of circulation, how is that a good thing.

#43 - I will be forced to give up work and claim housing benefit because room prices will increase as there will be less rooms.

#44 - It's Economic Cleansing. The poorer tenants of small rooms will be forced out of Cambridge.

#45 - So where will all us people happily living in rooms smaller than 6.52msq go when these rooms have to be permanently unlive in.

#46 - Take a house as a whole rather than getting out a tape measure in a bedroom and room is under by an inch and putting a big cross on a clipboard.

#47 - I will have to move out of Cambridge and try cheaper areas of UK. Less rooms more money.

#48 - If a tenant is on a tight budget or spends not much time in his/her room a smaller room is ideal.

#49 - The Parker Morris Standard was abandoned for public housing as bedroom sizes were deemed too big. So why is the private rental sector being punished and rooms that tenants like for renting to be forever closed.

#51 - New build homes are 20% smaller than homes built in the 1970's. So the private

developers/construction industry are allowed to build smaller. However the rental sector is going to be penalised for space and there is a Housing Crisis going on.

#52 - I am on minimum wage and will not be able to afford large room prices.

#56 - I see hostels are exempt. I was round Short St Hostel in Cambridge and there is 1 kitchen for 9 people, so it's ok for them. So pick on the private landlords for space standards and less rooms for us private tenants and more money eventually to pay.

#57 - I will have to have a cardboard cutout of an Environmental Health Officer in fifth empty room with clipboard to permanently check room remains empty to not have a licence hehe.

#58 - Nothing wrong with previous room sizes. As with all of these over-controlling and impacting-only professional landlords - type proposals; it removes the assumption that free market forces apply i.e. if a tenant doesn't like the space in a room they are under no compulsion to take the room and contract with the landlord. We are not providing accommodation for vulnerable groups in care home settings, we are offering rooms-to-rent just as any shop or business offers their services/offers and clients/customers to choose whether to accept or not based on free market forces in this case; space, facilities, location, decor, landlord, other tenants etc. It is totally outside of the Council's remit to provide minimum standards on behalf of people (tenants) more than capable of deciding for themselves. This is just a veiled way of generating more revenue via licensing and nothing to do with putting more inspectors on the streets to police bad landlords who are flouting already over-controlling systems. You admitted already to this happening so how are these proposals addressing this problem? Simply put - they are not. They are jeopardising future housing availability by alienating landlords out of the business and certainly increasing rents even further as a direct result. Please bear in mind that due to stamp duty changes, tax changes, loss of ability to charge administration costs of tenancies and additional data protection rules rents will be increasing by an average of £50 per head without inflation and assuming NO interest rate increases, which would add to this figure. Can tenants continue to pay this price increase, which is inevitable?

Q6) Optional, Please provide any further specific information that you wish to make us aware of in terms of the proposed Private Rented Sector Housing Standard?

Specific Consultation Comments to question 6 were as follows.

(please note that # = respondent number):

#16 - The requirement for a thermostatic control is unreasonable.

#16 - The requirement for heating systems to be capable of maintaining certain specified internal temperatures when the external temperature is 1C is unreasonable

#23 – Regulations too much

#26 – This will cause homelessness.

#27 – Keep my choice of Rooms and no extra regulation.

#29 – Enforcement must be strict and enhance public awareness of the new rules.

#32 - Clearly enforce Government minimum standards but apply Cambridge City Council standards as advisory.

#33 - No additional licensing is needed it's very severe. I've done a quick count on my comparables spreadsheet of 327 3 bedroom properties in this area for letting 96 (29.4%) have a third bedroom of less than 4.64m² and therefore be totally unlettable 63 (19.3%) have 3rd bedroom between 4.64m² and 6.51m² so can only be let to children under 10. Therefore 48.7% of all 3 bedrooms in this area could not be let to an adult. They are all marketed and priced as 3 bed letting. If the government thinks that it is so unreasonable for a child to sleep in a room under 4.64m² why don't they ban owner occupiers from putting their children in these rooms, (This is a repeat of this respondents answers to question 1 & 5).

#34 - Stop minimum bedroom, kitchen and lounge size restrictions on smaller HMOs.

#35 - There is no mention of the use of mezzanine floors which if properly used can increase space. A modification to letters sent would be useful. They are currently very aggressive in tone and will produce co-operation. The current letter should be used as a second step not a first. To reiterate the document is badly laid out all flash without the crucial information on what is part of the primary legislation and non ngeociable and what is part of the "improved" standards.

#36 - Try to be fair and consider 5 or above HMO for licensing, not 4 or less. Regards.

#37 - Dont meddle anymore than you have to with proposed law and make my housing needs more costly and harder to get or do the people (tenants) have no say.

#38 - The LACORS document you refer to is very outdated. I think we need to get in properly trained fire assessors to look at our HMOs and provide guidance on improvements, where necessary.

#40 - Don't damage Cambridge's Economy.

#41 - Don't let officialdom thrive.

#43 – Don't go down this route and cause unaffordable rooms.

#46 - I suppose common sense won't prevail and this will be pushed through.

#48 – Concentrate on fire safety standards.

#52 – Think of tenants on Minimum Wage.

#56 – Please don't make my accommodation more costly.

#58 - Please leave us good landlords alone to lick our already open wounds from all of the tax changes. Please bother the bad landlords by getting more people to police bad housing not create more paperwork and costs. Please! Please! Please!

Action in Relation to Common Themes & Further Proposals

Analysis of the consultation survey responses revealed that there were some common themes in terms of respondent's specific comments around particular content areas of The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard as follows:

Housing Definitions

There appeared to be discontent with regards to the inclusion of the definitions in relation to the types of HMO's 'Shared House' / 'Bedsit Type' HMO's – These must remain as they are written within this content area of The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard document as these defined types of HMO's remain accepted within LACORS Housing – Fire Safety from which fire safety standards within the standard document are drawn. Contribution was made to the writing of this document by industry professionals.

The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard does not contain an exhaustive list of definitions with regards to every type of HMO scenario that may be encountered the main occupancy types encountered by enforcement officers within Cambridge City are covered. It is specified that advice can be sought from the Residential Team within Environmental Services with regards to any uncertainty regarding a given occupancy situation.

Licensable HMO's

There appeared to be a degree of confusion from respondents in relation to Cambridge City Council bringing in 'additional licensing'. To provide clarity with regards to this point - Cambridge City Council is not bringing in additional licensing. Rather, from 1st October 2018 central government are implementing a statutory extension of the scope of the current mandatory licensing scheme. This means that as stated within The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard document from 1st October 2018 all HMO's with 5 or more individuals living within and certain flats in multiple occupation with 5 or more individuals living within will require a mandatory HMO licence from the Local Housing Authority in which the property is situated.

Additionally Cambridge City Council are not permitted to set the number of individuals occupying a property at which point mandatory HMO licensing applies, the figure of 5 or more individuals has been set by central government.

Fire Safety Standards

The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard document has been amended to reflect the request for further clarity in relation to the terminology 'means of escape' and 'protected route' as well as in relation to alternative self-closing devices that would be accepted to be fitted to fire resistant doors.

An additional content area of 'Fire Fighting Equipment' has been included within the standard document and it has been made clearer within the text relating to fire extinguishers that under Cambridge City Council Fire Safety Standards it is a recommendation to provide these within private rented accommodation.

Amenities

The standard of ensuring provision of at least 4 double plug socket outlets in addition to those servicing major appliances, (e.g. oven, refrigerator, washing machine etc.) within an HMO shared kitchen have been drafted with reference to current National House Building Council's technical standards. Reference to the provision of a greater number of plug socket outlets within a shared kitchen occupied by 6 – 10 individuals has been removed from The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard.

Space Standards

It is clear from the summary of comments provided within this report as well as from the more detailed analysis of consultation responses' that forms Annex A to this report that this was the content area of The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard that received the highest level of response as well as the majority of specific comments from respondents.

Taking into account specific comments made an Options Appraisal in relation to the issue of 'Space Standards' within privately rented accommodation and in particular floor area measurements relating to sleeping rooms within HMO's has been included into the Housing Scrutiny Committee Report which is an agenda item on 19th June 2018, please see the 'Next Steps' section within this report below for further details in relation to this.

There needs to be a baseline minimum sleeping room size requirement without which there is a danger that available room sizes within this sector will become smaller and smaller over time something that could ultimately affect the standard of private rented sector housing provision within Cambridge City and the health, safety and wellbeing of occupiers. The Government have acknowledged this with regards to them setting national minimum room size standards that will be conditioned onto HMO licenses issued from October 2018.

It is important to note that tenant's wishes will continue to be taken into account when determining appropriate enforcement action in individual cases.

Properties will continue to be considered case by case according to their own individual merit, with a degree of considered flexibility being applied where deemed appropriate / necessary.

Services

The issue re temperature ambiguity raised has been amended accordingly on page 22 within The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard.

The standards within The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard around 'Services' and in particular the controllability of heating systems have been put together in reference to the current accepted criteria contained within the Housing Health & Safety Rating System, HHSRS in terms of the hazard of 'excess cold' as well as accepted criteria contained within the CIEH Guidance on enforcement of excess cold hazards in England.

General Comments

For clarity The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard is primarily for reference / use by landlords and property agents / managers responsible for property within this sector in Cambridge City. It relates to properties that comprise an individual(s) permanent place of residence for which rent is paid.

Next Steps

This report will form appendix b to the Committee Report Item – 'Adoption of The Private Rented Sector Housing Standard' that is an agenda item at Cambridge City Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee on the 19th June 2018.

Taking into consideration the 'Options Appraisal' included within paragraph 3.19 of the Committee Report that has been inserted following consideration / analysis of the consultation responses detailed within this report, the Executive Councillor for Housing is recommend to approve the adoption of the Cambridge City Council Private Rented Sector Housing Standard to include agreed 'Space Standards'.

It is anticipated that the Standard document would be used to inform consistent advice and enforcement by The Council where necessary in relation to ensuring that safe and suitable accommodation is provided to occupiers within the private rented sector in Cambridge City.

END

Claire Adelizzi
Team Manager - Residential