

HMO Licensing Facts

Do I need a licence?

Since April 2006 it has been a mandatory requirement under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 for the owners of houses in multiple occupation of 3 or more storeys and occupied by 5 or more people, forming more than one household, to license such properties with the Council.

What is an HMO?

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is any house (or flat) which is occupied by three or more individuals as their only or main residence and form more than one household and who share (or lack), kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities and pay rent.

A household comprises of people who may or may not be related to each other, i.e.

- Families (mum, dad and children), couples, same sex couples and single people
- Other relationships, such as fostering, carers and domestic staff

What are the conditions of the licence?

The conditions of the licence are numerous and may also vary from property to property. For more specific details please email: housing@Winchester.gov.uk

How can I apply?

To apply for an HMO Licence you can contact the Private Sector Housing Team by:

- Telephone 01962 848381
- Email: housing@winchester.gov.uk
- In writing :Private Sector Housing, Winchester City Council, City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester, Hampshire, England, SO23 9LJ
- Website:
<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/Housing/PrivateHousing/HousesinMultipleOccupation/>

What does it cost?

An HMO licence generally lasts for five years and the basic cost to cover the whole of the licence period is £900

What information / evidence will I need to provide?

In addition to a fully completed application form, a valid gas safety certificate is required to be submitted provided by a Gas Safe registered engineer. A simple plan of the floor layout of the property which details the location of any fire detectors and fire doors is also required to be submitted. The proposed Licence holder must also be able to demonstrate that they are a “fit and proper” person.

Are there inspections/assessments?

Before a licence certificate is granted an inspection of the property will be undertaken to determine if the property is up to the required standard in respect of fire precaution and means of escape and bathroom and kitchen amenities.

How long will it take to process my application?

Once an application has been received, an appointment will be made for the property to be inspected. After the inspection has been carried out, a draft proposed licence is sent to those individuals that have been identified as having an interest in the property i.e. proposed licence holder and mortgagor etc, in order for them to make representation if they so wish. The 'representation period' is 21 days and the council has to consider any representation received. The council also consults with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding the provision of fire precaution amenities in the property.

In normal circumstances, inclusive of the consultation process it is hoped that a licence will be issued within a time frame of no more than ten weeks.

If I'm turned down, how do I appeal?

If a proposed licence holder is deemed not to be a 'fit and proper' person and their licence application is turned down, they can appeal in writing to the Head of Housing Services:

Richard Botham
Head of Housing Services
Winchester City Council
City Offices
Colebrook Street
Winchester
SO23 9LJ

How long does the licence last, and what's the renewal procedure?

A licence generally lasts for a period of five years. Towards the end of the licence period the council will write to the licence holder to determine if the house requires to be relicensed.

How do I tell you about changes of circumstances?

If the licence holder moves, or changes their name or business address etc, they must notify the council by phone or email as detailed above under 'How can I apply?'. A licence is **not** transferable and the Council should be informed if a property is sold.

Where can I go for further information?

Further information in respect of HMO Licensing can be found on the Communities and Local Government web site at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/rentingandletting/privaterenting/housesmultiple/>

Is there a register of licensed HMOs?

It is a legal requirement under the Housing Act 2004 for the council to maintain a register of all Licensed HMOs which the public can view free of charge at the city council offices.