

HMO Enforcement in Dacorum

The latest House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Regulations, laid out by the Government in October 2018, gave us a new and updated definition of what a HMO is.

They say that a HMO is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities such as the bathroom and kitchen. They also explain that you must have a licence if you're renting out a large HMO in England or Wales. Your property is defined as a large HMO if all of the following apply:

- it is rented to 5 or more people who form more than 1 household
- some or all tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities
- at least 1 tenant pays rent (or their employer pays it for them)

These changes have seen our team license a large number of properties that were not licensed before, due to the older definition. As of July 2021, our team have licensed a total 104 properties throughout Dacorum. A number that is increasing thanks to the help of Dacorum's Landlords wanting to provide safe and compliant homes to their tenants. However, there is still work to be done.

Due to the success of the licensing scheme, our team can now focus some of their attention on identifying properties that are acting as HMO's without a license. We are able to do this with help of a stock condition survey, commissioned by the Dacorum Borough Council, which was carried out in the early months of 2020. This new information will be given to our trained team so they can investigate properties that have been identified as suspect HMO's that have not yet been licensed (or have an ongoing application). Our team will then work with the Landlords of these properties in order to ensure that they become both safe and compliant. This way, tenants can rent with peace of mind.

The current regulations have helped the council to tackle poor standards, migration and other problems caused by non-compliant Landlords. Anyone who operates as a licensable House in Multiple Occupation without a license (or a valid application for a license) will be committing an offense and will be liable to prosecution. The fine for such an offense could be a maximum of £30,000. This can be accompanied with an extra fee when applying for an application for the property.

Need some more guidance or have any questions regarding HMO licensing? Contact our team via our mailbox pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk or visit our Webpage dedicated to HMO's at <http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/housing/private-housing/private-landlords/hmo-licences>