

Sandwell Council

Standards and Amenities Guide for Houses in Multiple  
Occupation (HMO)

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## Introduction

This guide has been produced by Sandwell Council to assist owners, agents and occupiers in relation to the standards they should expect in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The information covers both licensed and non-licensed HMOs.

**Please note: This document should only serve as a guide. It gives the standards reasonably expected for a typical HMO. The requirements specific to your property may change following a site visit or advice from an officer.**

**For further information please contact Landlord Licensing on [landlord\\_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:landlord_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk)**

### Definition of a house in multiple occupation (HMO)

The Housing Act 2004 sections 254 - 260 provides a definition of an HMO.

An HMO is defined in law as a house or flat in which three or more unrelated persons forming two or more households share an amenity such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities. This includes shared houses and bedsits. A 'household' is defined as either a single person or members of the same family who are living together.

An HMO is also a converted building which has one or more non self-contained units. A non self-contained unit is where one or more of the facilities is not within the occupant's room. This applies even if the facility is for the exclusive use of the occupant.

An HMO is also a building that has been converted into self-contained flats, and less than two-thirds of which are owner occupied and the conversion does not meet the appropriate Building Regulations. If the property was converted prior to June 1992, the conversion must meet the 1991 Building Regulations for it not to be an HMO. If the conversion took place after June 1992, the conversion must meet whichever Building Regulations that were in force at the time of conversion for it not to be an HMO.



As a general rule for a building to be a HMO it must be used as the tenant's only or main residence, or they are treated as so occupying it (i.e. properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same applies to properties used as domestic refuges); and rents must be payable, or some other consideration is to be provided, in respect of one of the tenants.

### **Mandatory Licensing of HMOs**

All HMOs that meet the following criteria will require a mandatory HMO licence.

- It is occupied by five or more persons;
- Is occupied by persons that form two or more separate households.

### **Additional Licensing of HMOs**

Under the Housing Act 2004 the Council can introduce additional licensing of HMOs to cover certain types of HMOs that are not subject to Mandatory Licensing. In Sandwell, the Additional Licensing scheme requires all HMOs in certain areas to be licensed. This includes Section 257 HMOs (poorly converted blocks of flats). Please check our website for further details of the areas covered by the scheme.

### **Legal standards in HMOs**

The Housing Act 2004 and associated regulations state the minimum standards in HMOs. This guide will explain the legal requirements and provide the Council's approach on how those standards should be achieved.



## Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 is the legislation giving minimum standards for all homes which includes HMOs, regardless of tenure. It is a risk-based evaluation tool to enable local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings.

The HHSRS is not a standard but a system to enable the hazards to be identified and the risks minimised or removed. All properties shall be free of category 1 hazards as determined using the system. The HHSRS consists of 29 hazards which should be assessed in a domestic property. Landlords are required to manage all these hazards to reduce the risk to tenants and visitors to reasonable levels.

Some of the most common hazards are as follows:

### Damp and mould growth

Houses should be warm, dry and well-ventilated, and maintained free from rising, penetrating and persistent condensation. There should be adequate provision for the safe removal of moisture-laden air to prevent damp and mould growth.

### Excess cold

Houses should be adequately insulated to prevent excessive heat loss and have an effective heating system capable of maintaining temperature. An Energy Performance Certificate, (EPC), is required every time a home is put up for sale or for rent. There are a few exceptions, i.e. for a room that's being rented out by a resident landlord and listed buildings may also be exempt.

### Electrical hazards

The electrical installation should be maintained in a safe condition. There is a legal requirement for the electrical installations in HMOs to be inspected every five years. Electrical installations must be inspected by a competent person.



## Lighting

All habitable rooms should have an adequate level of natural lighting. Where practicable, all staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets should be provided, with a window. All rooms and circulations areas within the property should have provision for electric lighting.

## Fire

Adequate smoke and heat detection in key areas with elevated fire safety such as fire doors, thumb turn locks and escape routes in HMOs and key fire barriers in residential/commercial mixed buildings (flats over shops etc.).

## Flames, hot surfaces etc.

Heating and cooking appliances should all be maintained in a safe condition and be suitably located so as not to become unreasonably hazardous. Cooking appliances should be set on an even surface and heating appliances securely fixed with a suitable position within the room.

## Entry by intruders

Houses should be capable of being secured to deter against unauthorised entry. Windows and doors should be robust and fitted with adequate security. Externally, the curtilage of the property should be restricted and be properly gated. Sheds or outbuildings should be maintained in good order and made secure.

## Falls

Externally, paths and walkways should be even, properly drained and steps should be maintained in good condition and be free from disrepair. Internally, floors should be even, have a non-slip finish and be maintained in a good condition. Stairs should be maintained in good condition and be free from disrepair. Stair coverings should be properly and securely fitted and should not be worn or loose. A securely fixed handrail should be provided the full length of the stairway. Balconies and basement light wells should have securely fixed guarding.



### Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse

Bathroom and kitchen surface finishes should be capable of being readily cleaned. The external parts of the property should be free from disrepair and free from access by pests, such as rats and mice. There should also be suitable provision for the storage of domestic waste inside and adequate receptacles outside the property.

### Water supply

Adequate supply of cold water for drinking or cooking, washing, cleaning or toileting should be available. All pipework should be adequately protected from frost damage.

### Further information

Further guidance can be found on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System by following these links:

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/HHSRS](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/HHSRS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals>

## Licensing and Management Regulations

These regulations set out the minimum standards for HMOs and provide the legal requirements that the Council has interpreted within this guidance. Where landlords are seeking to convert to an HMO, increase the occupancy of an HMO or undertake refurbishment work to their HMO, the Council will require these standards as a minimum.

A copy of regulations can be found at: The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/373/contents/made>



## Management Regulations

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation apply to all HMO's, irrespective of their licensable status. Owners and managers must ensure that their accommodation is adequately managed in accordance with these requirements which reflect the additional risks and responsibilities associated with managing this type of accommodation.

These are to:

- Provide all occupiers with the landlord's name, address and telephone number; all this information will be on a notice board in a well-located area within the property.
- Ensure that all fire escapes are cleared of any obstacles and that adequate fire safety measures are in place with regards to the design.
- Maintain an adequate supply of water and a drainage to the dwelling.
- Not unreasonably cause the gas and electric supply to be interrupted.
- Inspect every electrical installation by a suitably qualified person at intervals not exceeding 5 years.
- Provide electrical and gas inspection certificates within 7 days of receiving a request of writing from the local housing authority.
- Ensure that all parts of the HMO are maintained in good decorative order and safe working condition, especially the common parts.
- Ensure that each unit of living accommodation and its contents are clean before the occupiers move in. Also ensure that they are kept in good repair and clean working order.
- Provide adequate facilities to dispose of all waste produced by the property.
- Ensure that there is no build-up of litter or refuse.
- Ensure that outbuildings, yards, forecourts, boundary walls, fences and railings are to be kept in good repair as well as gardens kept in reasonable condition.

Failure to abide with Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 a Civil Penalty Fine of £1000 per beach of regulation could be issued, or prosecution in court.





Copies of the HMO Management Regulations can be found at:

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006;  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/372/contents/made>

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007;  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/1903/contents/made>

## Non-Compliance with legal requirements

Where landlords fail to comply with legal requirements, the Council can issue a civil penalty of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution. The Council could also prosecute; a summary conviction may result in an unlimited fine.

## Other legal Considerations

**Planning Permission** - Owners must satisfy themselves that the property has appropriate planning approval and can lawfully be used as a House in Multiple Occupation under planning legislation. Currently, if you wish to convert a residential house to an HMO with seven or more lets you will need to seek planning permission. Further information can be found at [www.planningportal.co.uk](http://www.planningportal.co.uk) or visit our website at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/planning](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/planning)

**Building Regulations** - Approval under the Building Regulations is likely to be required for a range of HMO conversion works including: Installation of additional kitchen or bathroom facilities that require waste connections, changes in layout including adding or removing walls and or doors and windows. Further information can be found at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/buildingregulations](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/buildingregulations)

**Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998** - As a landlord, you are responsible for the safety of your tenants. The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 specifically deal with the duties of landlords to ensure that gas appliances, fittings and flues provided for tenants' use are safe.



As a landlord, you have a duty to ensure:

- Gas fittings (appliances, pipework) and flues are maintained in a safe condition;
- All installation, maintenance and safety checks are carried out by a Gas Safe Registered Installer;
- An annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance/flue by a Gas Safe Registered Installer. Checks need to have taken place within one year of the start of the tenancy/lease date, unless the appliances have been installed for less than 12 months, in which case they should be checked within 12 months of their installation date;
- A record of each safety check is kept for two years; and
- A copy of the current safety check record is issued to each existing tenant within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in (in certain cases the record can be displayed).

### Electrical Safety

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 apply to all privately rented properties, including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The Regulations apply to all new tenancies from 1 June 2020 and to all existing tenancies from 1 April 2021.

The Regulations require all landlords to ensure that the electrical installation in any privately rented property is inspected by a qualified and competent person every 5 years.

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be provided to all new tenants before they occupy the dwelling and to all existing tenants within 28 days.

A copy of the EICR must also be provided to the Council within 7 days on request.

Where the inspection and report show that remedial work is needed, this must be carried within 28 days (or within a shorter period if indicated in the report). Confirmation that any necessary work has been satisfactorily completed must be given to the tenant and to the council within 28 days of completion.



The council can issue a financial penalty of up to £30,000 on a landlord who is found to be in breach of their duties under these regulations.

### **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022**

These regulations require landlords to ensure at least one smoke alarm is installed on each storey of the property where there is a room used as living accommodation. This is the minimum requirement, and the local authority may require extra smoke alarms depending on the layout and use of the building i.e. to comply with HMO requirements. The alarms must also be tested on the first day of occupancy.

The regulations also require a carbon monoxide alarm (CO) to be installed in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).

The landlord must ensure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are repaired or replaced where they are found to be faulty.

If a landlord fails to comply with the updated regulations, the local authority can impose a fine of up to £5,000.

### **Portable Appliance Testing**

Portable Appliance Test (PAT) is part of the management requirements of an HMO; landlords must ensure any electrical appliances provided in the property are safe. If you provide electrical appliances as part of the tenancy you must have them regularly inspected by an approved electrician if they are more than 12 months old.

Portable appliances include such items as fridges, freezers, kettles, toasters, microwave ovens, televisions, table lamps, portable heaters and other plug-in appliances.

If the portable appliance is less than 12 months old, you must keep the receipt to prove the age of the equipment. You must be able to provide a PAT certificate issued by an approved electrician if requested. This certificate must not be more than 12 months old.

More information on PAT testing in general can be found here <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm>.



## Furniture and furnishings

Materials used for filling, covering or forming furniture can present a fire risk, being high flammable and in some cases can produce large quantities of toxic gases such as cyanide or carbon monoxide when in a fire.

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended 1989 & 1993) require that furniture and furnishing hired out in the course of a business, such as the letting of furnished accommodation must comply with the British Standard tests for combustion and fire spread.

## Energy Efficiency

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 require that any property rented out in the private rented sector is to have a minimum energy performance rating of E on an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). It is now unlawful to rent a property which breaches the requirement for a minimum E rating, unless there is an applicable exemption.

Failure to comply could result in a penalty of up to £4,000.

## Right to Rent

The Immigration Act 2014 introduced the requirement that anyone who rents out private property in England, including those subletting or taking in lodgers, must make 'right to rent' checks to make sure that their tenants/lodgers can legally rent residential property here.

Information about 'Right to Rent' can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/landlords-immigration-right-to-rent-checks>

## Amenities & Facilities

### Heating

Each unit of living accommodation in an HMO must be equipped with adequate means of space heating. Heating which is capable of maintaining 20 degrees Celsius (°C) temperature difference with the external air when the outside temperature is -1°C, should be provided in every habitable room and bathroom. (The provision of insulation can assist in meeting this standard.) Such heating provision must be capable of being used at any time.



Heating may be by means of central heating, gas heaters connected to a suitable flue or terminal outlet, Oil heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet. Any electrical heater should be a fixed installation and connected via a fused spur for the sole use of the appliance. **The use of portable paraffin or oil fire heaters and liquefied petroleum gas heaters (LPG) (bottled gas heaters) shall not be acceptable under any circumstances. Portable or removable heating appliances will not be acceptable.**

### Location of meters

All gas and electrical meters (and boilers) must be in a communal area or room that is accessible at all times. In properties above or below commercial premises, the HMO must have a separate supply for gas and electricity. A shared supply and or meters are not acceptable.

### Natural lighting

All habitable rooms should have an adequate level of natural lighting provided via a clear glazed window or windows. (It is advisable that the glazed area is to be equivalent to at least one-tenth of the floor area). Where practicable, all staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets should be provided with a window. Windows to bathrooms and toilets should be glazed with obscuring glass.

### Artificial lighting

All rooms and circulation areas within the property should have provision for electric lighting, which should be controllable from suitable located switch points.

Lighting on stairs should be capable of being switched on and off from both upstairs and downstairs.

### Electricity supply

Electrical socket outlets shall be provided in individual rooms or lettings to a minimum standard as follows:

- Living rooms – 6 single (3 double) sockets or equivalent.
- Bedrooms – 4 single sockets (2 double) or equivalent.
- Bedrooms containing living space – 6 sockets (3 double) or equivalent.



## Ventilation

All habitable rooms shall be ventilated either directly to the external air by a window; the openable area of which shall be equivalent to at least 1/20th of the floor area of the room, or by an appropriate mechanical ventilation system.

Doors which open from habitable rooms to the external air will not be considered for ventilation purposes unless the door incorporates a purpose designed controlled ventilation device which does not prejudice the security of the door.

All kitchens, bathrooms and water closet compartments shall comply with the above, but where this is not practicable, mechanical ventilation providing a minimum of three air changes per hour shall be provided. Such an installation shall be fitted with an overrun device for a minimum of 15 minutes and be connected to the lighting circuit of the room.

## Water supply

A supply of cold running water shall be provided suitable for drinking purposes either directly off the rising main or by such other means as are acceptable to the relevant water authority.

## Asbestos

Landlords have a duty to identify and manage any Asbestos containing materials in their property. If the material is in good condition and not liable to damage or disruption, for example during alteration work, then it is normally appropriate to leave it alone. If in doubt, you should seek further advice.

If you are aware of any Asbestos containing materials, you should keep a record of the location and type of material and confirm that it is in a sound condition. You should then check every 6 months to see there has been no damage etc and date and sign the record to show that you have done this.

## Personal safety and security

Sufficient measures must be in place to provide a secure environment for the occupiers, including appropriate locks to external doors and tenant's own rooms to prevent unauthorised access but permit safe keyless egress.



Vulnerable windows must also be securable against entry without compromising the means of escape in case of fire. Simple locks must be provided to communal bathrooms and toilets to provide privacy.

Window restrictors will be required for all windows above ground floor level where the sill height is within 1100mm of the floor level, preventing the window from being opened more than 100mm. Any restrictor must be of a type which can be easily over-ridden by an adult in the event of fire.

Where any glazing is within 800mm of the floor level (including glazing within doors) it should be guarded or comprised of safety glass. Windows, on second floors and above, where the glazing is within 1100mm of the floor level should be guarded with a safety rail. Guarding (e.g. balustrade) should be provided to staircases, balconies and landings to prevent falls. It should be at least 1100mm high and designed and constructed in such a way that will discourage children climbing and strong enough to support the weight of people leaning against it. There should be no openings to the guarding which would allow a 100mm sphere to pass through.

### **Refuse storage and disposal**

There shall be provided and maintained in a convenient and accessible position an adequate number of suitable refuse containers, so sited as to be readily accessible to the refuse collection service and ensure that all refuse containers are returned within the curtilage of the HMO on the same day that they are emptied.

For further information visit our website

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/HMOwaste](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/HMOwaste)

## **Space standards**

### **Legal requirements**

This requirement is set out in the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018 SI 616, which amends the Housing Act 2004 Schedule 4 Mandatory Conditions.



From 1 October 2018, all HMO licences issued on or after this date must include conditions relating to minimum bedroom floor area as follows:

- 6.51 m<sup>2</sup> for one person over ten years of age
- 10.22 m<sup>2</sup> for two persons over ten years of age
- 4.64 m<sup>2</sup> for one child under the age of ten years

Any room of less than 4.64m<sup>2</sup> must not be used as sleeping accommodation. The licence holder will need to notify the Council of any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64m<sup>2</sup>.

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 require kitchens, bathrooms and WCs to be of adequate size, as set out in this guide. If there are no communal living areas, bedrooms would need to be larger.

Sandwell Council requires different room size requirements depending on whether the property has additional communal space and has adopted the following guidelines as minimum requirements.

### **Important notes on calculating the minimum room size**

When measuring the size of any room, the officer must take into account the 'useable space' by considering the height and shape of the room. Measurements will include all floor space including floor to ceiling fitted wardrobes/walk in cupboards, but not chimney breasts, bulkheads or ensuite bathroom facilities. Skirting boards will also be ignored.

Rooms must be able to allow the effective use of the required amount of furniture and allow sufficient movement around the room. Where this is not possible (e.g. narrow layout), a higher minimum floor space may be required. All rooms should have a minimum floor to ceiling height of at least 2.3 metres over 75% of the room area. Where the ceiling height is less than 1.5 metres the floor area underneath it shall be disregarded and not counted as 'useable space'.





<b>Bedroom sizes for HMOs with shared kitchen guidance (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>			
<b>Persons in Bedroom</b>	<b>Minimum Room Size</b>	<b>Minimum Room Size if separate living room provided</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6.51</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10.22</b>	
<b>Bedroom sizes with kitchen facilities included (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>			
<b>Persons in Bedroom</b>	<b>Minimum Room Size if no additional living space provided</b>	<b>Minimum Room Size if separate living space provided</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	
<b>Minimum sizes of other rooms (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>			
<b>Total Residents in House</b>	<b>Kitchen (obligatory)</b>	<b>Living Room (optional)</b>	<b>Dining Rooms (optional)</b>
<b>3-5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6-10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>11-15</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>
<b>16+</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>
<p>In HMOs with a shared kitchen, for the landlord to take advantage of the lower bedroom sizes they must also have at least a shared living room, but they can have additional shared rooms. If you wish to make the kitchen your main living space, it must equal or exceed the minimum kitchen size plus the minimum living room size.</p>			



## Facilities for storage, preparation and cooking of food

### Shared kitchens, legal requirement

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 require:

1. A kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, and of such layout and size and equipped with such facilities to adequately enable those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food.
2. The kitchen must be equipped with the following equipment, which must be fit for the purpose and supplied in a sufficient quantity for the number of those sharing the facilities:
  - (i) sinks with draining boards
  - (ii) an adequate supply of constant cold and hot water to each sink supplied
  - (iii) installations or equipment for the cooking of food
  - (iv) electrical sockets
  - (v) worktops for the preparation of food
  - (vi) cupboards for the storage of food or kitchen and cooking utensils
  - (vii) refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment (or, where the freezer compartment is not adequate, adequate separate freezers)
  - (viii) appropriate refuse disposal facilities; and
  - (ix) appropriate extractor fans, fire blankets and fire doors.

To meet the above requirements, Sandwell Council has adopted the following minimum standards:

### Quantity and minimum provision of equipment

- A complete set of kitchen facilities must be provided for every five persons as detailed below.
- No more than two sets of facilities shall be provided in any one kitchen.

**Sinks** must be stainless steel or have a comparable impermeable, easily cleansable surface. They must be provided with a drainer, overflow,



supplies of constantly available hot and cold water and all requisite drainage. The sink top (or surface into which it is inset) must be a minimum 900mm x 500mm. Sinks must have a tiled or similar waterproof splash-back (where the sink abuts a window reveal, the sill of the window must be clad in waterproof tiles or similar) extending to a minimum height of 150mm above the sink top and there must be a flexible waterproof joint between the sink and the splash-back.

**Food Preparation Surfaces** must be of impermeable, durable & easily cleansable materials. Where these are fixed, the joint between the food preparation surface and any abutting units or the wall must be watertight and a splash-back as detailed above for sinks must be provided.

**Cooking Appliances** with four ring burners, oven and grill, that are capable of simultaneous use must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. Electrical appliances must be connected via an appropriately rated switch and fuse. All cooking appliances must be sited with safety in mind having regard to the ergonomics of handling hot food. In particular, cooking appliances should be located adjacent to food preparation surfaces.

**Food Storage** must have a minimum capacity 0.1 cubic metres (which is equivalent to a standard single wall unit). The internal and external surfaces must be of durable and easily cleansable materials and, where wall mounted, must be fixed securely to take the considerable weight of stored tinned/bottled foods. This may be provided within each occupant's room. (The space in the unit beneath the sink and drainer is not allowable for food storage).

**Fridge/Freezer** with a minimum fridge capacity of 130 litres plus a freezer with a minimum capacity of 60 litres. If not in the kitchen the fridge/freezer must be freely accessible and adjoining the kitchen.

**Refuse disposal:** Adequate provision must be made for the collection storage and disposal of refuse.

**For all shared kitchens** it is important that residents do not have to carry hot food and drink long distances to rooms, especially if this means climbing stairs. Careful consideration must be given to which rooms in a house are used for kitchens.

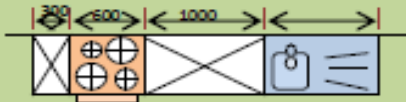


A kitchen should not, where practicable, be more than one floor distant from each user. Alternatively, a suitably furnished dining facility can be provided on the same floor as the kitchen.

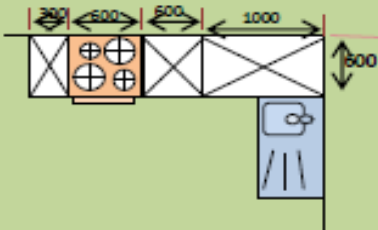
**Examples of good and poor kitchen layouts**

**✓ Good practice**

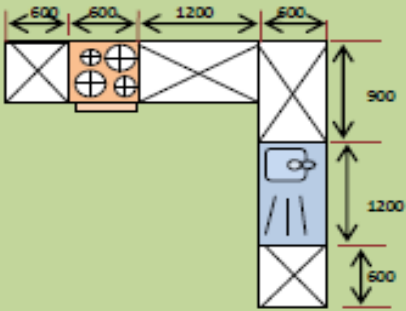
A satisfactory kitchen must be safe, convenient and must allow good hygiene practices. It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each. Worktops must be secure, level and impervious and must be of adequate size. Adjacent walls require splash-backs and power points must be suitably located

**✓** 

This is the minimum provision for a kitchen. It incorporates worktop on both sides of the cooker and working space both sides of the sink bowl. Note 300mm is the minimum width and should be made wider where possible.



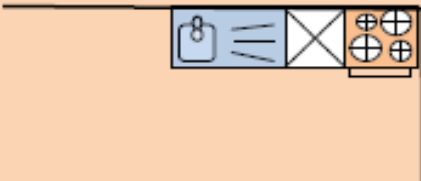
**Alternative minimum layout**  
This arrangement provides more workspace but could be further improved by giving more room in front of the sink (see below)




This is a good kitchen layout. It is well set out and has plenty of usable workspace

**✗ Unacceptable**

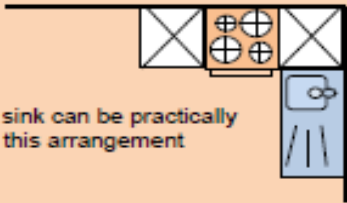
Cookers cannot be safely used if they are located in corners, do not have adequate worktop on both sides or are too close to sinks. Sinks require space to put dirty utensils on one side and clean on the other.

**✗** 

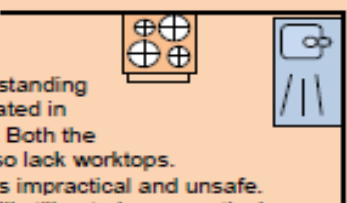
Cookers may not be located in a corner. This arrangement is impractical and unsafe.

**✗** 

The sink bowl must not be placed in a corner. This is an impractical arrangement and because there is no worktop next to the bowl and it is impossible to separate clean and dirty utensils it also creates a hygiene hazard

**✗** 

Neither cooker nor sink can be practically or safely used with this arrangement

**✗** 

The cooker is free standing and improperly located in relation to the sink. Both the cooker and sink also lack worktops. This arrangement is impractical and unsafe. Adding worktops will still not give a practical and safe kitchen



Number of people	Minimum provision of kitchen facilities
3 – 5 people	1 complete set of kitchen facilities- 1 stainless steel sink and integral drainer, one food storage cupboard per person, a standard size fridge and a standard size freezer (can be a single fridge/freezer), a worktop which is the minimum length of 1000mm and minimum width of 600mm, a minimum of (3) twin 13 amp socket outlets, and a gas or electric cooker with 4 ring burners.
6 – 7 people	2 complete sets of kitchen facilities with a minimum 1500mm x 600mm worktop and (5) twin 13-amp sockets outlets. A combination microwave is accepted as a second cooker. A dishwasher will be accepted as a second sink. 2 separate fridge/freezers or a version of.
8 – 10 people	2 complete sets of kitchen facilities with a minimum 2000mm x 600mm worktop and (5) twin 13-amp sockets outlets. A combination microwave is accepted as a second cooker. A dishwasher will be accepted as a second sink. 2 separate fridge/freezers or a version of.
11 – 15 people	At least two separate kitchens containing three complete sets of kitchen facilities, each kitchen with a minimum 2500mm x 600mm of work surface and (5) twin 13-amp sockets.
<b>If two sets of facilities are provided in one kitchen, the layout must allow them to be used safely at the same time.</b>	

### **Kitchens for exclusive use: bedsits**

A bedsit is where sleeping, living and cooking amenities are provided for exclusive use by occupants within a single unit of accommodation (i.e. one room).



## Legal requirements

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 requires rooms without shared amenities to be provided with adequate equipment.

To achieve compliance with the above requirements for adequate size, layout and equipment, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has adopted the following additional requirements.

**Cooking:** A gas or electric cooker with a minimum two-ring hob, oven and grill.

**Storage:** A 130 litre refrigerator with freezer compartment plus at least one food storage cupboard for each occupant in the bedsit (base units shall be 500mm wide and wall units shall be 1000mm wide). The sink base unit cannot be used for food storage.

**Preparation:** Worktop of at least 500mm deep and 1000mm long, comprising a minimum of 300mm both sides of the cooking appliance to enable utensils and pans to be placed down. All worktops must be securely supported, impervious and easy to clean.

**Electricity:** Two double 13-amp power sockets suitably positioned at worktop height for use by portable appliances, in addition to sockets used by fixed kitchen appliances, plus three double sockets located elsewhere within the bedsit.

**Washing:** A stainless steel sink and integral drainer set on a base unit with constant supplies of hot and cold running water. The sink shall be properly connected to the drainage system. The cold water shall be direct from the mains supply. A tiled splash-back shall be provided behind the sink and drainer.

**Ventilation:** Mechanical ventilation to the outside air at a minimum extraction rate of 60 litres per second or 30 litres per second if the fan is sited within 300mm of the centre of the hob. This is in addition to any windows.



**Layout:** The same principles of safe layout and design apply in bedsits as for shared kitchens. Cookers must not be located near doorways, to avoid collisions and to reduce the possibility of a fire on the hob trapping an occupant in the room or sited under windows.

### Notes:

1. Where any gas appliance is provided within a unit of accommodation, a carbon monoxide detector must also be provided.
2. Proprietary micro-style kitchenettes incorporating the above features may be suitable in certain situations, following consultation with a case officer.

## Personal washing facilities

### Legal requirements

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 set standards for washing facilities as below:

1. Where all or some of the units of living accommodation in an HMO do not contain bathing and toilet facilities for the exclusive use of each individual household:
  - (a) where there are four or fewer occupiers sharing those facilities, there must be at least one bathroom with a fixed bath or shower and a toilet (which may be situated in the bathroom);
  - (b) where there are five or more occupiers sharing those facilities, there must be: (i) one separate toilet with a wash hand basin with appropriate splash-back for every five sharing occupiers; and (ii) at least one bathroom (which may contain a toilet) with a fixed bath or shower for every five sharing occupiers.
2. All baths, showers and wash hand basins in an HMO must be equipped with taps providing an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water.



3. All bathrooms in an HMO must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated.
4. All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be of an adequate size and layout.
5. All baths, toilets and wash hand basins in an HMO must be fit for the purpose.
6. All bathrooms and toilets in an HMO must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO.

To meet the above requirements of adequate size, layout, and to be fit for purpose, Sandwell Council has adopted the following additional requirements:

1. Where a child under 10 lives in the property, a bath must be provided.
2. Bathrooms and shower rooms require an efficient and safe fixed space heating appliance, capable of maintaining a minimum temperature of 21°C when the outside temperature is -1°C. The fixed space-heating appliance may be an adequate central heating system with thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) or a fixed electrical appliance. The heating must be under the control of the occupiers for timings and temperature settings.
3. Bathrooms must have mechanical ventilation to the outside air at a minimum extraction rate of 15 litres per second in addition to any openable window(s). The system is to be either coupled to the light switch and incorporate a suitable over-run period, or an appropriately set humidistat.
4. A tiled splash-back of at least 300mm shall be provided to all baths and wash hand basins. Shower cubicles shall have fully tiled walls and be provided with a suitable water-resistant curtain or door to the cubicle.

Bathrooms and shower rooms shall have smooth, impervious wall and ceiling surfaces, which can be easily cleaned. The flooring should be capable of being easily cleaned and slip-resistant.





5. Bathrooms and shower rooms must be constructed to ensure privacy. Locks/bolts are needed and obscured glazing/film to be fitted as necessary.

The following minimum dimensions shall apply:

Item	Dimensions
Wash Hand Basin	500mm x 400mm although a smaller wash hand basin is accepted in separate toilet compartments.
Bath	1700mm x 700mm
Splash Back	300mm high
Shower	800mm x 800mm
Shower Room	1600mm x 900mm
Bathroom (bath only)	1400mm x 1700mm
Bathroom (bath/whb/WC)	1800mm x 1600mm

## Toilet facilities

### Legal requirements

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 set standards for sanitary conveniences.

1. Where there are four or fewer occupiers sharing facilities, there must be one toilet which may be situated in the bathroom.
2. Where there are five or more occupiers there must be one toilet with wash hand basin separate from the main bathroom for every five sharing occupiers.



3. Toilets are to be provided in bathrooms or separate compartments of an adequate size and layout. The rooms shall have smooth, impervious wall and ceiling surfaces, which can be easily cleaned. The flooring should be capable of being easily cleaned and slip-resistant.

4. Toilets shall be readily accessible and normally not more than one floor away from the user. Shared facilities shall be accessible from a common area. Facilities must be inside the building.

5. A toilet provided in a separate compartment must have a wash hand basin with an appropriate splash-back.

To meet the above requirements of adequate size, layout, and to be fit for purpose, Sandwell Council has adopted the following additional requirements:

1. Separate toilet compartments should be a minimum dimension of 1300mm x 900mm with 750mm in front of the toilet.

2. Each toilet in a separate compartment is required to have a window that opens equivalent to 1/20th of the floor area or mechanical ventilation to the outside air at a minimum extraction rate of six litres/second.

3. An efficient and safe fixed space-heating appliance, capable of maintaining each room at a minimum temperature of 21°C when the outside temperature is -1°C, must be provided. The fixed space-heating appliance may be an adequate central heating system with thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs), or a fixed, hard-wired electrical appliance. The heating must be under the control of the occupiers for timings and temperature settings.

4. A wash hand basin with appropriate splashback must be provided in the same compartment as the toilet.

5. Compartments must be constructed to ensure privacy.



## Sharing ratios for bathrooms and toilet facilities

### Legal requirements

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 set standards for the number of bathrooms/showers and toilet facilities in HMOs

The information below explains this requirement in more detail:

Number of people irrespective of age	Facilities required (Note: If a child under 10 lives in the property, a bath must be provided.)
1-4 people	<p>The minimum provision is 1 bathroom containing toilet, bath or shower and wash hand basin.</p> <p>The bathroom and toilet may be in the same room.</p>
5 people	<p>The minimum provision is 1 bathroom with a bath or shower and 1 separate toilet with wash hand basin.</p> <p>The separate toilet may be located in a second bathroom.</p>
6-10 people	<p>The minimum provision is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 bathrooms containing a bath or shower.</li> <li>• 2 toilets with wash hand basins, one of which must be in a separate room.</li> </ul>
11-15 people	<p>The minimum provision is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 bathrooms containing a bath or shower.</li> <li>• 3 toilets with wash hand basins, one of which must be in a separate room.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Bedrooms with ensuite</b></p>	<p><b>Where a room is provided with a complete ensuite facility (bath/shower, toilet and wash hand basin) for the exclusive use of that occupant, then that occupant will be disregarded when considering the provision of sanitary facilities.</b></p> <p><b>If there were six occupants, one of whom had exclusive use of a fully equipped en-suite, the requirement for the remaining occupants would be for five people.</b></p> <p><b>If, however, the ensuite only provides one facility (either a bath/shower or a WC) then the occupant will not be disregarded for the missing amenity.</b></p>
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## Fire Safety

### Legal requirement:

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 require appropriate fire precaution facilities and equipment to be provided of such type, number and location as considered necessary.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires all HMOs to have a sufficient risk assessment with regard to fire.

The Management Regulations require firefighting equipment and fire alarms to be maintained in good working order.

West Midlands Fire Service enforce fire safety Regulations in communal, (shared), parts of an HMO such as shared kitchens, living rooms, hallways, stairways, etc.



Sandwell Council will undertake the inspection of HMO's and determine whether adequate fire precaution facilities and equipment are in place. A joint inspection may be undertaken with West Midlands Fire Service where appropriate.

The fire precaution facilities and equipment considered necessary are in the national guidance: Fire Safety, Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing, published by LACORS.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>

In addition the Homestamp guide was especially produced to help landlords with the issues of fire safety and security with HMOs

[Homestamp\\_guide](#)

### **All licensable HMOs must have a fire risk assessment.**

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires the 'responsible person', who could be the landlord/licence holder or an agent with full management control, to carry out and regularly review a fire risk assessment. This is enforced by the Fire and Rescue Authority. The fire risk assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient', and assistance from an appropriately competent person should be sought as necessary to achieve this. Further information and guidance on completing a fire risk assessment is available from the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Government website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation>

### **Fire Precautions**

The risk of a fire occurring and the potential for increases in multiple occupied dwellings. Therefore, measures must be taken to reduce the levels of risk to occupiers in the event of fire.

The strategy to reduce the risk of harm to the occupiers in the event of a fire has two main components. The first is to give the occupants early warning of a fire occurring and the second is to provide a means of escaping from any room in the house to a place of safety (Protected Route).



There is no “one size fits all” approach to fire safety in HMOs. The following information is not a schedule of works; it is a guide on the general requirements. You will need to carry out more in-depth research.

Be as accurate as possible in your assessment of the property and try to avoid categorizing the risks lower than they are to save costs. This may end up costing more in the long run if the council finds that the risks are not adequately reduced.

The fire precautions that the council require are mostly about things that can happen outside the residents’ control. The law takes the view that someone with overall control of the house, i.e. the owner, landlord or manager, must take steps to protect everyone living in it. The main reasons for insisting on fire precautions in HMOs is to provide early warning and stop the smoke and fire spreading to other parts of the house before other residents have the chance to escape.

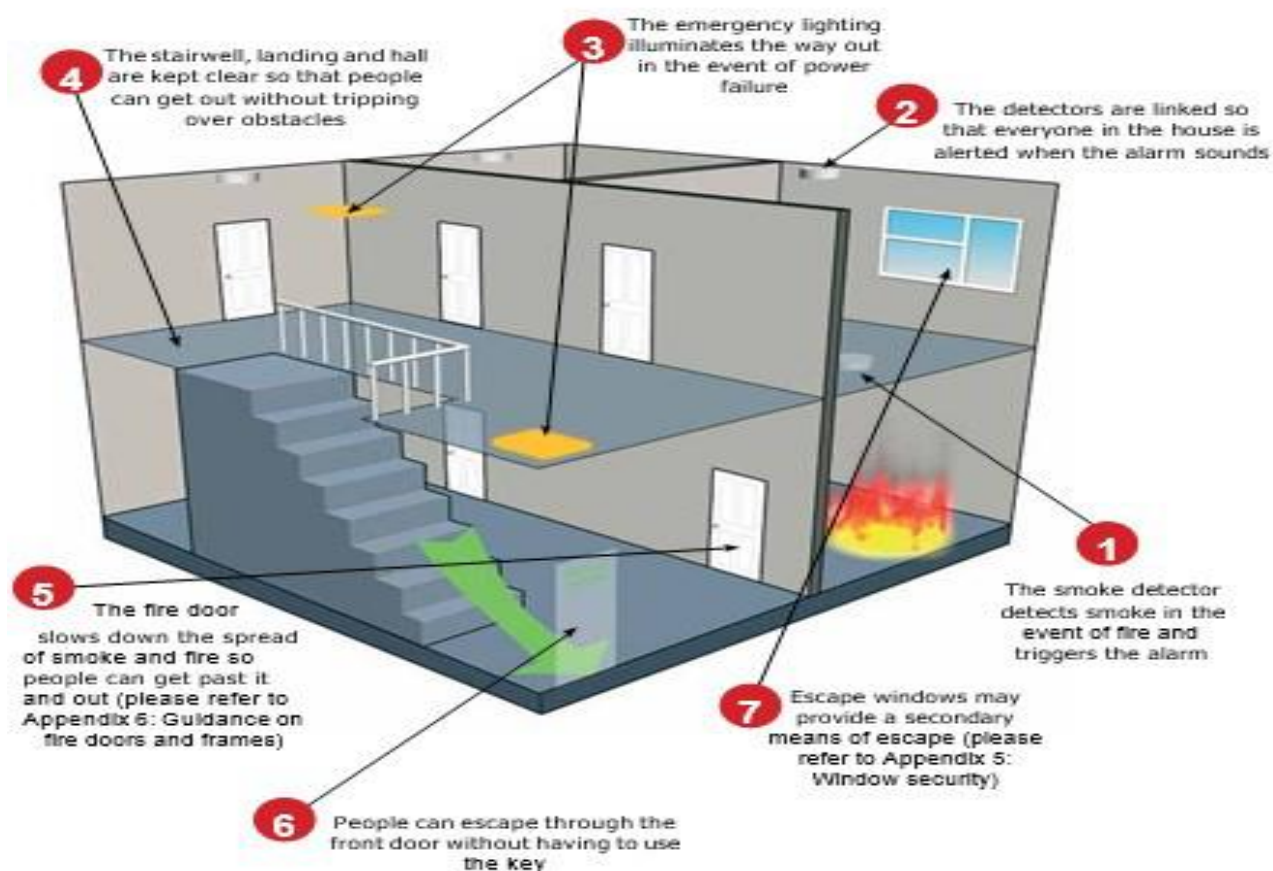
The information below is summarised from the above guides to help landlords understand their responsibilities and the fire safety precautions judged necessary for HMOs.

*(Please note that all British Standards referred to in this Guide are subject to change. You must ensure that the latest relevant British Standard is followed).*



## General principles

The following diagram illustrates the general principles of fire precautions in a representative house.



**Protected routes** provide a safe means of escape from fire and smoke and can involve going downstairs or along corridors and passages. All walls, floors and partitions along the route must give good protection and all doors leading onto the route should be fire doors.

Gas and electricity distribution panels, meters and fuse boxes in the common parts must be closed to give half hour fire resistance and provided with a lockable door. Affix a standard blue disc 'FIRE DOOR KEEP SHUT' signs.



**Fire doors** must be able to resist fire and prevent the passage of smoke, usually for thirty minutes to give you time to escape. Fire doors must fit tightly in their frame, have a self-closing device and be fitted with three sets of hinges. These doors are referred to as FD30.

Fire doors are very heavy and newer ones can be identified by a colour code on the edge of the door near the hinges. Ordinary doors with thin timber panels or cheap modern flush panel doors made from plywood and hardboard or hollow-core doors are not acceptable as they can fail in a fire situation very quickly, even within five minutes.

Fire doors are to be fitted with intumescent strips and often also require smoke seals. These are fitted continuously around either the top and side edges of the door or the frame. They can be combined as one strip or can be separate.

It is important that fire doors and their fixtures and fittings are properly maintained and not tampered with, once installed to ensure that they will be effective in a fire situation.

Fire doors should be installed and maintained in accordance with British Standard (BS) 8214:2016 by a competent person.

**Intumescent strips** expand when exposed to extreme heat. Once a fire breaks out in a room, the heat causes the strip to swell and seal the gap between the door and the frame in order to contain the fire.

**Smoke seals** restrict the passage of smoke into the escape route from the room where the fire is. They are designed to only block smoke and not fire, which is the purpose of the intumescent strip.

**Fire resisting materials** must be on each part of the building on the protected route, that is the walls, floors, ceilings and doors, and must resist fire usually for 30 minutes. If the HMO is adjacent or above a commercial premise, then the partition between the commercial premises and the HMO must resist fire for 60 minutes.





Bricks, blocks, concrete and plaster are all good fire resisting materials. Building methods consisting of partitions made of hardboard and timber, or single sheets of plasterboard with no top coat or plaster will not provide adequate fire protection.

**Fire alarm systems** are vital in HMOs and can save lives and injuries. The alarm system can range from linked smoke protection to a fully commissioned system. Alarms should be placed all along the protected route and have a distinctive sound, with a level of no less than 75dB (A) at all bed-heads when doors are shut.

The Council's fire precaution standards generally require:

An automatic fire detection system which should be in accordance with BS5839 Part 6-2019, with the most commonly used systems being:

Grade A: Fire alarm system with detectors and a central control panel. Usually with call-points (break glass units) near exits and on each landing.

Grade D: System of (usually interlinked) mains-powered smoke and heat alarms with backup batteries.

The coverage within the building by the detection system is described with the following codes:

LD1: Covers all circulation spaces that form part of escape routes plus all rooms in which a fire could start

LD2: Covers all circulation spaces that form part of escape routes plus all rooms and areas that present a high fire risk to occupants

LD3: Covers circulation spaces that form part of the escape routes

All testing and servicing of fire alarm systems is to be documented.

**Emergency lighting systems** should be tested regularly, and a full system test and service must be completed annually by a competent person in line with BS5266.



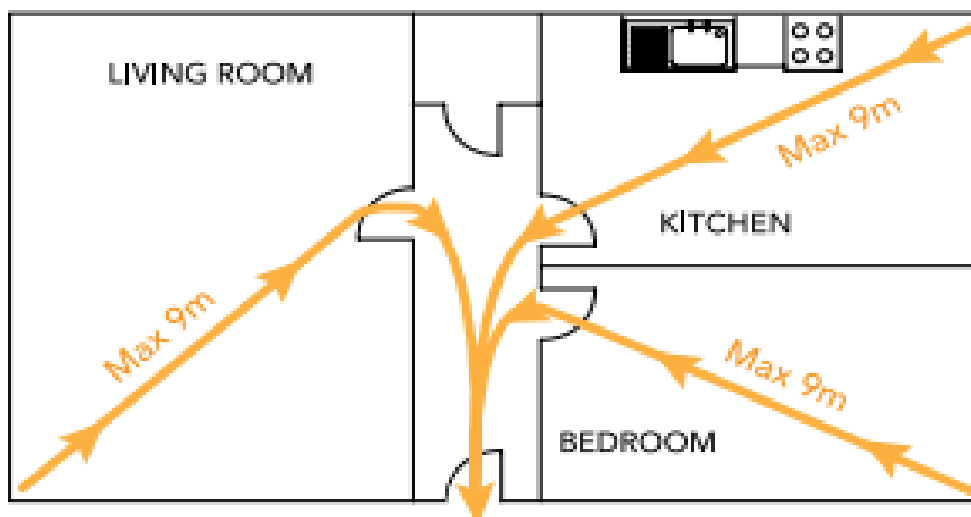
**Fire blankets** can stop a small fire becoming a major disaster and should be located in every kitchen area within the property. They are to be wall mounted in a conspicuous position and easily accessible position in line with BS6575:1985.

**Firefighting equipment** provided at the property must be serviced annually.

**Distance of travel** within HMOs are an important matter. In the event of fire, occupiers need to be reasonably sure that they can reach a place of safety within reasonable time. The layout of the premises needs to be such that occupiers can quickly find their way across the room they are in and then through any protected route to the final exit. This must be achieved despite possible heat, flames and most importantly smoke.

Smoke is often toxic but can also reduce visibility both by fogging and by causing irritation to the eyes. Occupiers need to be able to get through the escape route with a minimum of exposure to these hazards particularly by inhalation. Like most elements of fire safety, judging the adequacy of travel distances is a matter of risk assessment and needs to be considered along with all other risks.

The distance between any point on the premises and a place of safety should ideally be a maximum of 9 metres. A place of relative safety would, for example, be a protected route within the building.



**Place of relative safety or protected route**



### **Non-standard layout / Higher risk homes**

If the property is of a non-standard layout or if the occupants present a higher risk due to factors such as drug/alcohol dependency or limited mobility, then the risk may increase and additional precautions may need to be taken. This must be factored into your Fire Risk Assessment.

An example of a non-typical layout is 'inner rooms' where the bedroom is located such that the occupant passes through risk rooms (living rooms, kitchens or dining rooms) in order to reach the means of escape. There are various solutions available such as escape windows or water suppression systems; these should be discussed with a case officer before undertaking works.

### **Emergency Escape Windows**

A room from which the only escape route is through another room is an “**inner room**”. The room through which you have to pass is the “**access room**”. Inner rooms should not be used as bedrooms because there is a much greater risk to the occupants should a fire start in the access room.

This situation could arise, for example, where a bedroom is accessed from a living room. An inner room situation can be overcome by the provision of an emergency escape window or door leading to an alternative escape route.

Escape windows must enable a person to reach a place of safety free from danger from fire and are therefore generally provided to ground floor windows only.

However, escape windows may be provided to first floor rooms, provided that the distance from the window sill to external ground level does not exceed 4.5 metres.

Such rooms should only be occupied by persons physically capable of escaping via this route. The escape window should have an unobstructed openable area that is at least 0.33m<sup>2</sup> and at least 450mm high and 450mm wide (the route through the window may be at an angle rather than straight through). The bottom of the openable area should be not more than 1100mm above the floor. Where security is provided on windows, means of opening must be readily available within the room.



**Bedroom doors** should be fitted with locks that can be opened from the inside without a key, for example, thumb turn locks. In most cases, fire doors are required to be fitted to bedrooms.

In some low risk HMOs, they may not be required, if this is the case, doors should be solid, well-constructed, in good condition and close fitting to the frame. As a rule, fire doors should be fitted with smoke seals, however there is an exception to this. If fire doors are fitted to rooms where there is fire detection to the common parts (for example landings and hallways) then smoke seals may not be necessary.

A bedroom may be deemed high-risk if it contains cooking facilities, or if there is no common area such as a lounge for occupants to share.

### Fire precaution requirements checklist

For properties let on a room by room basis as individual tenancies with shared kitchen facilities, the following requirements apply:

Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
2 Storey Shared House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound traditional construction</li> <li>• Kitchen door to be FD30s with intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted.</li> <li>• All other doors to be sound, well-constructed close-fitting doors</li> <li>• Route must not pass through risk rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade D LD3</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each communal lounge</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in each communal kitchen</li> </ul>



Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
2 Storey shared house (Higher Risk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route</li> <li>• FD30s doors to all bedrooms, lounges and kitchens (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted)</li> <li>• Route must not pass through risk rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade D LD2</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels and in any under stairs cupboards.</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit and communal lounge</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in kitchen</li> </ul>

Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
2 Storey (Cooking In lets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route</li> <li>• FD30s doors to all bedrooms and lounges (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted)</li> <li>• Route must not pass through risk rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade D LD2</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels including any under stair cupboard.</li> <li>• To provide an early warning to occupiers of a fire occurring within their rooms, single point smoke alarms are also required. These detectors are not interlinked between rooms</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in each bedsit</li> <li>• Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each communal lounge</li> </ul>
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<b>Property type</b>	<b>Protected Route</b>	<b>Automatic Fire Detection</b>
3 or 4 Storey Shared House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route</li> <li>• FD30s doors to all bedroom, kitchen and lounge doors (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted)</li> <li>• Route must not pass through risk rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade A LD2</li> <li>• Control and indicating equipment (fire alarm panel) required</li> <li>• Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment</li> <li>• Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment</li> <li>• Mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each kitchen, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment</li> </ul>



Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
3 or 4 Storey (Cooking in lets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route</li> <li>• FD30s doors to all bedroom, kitchen and lounge doors (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted)</li> <li>• Route must not pass through risk rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade A LD2</li> <li>• Control and indicating equipment (fire alarm panel) required</li> <li>• Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment</li> <li>• Mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment</li> <li>• To provide an early warning to occupiers of a fire occurring within their rooms, single point smoke alarms are also required. These detectors are not interlinked between rooms</li> </ul>



## Applying for an HMO licence

You can apply for an HMO licence via the link below  
[www.sandwell.gov.uk/hmoapplication](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/hmoapplication)

To make a valid HMO licence application you must have:

1. completed application form
2. current gas safety certificate (if there is gas)
3. current electrical installation condition report
4. test certificate for the automatic fire detection system and emergency lighting system
5. written fire risk assessment carried out by a competent person (if you have one. If you do not currently have one, you will be required to produce one within 6 months of your licence being issued)
6. floor plan showing the room sizes, the fire protection measures and the kitchen, toilet, bathroom facilities
7. energy performance certificate (EPC)
8. a blank copy of a tenancy agreement given to tenants
9. appropriate 1st part of the license fee

The application is open for consultation. Consultation takes 7 days and it is where various parties will investigate whether the applicant is a fit and proper person and there are no concerns with the property.

Once an application is valid, we will prepare a draft licence called an 'Intention Notice' and request payment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the license fee.

There is a two-week consultation period before the final licence or 'Decision Notice' is issued. If you disagree with any conditions on the licence you can make representations against the conditions. These will be reviewed. We may amend the licence as requested or reject the representations.

The actual licence is then issued. You have the right of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (formerly Residential Property Tribunal) against conditions on the licence. This must be done within 28 days.





An HMO licence runs for up to five years from the date of issue and an inspection of the property will be undertaken during this period.

You must renew your licence before the current licence expires. A valid renewal requires timely submission of the HMO renewal application form, with signed copies of required documentation, declaration and fee payment.

## Further Information

For any further information about HMOs please visit our website via the link below.

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/whatisaHMO](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/whatisaHMO)

or contact on our email address: [landlord\\_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:landlord_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk)

## Version Control

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The reader of this document is made aware that a physical copy may not be the latest available version. The latest version, which supersedes all previous versions is available on [www.sandwell.gov.uk/HMOstandards](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/HMOstandards)

Version Number	Date	Change	Author

