



Empty Homes & Lettings

Bedroom Assessment Policy

Regulation and Legislation	This policy links to Housing Act 1985, Housing Act 1996, the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) and the Localism Act 2011.
Supporting documents	Bedroom Assessment Procedure, Allocations and Letting of Homes Procedure, Priority Move Procedure, Deceased Customer and Succession Procedure, Customers' Own Improvements Procedure.
Scope	This Policy sets out the principles to be adopted for the assessment of whether a room can be classed as a bedroom by size in our general needs and Later Living homes.
Reference to "Orbit" means Orbit Group which consists of Orbit Group Limited, Orbit Housing Association Limited, Orbit Homes (2020) Limited, Orbit Treasury Limited and Orbit Capital Plc.	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy sets out Orbit Group's core principles to be adopted for the recognition of a bedroom by size. It defines the rules in which we operate within regulatory requirements.
- 1.2 It ensures compliance with the Housing Act 1985 and the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) with regards to acceptable bedroom size.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Orbit is committed to providing sustainable high-quality housing, whilst satisfying demand for homes and complying with all relevant legislation and regulation.
- 2.2 This policy applies where we inspect empty homes for re-let and where we receive customer enquiries.
- 2.3 For homes built after March 2015 we will adopt the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2015. Size technical requirements 10. c. d. and e. apply.
 - 2.3.1 10.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,
 - 2.3.2 10.d. in order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin) bedroom has a floor area of at least 11.5m²,
 - 2.3.3 10.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.

2.4 For homes built before this we will apply the floor space standard in the Housing Act 1985. Where a child between the age of one and ten counts as half a person and a child below the age of one is disregarded.

2.4.1 a bedroom with a floor area of 4.65m² to 6.49m² is for half a person,

2.4.2 a bedroom with a floor area of 6.5m² to 8.35m² is for one person,

2.4.3 a bedroom with a floor area of 8.36m² to 10.21m² is for one and a half people,

2.4.4 a bedroom with a floor area over 10.22m² is for two people.

2.5 Any measurements quoted in square feet have been converted to square metres.

2.6 For a bedroom to be considered habitable it must also have a window and a heat source.

3. Data retention

Any measurements taken will be logged in the housing management system and are property specific.

Any correspondence with customers will be logged on EDRM and will be managed with all EDRM data and in line with Orbit's data schedule and legal obligation.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Area Inspectors	Measurement and assessment details in empty homes
Neighbourhood Managers	Measurement and assessment details in homes with customers
Rents Compliance Manager	Decisions at home level and review of 1999 valuation and rent level
Master Data Administrators	Adjustment of housing system home record after decision
Head of Empty Homes	Overall delivery of service

5. Performance Controls and Business Risk

- 5.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Head of Empty Homes and Lettings, via reporting. Key data will be reported to CPLT. Capture and delivery is the responsibility of the Rents Compliance Manager. Performance in the delivery of the service will be assessed by Internal Audit as part of their audit programme of rents.
- 5.2 Monthly reporting metrics:
- Number of assessments completed,
 - Assessment due to empty homes inspection or customer enquiry,
 - Outcome, number of assets changed,
 - Rent value change if applicable.
- 5.3 Orbit will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years subject to legal, regulatory changes or in accordance with the agreed Policy Review programme.

6. Essential information

- 6.1 All Orbit policies and procedures are developed in line with our approach to the following, data protection statement, equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) approach, complaints and customer care policy and our regulatory and legal obligations to ensure we deliver services in a lawful manner and treat people equally and fairly. Orbit's privacy policy can be accessed on our website www.orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/publications/policies/

EA	Equality Analysis was completed on 21 October 2024 and is available to view.
DPIA	A DPIA was completed against the supporting procedure and is available to view.
Consultation	Internal: Rents, Lettings, Later Living, Neighbourhoods (Property Management, Tenancy Services and Tenancy Sustainment), Data Delivery and Service.
	External: n/a internal policy
Applies to	

Document control

Status

Approved

Date Issued

Apr 2026

Version

v1.0

Uncontrolled if Printed

Title	Bedroom Assessment Policy		ID 572
Doc Type	Policy	Review Cycle	3 Yearly
Circulation	All Departments	Classification	Public

Doc Level 2

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Date

Approved by	Executive team	Feb 2026
Next review		Apr 2029

Extension date	Extension reason	Approved by

Revision History

Version Number	Date	Comments / Reason for revision
v1.0	Apr 2026	Published