

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2015
title: NATIONALLY DESCRIBED SPACE STANDARDS
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT – HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To request Committee approve the use of nationally described space standards. These are to be accepted as the minimum size standards in all new affordable housing developments.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives – To meet the identified housing needs of households in the borough.
 - Corporate Priorities – To achieve a balanced housing market.
 - Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Over the past five years, there has been a significant change in how affordable housing units are delivered. Today, affordable units are built by developers as part of the Section 106 negotiations, 30% of the site is required to be affordable. Prior to this the majority of affordable units were developed by housing associations with Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant funding and therefore the HCA prescribed the quality and space standards for each affordable unit. Since this change, we have seen a significant reduction in the size of affordable units being developed in the borough. This has caused issues with demand for the family housing as the units have been very small. The technical housing standards set out requirements of internal floor space in new dwellings across all tenures. The standards are set out in Appendix A.

3 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – No implications identified.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – Developers may try to resist the new space standards as it will incur additional costs in delivering affordable units.
 - Political – Important to ensure the affordable units we secure meet housing need.
 - Reputation – To ensure a high quality affordable housing product.
 - Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

4 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 4.1 Request that Committee agree the new space standards are adopted by the Council and are required on all new affordable housing schemes.

RACHAEL STOTT
HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

DCLG – Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards – March 2015.

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 4567.

REF: RS/EL/110615/H&H



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard



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March 2015

ISBN: 978-1-4098-4567-6

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard

Introduction

1. This standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.
2. The requirements of this standard for bedrooms, storage and internal areas are relevant only in determining compliance with this standard in new dwellings and have no other statutory meaning or use.

Using the space standard

3. The standard Gross Internal Areas set out in Table 1 are organised by storey height to take account of the extra circulation space needed for stairs to upper floors, and deal separately with one storey dwellings (typically flats) and two and three storey dwellings (typically houses).
4. Individual dwelling types are expressed with reference to the number of bedrooms (denoted as 'b') and the number of bedspaces (or people) that can be accommodated within these bedrooms (denoted as 'p'). A three bedroom (3b) home with one double bedroom (providing two bed spaces) and two single bedrooms (each providing one bed space) is therefore described as 3b4p.
5. This allows for different combinations of single and double/twin bedrooms to be reflected in the minimum Gross Internal Area. The breakdown of the minimum Gross Internal Area therefore allows not only for the different combinations of bedroom size, but also for varying amounts of additional living, dining, kitchen and storage space; all of which are related to the potential occupancy.
6. Relating internal space to the number of bedspaces is a means of classification for assessment purposes only when designing new homes and seeking planning approval (if a local authority has adopted the space standard in its Local Plan). It does not imply actual occupancy, or define the minimum for any room in a dwelling to be used for a specific purpose other than in complying with this standard.
7. Minimum floor areas and room widths for bedrooms and minimum floor areas for storage are also an integral part of the space standard. They cannot be used in isolation from other parts of the design standard or removed from it.

8. The Gross Internal Area of a dwelling is defined as the total floor space measured between the internal faces of perimeter walls¹ that enclose the dwelling. This includes partitions, structural elements, cupboards, ducts, flights of stairs and voids above stairs. The Gross Internal Area should be measured and denoted in square metres (m²).
9. The Gross Internal Areas in this standard will not be adequate for wheelchair housing (Category 3 homes in Part M of the Building Regulations) where additional internal area is required to accommodate increased circulation and functionality to meet the needs of wheelchair households.

Technical requirements

10. The standard requires that:
 - a. the dwelling provides at least the gross internal floor area and built-in storage area set out in Table 1 below
 - b. a dwelling with two or more bedspaces has at least one double (or twin) bedroom
 - c. in order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m² and is at least 2.15m wide
 - d. in order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin bedroom) has a floor area of at least 11.5m²
 - e. one double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.55m wide
 - f. any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the Gross Internal Area unless used solely for storage (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage, assume a general floor area of 1m² within the Gross Internal Area)
 - g. any other area that is used solely for storage and has a headroom of 900-1500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all
 - h. a built-in wardrobe counts towards the Gross Internal Area and bedroom floor area requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths set out above. The built-in area in excess of 0.72m² in a double bedroom and 0.36m² in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement
 - i. the minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m for at least 75% of the Gross Internal Area

¹ The internal face of a perimeter wall is the finished surface of the wall. For a detached house, the perimeter walls are the external walls that enclose the dwelling, and for other houses or apartments they are the external walls and party walls.

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) ²			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

² Where a one person flat has a shower room rather than a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m².