

PRESTON CITY COUNCIL
LANDLORDS' INFORMATION PACK
STANDARDS FOR BASEMENT ROOMS

(The following should be read in conjunction with the attached Drawing)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 These standards shall apply to all rooms where the surface of the floor is more than 900mm below ground level, as measured within 3m from the outside wall of the room and where the room is used, or intended to be used, as living accommodation, including kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms.

2.0 Subsoil Drainage

2.1 The subsoil of the site of the room shall, wherever the soil is not effectively self-draining, be effectively drained using accepted techniques.

3.0 Drains

3.1 Every drain passing under the room shall be gas-tight and watertight.

4.0 Damp Protection

4.1 The room shall be fully protected against penetrating damp.

5.0 Ventilation in Non-Habitable Rooms

5.1 Where the room is not a habitable room and is not served by a window meeting the criteria below, ventilation is acceptable by:

- (i) Extractor fan controlled either automatically by sensor or controller, or manually.
- (ii) Passive stack ventilation in accordance with British Research Establishment Paper 13/94 operated manually and or by sensor or controller.

5.2 In kitchens and rooms used for air drying clothing, where an extractor fan is fitted, the minimum extraction rate is to be 60 litres per second.

5.3 In w.c.'s, shower rooms and bathrooms, where an extractor fan is fitted, the minimum extraction rate is to be 15 litres per second.

PART 2

6.0 **Open Space**

- 6.1 An area of open space outside any door/window must be provided which is properly paved with impervious material and effectively drained. Drainage can be to the main surface water drain, or:

where this facility is not provided, to the main sewer by means of a properly trapped gully fitted with a grid, or:

where sub soil conditions permit, drainage by a soakaway to meet current Building Regulations requirements.

(Note, in particular that no soakaway may be located within 5m of a road or building).

This area of open space shall adjoin the room and shall extend at least throughout the entire width of any window and for 300mm on each side of that window.

- 6.2 The area of open space shall extend to not less than 600mm wide from the outside wall and shall be open upwards from a level at least 150mm below the level of the adjacent window cill or, where applicable, door threshold.

If a bay window in the room has sidelights the width of the area outside the sidelights shall be a minimum of 300mm.

Any stairway necessary for access to any part of the building containing the room may be placed in or over the area of open space provided that they are placed so as not to be over or across any window of the room.

7.0 **Natural Lighting and Ventilation**

- 7.1 Every habitable room shall be lit and ventilated by a window or windows opening directly to the external air, which shall:

- (i) Overlook the area of open space required by Section 6 above;
- (ii) Be so constructed that a total area equal to at least one-twentieth of the floor area of the room may be opened;
- (iii) Have a total area equal to at least one-eighth of the floor area of the room;
- (iv) If a bay window is fitted, the eligible area is assumed to be equivalent to a flat window of the area of the opening through the wall from which it projects.

- 7.2 The ceiling level of the room must be minimum 2.13m above floor level.

PART 2

7.3 In addition to the area discussed in 6.1 above, there must be a largely unobstructed area extending beyond to allow for natural light. Some light foliage or foliage under the control of the tenant, may be acceptable within this area. Fencing, where light loss is limited, may also be acceptable.

To calculate the minimum provision for natural lighting:

- (i) Envisage/draw a cross section of the wall containing the window.
- (ii) Indicate the point on the window above which the window area is equal to one-tenth the area of the room.
- (iii) Project a horizontal line from this point outwards from the window.
- (iv) Project a plane upwards from the window at 30° to the horizontal.
- (v) The area above this plane must be largely unobstructed for a distance of 3m from the face of the building and throughout the width of the window, plus 300mm to either side of the window reveals.

Any queries on the compliance of specific underground rooms should be addressed to the Council's Housing Standards Section, Environment Directorate, Preston City Council, Town Hall, Lancaster Road, Preston, PR1 2RL.