

Greater Manchester Combined Authorities Code of Conduct & Minimum Quality Standards for Hotel Accommodation used as Homelessness Provision

1. Overview

This document sets out the minimum standard that the Greater Manchester Combined Authorities (GMCA) requires in hotel accommodation used to provide emergency accommodation to people who are homeless.

Part B of this protocol outlines commitments made by the local housing authority in each area of Greater Manchester. Separate commitments may be made by Social Services authorities, who may also place households into bed and breakfast accommodation. For example, people with no recourse to public funds.

In producing this document consideration has been given to Chapter 17 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance; Suitability of accommodation, which sets out the minimum recommended standards for Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

PART A: HOTEL PROVIDERS

Hotel providers who agree to adopt this protocol commit to the following:

- 1.1 To ensure high standards of courtesy, cleanliness and a service level appropriate to the type of establishment (e.g. hotels catering to families may offer slightly different amenities).
- 1.2 To ensure staff and volunteers are recruited, training and supported to a high standard.
- 1.3 To commit to not placing mixed household groups in proximity; preferably accommodating only one client group (families and/or single people) per premises or, where this is not possible, facilitating accommodation for each group in separate floors / wings of the building. Where this is not possible, the provider must make this clear to the local authority at the time of booking so the guest can be advised accordingly.
- 1.4 To ensure all building regulations are adhered to including, but not limited to, keeping the premises free from hazards and pests and ensuring mandatory certification is up to date.
- 1.5 Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.
- 1.6 To describe fairly to all guests and prospective guests the amenities, facilities and services provided by the establishment, which should be also be on display. To allow prospective guests to see accommodation, if requested, before booking – although it should be made clear from the outset of any outcomes following a refusal of accommodation offered.

- 1.7 To explain details of charges for additional services or facilities available.
- 1.8 To make clear to guests exactly what is included in all prices quoted for accommodation, meals and refreshments or additional services or facilities, including service charges, taxes and other surcharges.
- 1.9 To make clear to all prospective guests in all brochures, conditions and details, which should also be displayed where appropriate, any restrictions on the access to the accommodation by the guest, in such a way that each prospective guest is aware of any such restrictions before making any booking.
- 1.10 Not to exceed the price current at the time of reservation for accommodation or other services. As per the agreement with the Local Authority (LA).
- 1.11 To give each guest, on request, details of payments due and a receipt for payment made. To provide rent statements where requested.
- 1.12 To treat all guests with dignity and respect, and deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and complaints from guests.
- 1.13 Proprietor or staff to be on duty during guests' arrival and departure period and during meal times, where applicable. To provide an effective means for guests to call for the attention of the proprietor or staff, who should be available at all reasonable times.
- 1.14 To advise guests at the time of booking, and subsequently of any change, if the accommodation offered is in an unconnected annexe, or similar, or by boarding out, and to indicate the location of such accommodation and any difference in comfort and amenities from the accommodation in the main establishment.
- 1.15 To advise guests at the time of booking of check-in / check-out times, and where possible to provide a daytime waiting area for guests who may experience a delay in moving on to their next accommodation.
- 1.16 Not to conduct themselves in any business or operate any unregistered accommodation or otherwise in such a way as to cause damage or disrepute.
- 1.17 Where security guards are used, they should have a supportive approach, and should be carefully selected and inducted to ensure that they are working within an ethos of respect.
- 1.18 To provide information to guests on what action may be taken such as discharging of homelessness duties should they be asked to leave any accommodation due to their own actions.
- 1.19 To allow LA inspectors reasonable access to the establishment, on request, to confirm that the Code of Conduct and minimum standards are being observed.

2. Minimum Standards

All buildings and their fixtures, fittings, furnishings and decor must be fit for the purpose intended and maintained in good clean condition. They should have sufficient space to allow freedom of movement for guests.

2.1 Bedrooms

- 2.1.1 Providers should make clear their space standards in terms of room occupancy at the point of booking (e.g. how many household members can be accommodated per room) so local authorities can book and advise guests accordingly.
- 2.1.2 Internal lock, bolt or equivalent must be fitted on bedroom doors.
- 2.1.3 Adequate measures to provide for the security of guests' property.
- 2.1.4 Reasonable free space for movement and easy access to beds, doors and drawers.
- 2.1.5 Minimum bed sizes: Single 6'3" x 3' Double 6'3" x 4'6".
- 2.1.6 All beds to be of sound condition with secure headboards or similar.
- 2.1.7 Mattresses to be sprung interior or foam of good quality, with mattress protectors and/or under-blankets.
- 2.1.8 Bedding must be clean and in sufficient quantity, according to season and guests' needs.
- 2.1.9 Bed linen, including duvet covers, to be changed at least weekly and for each new guest.
- 2.1.10 Spare bed linen to be available on request and at no extra charge.
- 2.1.11 Bedrooms to be cleaned daily, where practical or when requested by guest.
- 2.1.12 Clean hand towels and bath towels to be provided for every new guest and changed as required or on request.
- 2.1.13 Towel rail or equivalent in bedroom or private bathroom
- 2.1.14 At least one external window to provide natural light and adequate ventilation.
- 2.1.15 Opaque curtains or blinds on all windows which require privacy and exclusion of light.
- 2.1.16 Bedrooms should be well lit with minimum total lighting levels of: Single rooms 160 watts. Double rooms 220 watts. All bulbs, unless decorative, to have shades or covers.
- 2.1.17 Floor to be fully carpeted or, where alternative flooring is provided, slip-resistant bedside rugs or mats.
- 2.1.18 Adequate wardrobe or clothes-hanging space.
- 2.1.19 Adequate drawer or shelf space to be available.
- 2.1.20 Non-flammable wastepaper container.
- 2.1.21 Adequate in-room heating according to season, which can be controlled by the resident. Extra heating to be provided on request and at no extra charge.
- 2.1.22 A minimum of 2 power points in every room, conveniently placed for use.
- 2.1.23 Provision for the making of tea and coffee including a kettle as a minimum requirement, with an adequate supply of well-presented

materials, replenished daily (minimum two per person per day of each item). Drinking water should always be available.

- 2.1.24 Printed advice for means of summoning assistance at night should be in all bedrooms. This is in addition to the fire-instruction notice that includes information on procedures in the event of an emergency. Emergency information should also be displayed in each room.
- 2.1.25 Access to the establishment and bedrooms at all times for registered guests, unless restrictions previously notified, at the time of booking.

2.2 En-suite bathrooms and Private Facilities (Where applicable)

- 2.2.1 An en-suite bath or shower and WC must be contained behind the main door of the bedroom.
- 2.2.2 Adequate ventilation by extractor fan or window that opens.
- 2.2.3 Bedrooms with a washbasin, shower cabinet and en-suite WC are acceptable.
- 2.2.4 Showers must have a shower screen or curtain.
- 2.2.5 Toilet tissue and toilet-roll holder.
- 2.2.6 Covered sanitary disposal bin.
- 2.2.7 Non-flammable waste-paper container.
- 2.2.8 A lidded WC.
- 2.2.9 A covered light.
- 2.2.10 A hook for clothes.
- 2.2.11 Opaque curtain or blind on any windows.
- 2.2.12 A towel rail or equivalent.
- 2.2.13 Hot water to be available at all times
- 2.2.14 Clean hand towel and bath towel per person.
- 2.2.15 Electric razor point or adapter within easy reach of the mirror, located in the bedroom or bathroom.
- 2.2.16 Adequate heating.

2.3 Bathrooms and WCs

- 2.3.1 At least one bath or shower room for every six guests, adequately ventilated and equipped with: Bath or shower, wash basin and mirror, electric razor point, soap and hand towel available.
Properties with four or less bed spaces: it is acceptable for a bath or shower room to be combined with a washbasin and WC. Where the maximum number of persons resident, including the proprietors, is no more than six, facilities may be shared between guests and proprietors. Where this arrangement exists, proprietors and their families should avoid prolonged use of the facilities during the early to mid-morning period and personal belongings should be removed.
- 2.3.2 Where accommodation is not family only, families should never share communal facilities with singles.
- 2.3.3 A lidded WC.

- 2.3.4 Covered sanitary disposal bin in each WC.
- 2.3.5 Toilet tissue and toilet-roll holder.
- 2.3.6 All bathrooms and WCs to be adequately heated.
- 2.3.7 All bathrooms and WCs to be cleaned daily.
- 2.3.8 A covered light.
- 2.3.9 Opaque curtain or blind on any windows.
- 2.3.10 Internal lock or bolt.
- 2.3.11 Hot water available at all times.
- 2.3.12 No extra charge for baths and showers.
- 2.3.13 Bath mat changed daily, and as required by the guests.

2.4 Dining areas and food provision

- 2.4.1 Establishments providing food should have appropriate hygiene certification in place.
- 2.4.2 Dining/breakfast room to be available, unless meals are served only in the bedroom. The opening hours of this room should be clearly advertised to guests.
- 2.4.3 Guests should be able to freely use equipment such as microwaves and toasters while the dining/breakfast room is available, including to heat their own food. A minimum of one microwave should be available per ten families.
- 2.4.4 Each guest must be supplied with, or have easy access to a mug, plate, bowl and cutlery. Plastic cups/plates/bowls/cutlery must be provided for children under the age of 6.
- 2.4.5 Where breakfast or other meals have been agreed by the LA, these must be supplied to all members of the household placed. Where not supplied but available, guests should be clearly advised of any additional costs and how/when these should be paid.
- 2.4.6 Up to date information regarding local services and facilities such as food banks, local welfare provision and community kitchens should be displayed clearly in the reception area and updated as necessary.

2.5 General

Buildings, and their fixtures, furnishings, fittings and décor, must be maintained in sound and clean condition and must be fit for the purpose intended.

- 2.5.1 Communal spaces, where applicable, must be made available to guests during agreed daytime hours. These hours should be clearly advertised to guests.
- 2.5.2 Laundry facilities, where available, should be advertised to guests including opening times, charges, and plain English / pictorial instructions for safe use of equipment.
- 2.5.3 Where laundry facilities are not available providers should provide information on the location of the nearest laundrette.

- 2.5.4 All public areas to be lit adequately for safety and comfort, with all bulbs, unless decorative, having shades or covers.
- 2.5.5 Adequate heating in all public areas.
- 2.5.6 Corridors and stairs should be in good repair and free from obstruction.
- 2.5.7 All public areas to be cleaned thoroughly daily.
- 2.5.8 The proprietor, manager, or other duly authorised member of staff must be available to guests at all reasonable times, and printed advice must be provided in rooms for means of summoning assistance at night.
- 2.5.9 All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent excessive noise from interfering with the comfort of guests.
- 2.5.10 A telephone should on request be made available for outgoing calls and for incoming calls in case of emergency. Where facilities are provided, all charges must be clearly indicated, including the duration of the unit.
- 2.5.11 Adequate measures must be provided for the security of guests and their property. There should be a means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key available. Access to bedroom areas should be restricted to prevent non-residents from gaining access, for example through the use of additional keys / key cards, buzzers or staff monitoring entry.
- 2.5.12 Car parking, if provided, should be adequately lit, to ensure guest safety. This also applies to pathways or passageways between annexes.
- 2.5.13 The entrance to the property should be identifiable and adequately lit.
- 2.5.14 Security cameras and a fully functioning CCTV system should be used where possible, with relevant signage displayed advising guests of its use.

3. Health and Safety

- 3.1 **Fire Risk Assessment.** Comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Supply evidence that a Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out annually.
- 3.2 **Gas appliances.** Comply with the Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998; Supply evidence that all gas appliances have been checked annually by a GAS SAFE registered gas installer.
- 3.3 **Electrical Safety.** Comply with the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994; All mains electrical equipment for guest use is regularly maintained to ensure it is safe.
- 3.4 **Portable Appliance Test.** (PAT) Have available a certificate, which covers all appliances used as part of the business.
- 3.5 **General.**
 - Operate safely with due regard to health & safety legislation and with evidence of consideration for the safety of guests and the security of guest's property.

- Supply clear information on how to contact proprietor/manager in case of emergency.
- Ensure building is checked regularly for spills and trip hazards.
- Ensure window restrictors are fitted in bedrooms to prevent falls or entry from external parties.

3.6 **Infection Control:**

- Current infection control policy and risk assessments are required.
- Infection control guidance and standard operating procedures for emergency accommodation should be followed.
- Safe systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection should be in place, including; provision of training and programme of audits/checks of the environment.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment should be readily available and accessible for staff and volunteers.
- Appropriate arrangements should be in place for the safe management of bodily fluid spillages.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment should be readily available and accessible for staff and volunteers

3.7 Smoke detectors must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations. They must be of a type which can be readily tested and must be maintained in working order. The manufacturer's instruction and recommendation leaflet or booklet must be kept and made available to the LA inspector on request

4. **Further Requirements**

4.1 **Safeguarding.** Landlords, managers and staff employed by B&B's will ensure the health and wellbeing of residents. Safeguarding policies and procedures should be in place and approved by the LA. Any safeguarding risks or incidents should be reported immediately to the Local Authority and the Police where applicable. All employees should have the appropriate DBS checks.

4.2 **Public Liability Insurance.** Whilst it is not a statutory requirement, it is a requirement for participation in this scheme.

4.3 **Planning.** Comply with all local planning and licensing regulations, if applicable.

4.4 **Data Protection.** Comply with the Hotel Proprietors Act and Data Protection Act, if applicable.

4.5 **Complaints Procedure.** Operate a clear complaints procedure, including who to contact within the Homelessness service.

5. **Condition of Approval**

Registration is subject to the observance by the proprietor of the letter and spirit of this document and any breach of the Code of Conduct or Minimum Standards may lead to the withdrawal of the award.

Name of Establishment:

Address:

Local authority area:

Signed:

Print name:

Position (e.g. proprietor, manager):

Date:

DRAFT

PART B: LOCAL AUTHORITIES

This document sets out the minimum standard expected of all authorities in GM who place into bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation.

This document has been produced to provide a consistently high standard of provision to households who are homeless and temporarily placed into hotels, and reduce the demands placed on welfare services provided either by the local authority or volunteer agencies.

6. Core Principles

When placing in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation, the placing local authority should as a minimum:

- 6.1 Ensure placements are made in line with space standards agreed by the hotel provider, including a minimum of one adult sharing a room which children under the age of 16. Where possible, adjoining rooms should be requested for larger families to ensure all household members are kept together
- 6.2 Ensure that the client has access to benefits and/or other income. Where there is no access to benefits or other income for a period (e.g. due to their next payment date being some time away) support the client to make an application for assistance under whatever scheme operates in the placing borough. For example:
 - Applying for a Universal Credit advance
 - Applying to Local Welfare Provision in the placing borough
 - Where it is not reasonable or practical to apply for provision in the placing borough – e.g. if the client is fleeing domestic abuse – liaise with similar provision in the borough they are being placed in to agree a temporary package of support.
- 6.3 Issue the client with contact details for the housing /support officer.
- 6.4 Issue the client with a licence agreement / placement letter which sets out the conditions of their placement.
- 6.5 Provide the client with information including detailed and accurate maps/description of how to find the premises, and once there how to access local health services/projects/outdoor spaces for exercise, food and other support.
- 6.6 Make available on request an interpreter where needed to verbally translate any aspects of the placement to clients where English is not their first language. This may be via the hotel provider where such a service is available, or via a telephone interpreting service.
- 6.7 Check with local agencies that the client would not pose a risk to other residents or themselves.
- 6.8 Ensure the client or members of the household can access medication and/or support services. Where needed, advise the client about changing prescription collection points to the nearest pharmacy. Local substance misuse services may be able to support with this where needed.

- 6.9 Notify colleagues in Social Care where the client / their children / anyone else in their household has an allocated worker that they are temporarily moving out of area, so ongoing support can be provided.
- 6.10 Notify the local authority in which the accommodation is based of any incident where a vulnerable adult or child has been seriously injured / harmed or died and cooperate with any subsequent practice review that may need to take place.
- 6.11 Notify clients in advance of when they can check-in to the accommodation, and the time and date whereby they will need to check-out. This should be done at the latest on the last night of the booking, except where an emergency precludes notice from being given.
- 6.12 Check with the bed and breakfast/hotel whether there is a food provision or access to cooking facilities and advise client accordingly.
- 6.13 Issue a s208 letter if placing out of borough which should include contact details of the officer that holds the case. It would be also be good practice to further advise the local authority when the placement has ceased.
- 6.14 All clients should be advised of an expected code of conduct and what the implications would be of them being asked to leave the bed and breakfast/hotel due to their own actions. This could be included in their licence agreement.
- 6.15 Local authorities will act within locally agreed timeframes to respond to complaints, concerns and suggestions for improvement from clients and partner agencies. Local authorities will also seek to incorporate these views in any commissioning activity undertaken around temporary accommodation.

7. Safeguarding

- 7.1 The local authority in which the premises is based will make available safeguarding training and access to relevant policies and procedures.
- 7.2 All providers will be given a point of contact to raise any safeguarding enquiries with the local authority who has made the placement.
- 7.3 Should a serious incident occur such as injury or death to a vulnerable adult or child, this should be reported to the Social Services authority where the incident occurred as well as the placing authority. Collaboration should take place to agree actions including which authority will lead on any statutory safeguarding reviews.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1 The local authority in which the premises is based will be responsible for ensuring the building meets mandatory health and safety regulations
- 8.2 The local authority in which the premises is based will be responsible for investigating any issues raised around trading standards, such as matters relating to business rates and expected hotel industry standards

8.3 Any concerns about property condition or the conduct of providers should be reported to the local authority in which the premises is located.

9. Information sharing

9.1 Local Housing Authorities will adhere to existing GM Joint Working Protocol for Cross-Borough Temporary Accommodation Placements in accessing hotel accommodation in other boroughs.

9.2

Local Housing Authorities will adhere to s208 of the Housing Act 1996 in notifying other authorities of placements into their borough.

Appendix 1: Example checklist

An example of Trafford's B&B checklist below:



Placement
Checklist.doc

Appendix 2: Key contacts (Greater Manchester Housing Needs Group)

Bolton		
Bury		
Oldham		
Manchester		
Rochdale		
Salford		
Stockport		
Tameside		
Trafford		
Wigan		