

HMO Licensing Standards

These HMO Licensing Standards (the Standards) comprising amenity, space and fire standards, will apply to HMO Licensing. The standards will also be used when assessments for overcrowding are made in non-licensable HMOs. The insulation standard is advisory and the Council may have regard to it when assessing whether a licensable HMO contains insulation related hazards and whether to take enforcement action.

The Council, under the Housing Act 2004, is required to administer the mandatory HMO licensing scheme in respect of Sheffield. This duty includes the grant of HMO licences to successful applicants. The Council is required to include on licenses mandatory conditions. In addition, the Council may include further licence conditions relating to housing and management standards. Also when deciding whether to grant a licence the Council must be satisfied that the HMO is reasonably suitable for occupation by the maximum permitted number of households or persons. When deciding these issues, (with the exception of the Insulation Standards under paragraphs 1.7 to 1.11) the Council will have regard to the Standards. Each decision on these issues will be decided on the individual circumstances of the case. However, where a standard relates to mandatory condition that must be included in HMO Licenses, those standards will be included in all licenses. Where the Council decides not to impose a standard as a condition on a licence, this will be clearly stated on the licence. This will not be binding upon future licences.

The Council will have regard to the space standard at section 10 of the Standards, when determining whether or not to serve an Overcrowding Notice under the Housing Act 2004, on a non-licensable HMO that is or is likely to become overcrowded. Each decision will be made on the individual circumstances of the case, and the standard applied where the Council considers it appropriate.

The Council will have regard to the insulation standard at paragraphs 1.7 to 1.11 of the Standards, when determining whether a licensable HMO contains any insulation related hazards and whether to take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004. Details of any insulation standards will be included on the licence for information but not as a licence condition. Any enforcement of the insulation standard will be taken following an inspection and a risk assessment.

The Specifications

Section 1 The Amenity and Space Standards

1.0 Heating and Insulation

- 1.1 A form of fixed space heating is required to all habitable rooms which can be controllable by the tenants incorporating a timer and suitably positioned thermostat(s). Heating must be capable of providing the following temperatures in each room:

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| • Bedrooms only | 18 °C |
| • Living room/ dining room | 21 °C |
| • Study bedroom | 21 °C |
| • Bathroom with WC | 21 °C |
| • Kitchens and separate WCs | 18 °C |
| • Dining kitchens | 21 °C |
| • Circulation areas | 16 °C |

- 1.2 Temperatures must be achievable when the external temperature is -1.0 °C and be capable of reaching this temperature within 1 hour when the heating is in regular use. This standard will be usually be met through the provision of gas fired central heating or Night Storage Radiators. Acceptable alternatives would be connection to a district heating scheme or an oil fired boiler where a gas supply is not readily available. Where any other system of heating is proposed it must be economical and will also be environmentally friendly and permission should be obtained prior to installation. Permission for suitable alternatives will not be unreasonably withheld.

Heating

- 1.3. Subject to item 1.4 below such heating provision must be capable of being used at any time.
- 1.4. Where the landlord includes heating costs in the rent the heating controls shall be set to achieve the above temperatures for a minimum of 8 hours per day. Where the heating is restricted and there is no provision for the tenant(s) to over-ride this they shall be provided with means of supplementary heating. This may be by:
- Gas heaters connected to a suitable flue and terminal outlet, or
 - Electric heaters connected to a dedicated fixed spur outlet. The electric heaters shall be convector or radiant heating, except for temporary heaters provided short-term in the case of boiler break-down
 - Wherever practicable, heaters shall be fixed to an existing chimneybreast or otherwise be fixed so as to direct heat towards the centre of the room.
- 1.5. Where storage radiators are provided there must be suitable meter(s) to charge separately for off-peak electrical use. In addition, to provide for times when the energy stored by the heater has been exhausted there shall be supplementary heating either incorporated into the storage radiator or additional heating provision as detailed in paragraph 1.4 above.
- 1.6. The use of portable paraffin or individual oil fired heaters and liquefied petroleum gas heaters (LPG) (Bottled Gas heaters) and halogen heaters shall not be acceptable under any circumstances, whether provided by or on behalf of the landlord or the tenant. Any new tenancy agreement must incorporate this standard

Insulation

- 1.7. An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is required for shared houses. Mid terraced properties must have a certificate with a D rating or higher. End terrace properties and semi-detached properties must also aim for a Band D but have a minimum of the top half of Band E. The exact works to improve these house types to a reasonable standard will be the subject of an individual assessment.
- 1.8. Roof/loft spaces must be insulated where they are accessible from the house. A minimum of 270mm glass fibre or mineral fibre loft insulation, or equivalent insulating value(U-value), including any upright stud walls in attic loft spaces, where accessible. Cheeks and ceilings of dormer windows and roof slopes can be over-boarded with insulated plasterboard to obtain greater energy efficiency if no insulation is evident
- 1.9. Loft hatches must be insulated and draught proofed.
- 1.10. Hot water tanks must be insulated and exposed hot water supply pipes must be insulated if passing through unheated areas. (Sub-floor spaces excepted)

- 1.11. Where houses are single glazed or poorly provided as regards wall insulation if cellar ceilings have been removed or the ceiling is in poor repair exposing floor joists there must be 150mm mineral fibre insulation fixed in place with chicken wire. It is important to maintain ventilation to cellars otherwise insulation and plasterwork will become wet with condensation. Where other insulation exists an individual assessment will be made to check its suitability.

2.0 Washing and sanitary facilities

- 2.1 There must be an adequate number of bathrooms, toilets and wash-hand basins suitable for personal washing for the number of persons sharing those facilities; and where reasonably practicable there must be a wash hand basin with appropriate splash back in each unit other than a unit in which a sink has been provided, having regard to the age and character of the HMO, the size and layout of each flat and its existing provision for wash hand basins, toilets and bathrooms
- 2.2 If bedrooms don't have wash hand basins, a normal sized wash hand basin is required to be available for every 5 persons. This should be in a suitably located bathroom or toilet compartment not more than two floors distant in relation to the sleeping accommodation
- 2.3 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 each with a tiled, or equivalent, splash back area and:
- Any shower must have a waterproof surround and a shower screen/curtain.
 - If a shower is situated in a bath, tiles or equivalent must extend 1.5m from the shower head down the length of the bath, 150mm over the top of the shower head and 150mm past the side of a shower curtain to prevent damage to plasterwork
- 2.4 Bathrooms and toilet compartments must have adequate space to ensure their safe use. Any alterations to the bathroom and water closet need to comply with Building Regulation standards.
- 2.5 All bathrooms must be suitably and adequately heated and ventilated.
- 2.6 All toilets compartments should be fitted with a wash hand basin and the toilet and the wash hand basin must be fit for the purpose.
- 2.7 All bathrooms and toilets must be suitably located in or in relation to the living accommodation in the HMO.
- 2.8 "Suitably located bathrooms" means that they are not more than two floors distant in relation to the sleeping accommodation in shared accommodation and in houses converted into bedsitting rooms this is not more than one floor distant. (Going up and down a floor to access facilities on the same level as a bedroom would count as two storeys)
- 2.9 "Suitably located water-closet facilities" shall be not more than one floor distant from living and sleeping accommodation (Going up and down a floor to access facilities on the same level as a bedroom would count as two storeys).
- 2.10 Hot water may be provided by any of the following methods:
- Piped from storage or boiler e.g. combi and multipoint boilers.
 - Immersion Heater (including small immersion units with a minimum 10 litre storage reservoir).

- Existing 6kw instantaneous heaters are allowed to wash hand basins, subject to the electrical capacity of the house.
- Electric showers with a minimum rating of 8KW.

2.11 Any room provided with its own bathroom or toilet facilities shall be provided in a separate, ventilated compartment not more than 1 floor distant from the room.

2.12 Bathroom facilities shall be provided in accordance with the table below

Proposed Facilities per person sharing	WHB & WC (May be contained within the shower or bathroom)	Shower or Bath	Separate WC with WHB
1-4 Persons	1	1	-
5 Persons	-	1	1
6-8 Persons	2	2	-
9 Persons	1	2	1
10 Persons	2	2	1
11-12 Persons	3	3	-
13 Persons	2	3	1

3.0 Kitchens

- 3.1 There must be a kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, having a suitable layout and size and equipped with adequate facilities so as to allow those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food in a safe and hygienic manner. In particular, the design of the kitchen should allow for cookers to have 300mm of work surface either side of the cooker and where two cookers are next to each other 300mm between cookers. Cookers shall be positioned so that there is 900mm free space in front of cooker without door swings entering into that space (Door swings of kitchen cupboards are acceptable)
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Cookers with a minimum of 4 rings, a standard sized oven and a grill-Cookers having 4 rings, an oven and a grill shall normally be provided at a ratio of one per 5 persons sharing the kitchen. Where an HMO is occupied by up to 7 persons the standard may be met by providing a microwave, or a cooker with more than 4 rings and more than one oven, in addition. For 8 persons two fully equipped cookers are required
- 3.4 Sinks with draining boards - Sinks shall normally be at the ratio of one sink for 6 persons. Where 7 persons occupy a house, the provision of a double-bowled sink & single drainer, or a dishwasher (in addition to a sink) may be treated as meeting this standard. Where there are either a combination of these additional facilities or other additional facilities e.g. the provision of a utility room available close by consideration may be given to allow 8 persons. Permission should be obtained prior to installation. Permission for suitable alternatives will not be unreasonably withheld. Each sink

supplied must have an adequate constant supply of cold and hot water to which can be provided by any of the following methods:

- Piped from storage or boiler
- Immersion heater
- 3KW heater with a 10-litre storage reservoir

- 3.5 Worktops for the preparation of food for up to 6 persons in shared kitchens shall normally be a minimum of 500mm depth with 2.0m length of worktop free of appliances (i.e. sinks, drainers, cookers, hobs and any microwave oven required above). For every 1 person over 6 persons there shall be a further 0.25m length of worktop
- 3.6 Food cupboards shall be the equivalent of a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboard per person. The space in a sink unit below the sink will not be acceptable. Refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment or adequate separate freezers
- 3.7 Fridge space shall be a minimum 1 cubic foot (28 litres) of space per person in addition to the freezer compartment
- 3.8 There must be appropriate refuse disposal facilities;
- 3.9 There must be a fire blanket positioned close to the exit of the kitchen.
- 3.10 Kitchens shall be fitted with an appropriate electrically operated extractor fan. This shall be capable of achieving 6 air changes per hour this may be achieved by:
- A humidity controlled extractor fan extracting direct to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
 - A humidity controlled centrifugal extractor fan extracting through ducting to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
 - A humidity controlled fan incorporating heat recovery systems installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
 - An existing fan operated by a pull switch extracting direct to the external air (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above)
 - An existing Centrifugal fan operated by a pull switch extracting through ducting to the external air. (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above).
 - An existing built in cooker hood that extracts to the external air.
- 3.11 There must be dedicated sockets for appliances e.g. fridges or microwave ovens. In addition, the following sockets are required, to be located in a safe position above worktop height

	Double Sockets Above Worktop
1-5 Persons	2
6-8 Persons	3
9-12 persons	4

- 3.12 Where the landlord provides a catering service the facilities must comply with The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006. In addition, some self-catering facilities will need to be provided and the level of facilities required will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the level of provision by the landlord. We will provide advice on request.

4.0 Bedsits with kitchens

- 4.1 In bedsits with kitchen areas, adequate kitchen facilities must be provided to allow the storage, preparation and cooking of food in a safe and hygienic manner to the following minimum standard:
- 4.2 Two rings/hot plates together with a minimum of 1 cu. ft. (28 litres) oven and a grill. For occupancies of two persons, the minimum requirement is three rings/hot plates together with a full sized oven and grill. For occupancies of three or more persons a full size cooker is required. Cookers shall be positioned at a location and height to allow safe use
- 4.3 A sink with an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water;
- 4.4 A suitable work surface a minimum 0.5m deep and a length of 0.5m plus 0.5m per person using the facility shall be provided. A table in the kitchen area of suitable size and type may be considered an acceptable alternative for half of the requirement
- 4.5 Sufficient electrical sockets. A minimum of 3 single socket outlets shall be located above the work surface for the use of portable appliances in addition to any sockets for appliances required by these standards, situated in convenient positions for the user
- 4.6 Cupboards for the storage of kitchen utensils, crockery and food shall be required a minimum of one 500mm wide base unit or wall cupboard per person. The space located below the sink should not be treated as a food cupboard for the purpose of this standard
- 4.7 A refrigerator. (Fridge space shall be a minimum 1 cu. ft. (28 litres) of space per person plus a freezer compartment.) The fridge shall be capable of maintaining an internal temperature of 5°C
- 4.8 The standards referred to in this section regarding appliances do not apply where:
- the landlord is not contractually bound to provide such appliances or equipment;
 - the occupier of accommodation is entitled to remove such appliances or equipment from the HMO; or
 - the appliances or equipment are otherwise outside the control of the landlord

5.0 Refuse, Storage and Disposal

- 5.1 There must be refuse and recycling bins or containers in sufficient numbers and type for the needs of the house and compatible with the requirements of the refuse collection service.
- 5.2 All refuse containers must be located on hard-standings with suitable access for cleansing the area and removing the containers. They must be located away from habitable rooms and where reasonably practicable at the rear of the house unless a proper housing is provided at the front. Where reasonably practicable such containers shall be positioned so that bins do not obscure natural light from windows below bin height.

6.0 Electricity supply

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

	Single sockets (Either)	Double sockets (Or)
Living rooms	4	2
Bedrooms/Studies	4	2
Bedrooms within multiple room lettings	4	2
Bedsits containing cooking facilities	3 in kitchen area 3 elsewhere in room	

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or one double socket must be located above the work surface for the use of portable appliances.

- 6.3 Electric cookers must be provided with a dedicated cooker point outlet suitable for the rating of the cooker and fixed electric space or water heating appliances shall be provided with a separate dedicated electric point.

7.0 Natural lighting

- 7.1 All habitable rooms should be provided with a window to provide sufficient natural light to allow normal daytime activity without the need for artificial lighting. The window should be of a size not less than 1/10th of the floor area of the room
- 7.2 All kitchens, bathrooms and toilet compartments shall ideally comply with the above requirement and the glazing in bathrooms and toilet compartments must be obscure. Where it is not practicable to provide natural light, adequate artificial lighting alone will be acceptable within kitchens, bathroom and WC compartments

8.0 Artificial lighting

- 8.1 All rooms, passageways, staircases and cellars in use shall be adequately lit with suitable switching, including two-way switching to stairs and passageways etc, as necessary

9.0 Ventilation

- 9.1 For habitable rooms with a window to external air - the openable area should be of a size not less than 1/20th of the floor area of the room. Alternatively, a suitable ventilation system may be provided in accommodation where non opening windows are required.
- 9.2 All bathrooms and water-closet compartments shall ideally comply with the paragraphs above, but where this is not practicable, mechanical ventilation with an overrun device providing a minimum of 6 air changes an hour shall be provided. This may be achieved by:
- A humidity controlled extractor fan extracting direct to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
 - A humidity controlled centrifugal extractor fan extracting through ducting to the external air, fitted with a manual over-ride (recommended)
 - A humidity controlled fan incorporating heat recovery systems installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
 - An existing fan operated by a pull switch extracting direct to the external air (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above)
 - An existing Centrifugal fan operated by a pull switch extracting through ducting to the external air. (Any replacement fan to be one of the three types recommended above).
- 9.3 Where there are existing extraction arrangements that do not fit within examples 1 to 5 above but there are good reasons for the type of extraction fitted these will need to be individually approved and approval of such systems will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 9.4 Louvre windows are not acceptable in any circumstances
- 9.5 Windows opening onto walkways and across yards need to be fitted with restrictor stays to prevent them opening onto the thoroughfares

10.0 Space Standards for Rooms

- 10.1 Room sizes should comply with the standards set out below. All standards for floor space apply whatever the age of the occupants. The standards detail three types of premises,
- Bed sitting rooms, and flats with cooking facilities.

- Shared accommodation
- Hostel type accommodation with catering provided by the management

10.2 The calculation of room size only takes into consideration that part of the room where the ceiling height is greater than 1.5m, and assumes the majority of the room to be of a reasonable height and free of potentially injurious obstructions.

10.3 For the purpose of these floor space standards the space taken by any bathroom facilities will be disregarded.

10.4 Various room sizes are as follows:

Two or more room units with cooking, living and sleeping facilities	
Each single bedroom	6.52m ² (70 sq. ft)
Each double bedroom	10.23m ² (110 sq. ft)
Each living room single person units	9.0m ² (97sq. ft)
Each living room, two persons units	10.0m ² (108sq ft)
Each living/ kitchen, or living/bedroom single person unit	11m ² (120 sq. ft)
Each living/ kitchen, or living/bedroom two person unit	13.9m ² (150 sq. ft)
One room unit of accommodation with cooking, living and sleeping facilities	
One room for one person	13.0m ² (140 sq. ft)
One room for 2 persons	18.6m ² (200 sq. ft)

Bedroom/studies	
Bedroom/study for one person where there is no separate living room or living area in a kitchen/living room	10.2m ² (110 sq. ft)
Bedroom/study for two persons living together as a couple where there is no separate living room or living area in a kitchen/living room	14.9m ² (160 sq. ft)
Bedroom for one person where a separate living area is provided	6.52m ² (70 sq. ft)

Bedroom for two persons living together as a couple where a separate living area is provided	10.23m ² (110 sq. ft)
Bedroom for two persons not living together as a couple where a separate living area is provided * (see below)	13.0m ²
Rooms used as a living room only	
Up to 6 occupants	11.5m ²
7 occupants	14m ²
8 occupants and above	16m ²
Rooms used as a living/dining/kitchen	
Up to 5 occupants	12.5m ²
6 occupants	15m ²
7 occupants	17m ²
Additional area for each occupant above 7	2m ²

* All persons sharing rooms on a non-couple basis will have to agree in writing.

<p>Minimum Floor Area for Bedrooms in Hostels</p> <p>(Bedrooms that accommodate up to 4 members of the same household may be permitted, but in all other cases there shall be a maximum of two persons of the same-sex in a room. The bedrooms to have minimum floor area as follows:)</p>	
1 person	6.52m ² (70 sq. ft)
2 persons	10.23m ² (110 sq. ft)
3 persons	16.3m ² (175 sq. ft)
4 persons	20.9m ² (225 sq. ft)

11.0 Other standards

- 11.1 Houses let to groups on a shared basis do not need to have locks to bedroom doors. Where a group is gathered together by the landlord, the university or anyone else other than the group themselves then locks will be required to bedroom doors. Any such locks shall open from the inside of the room without the use of a key. Where a bedroom also comprises a means of escape a special lock will be required detailed in paragraph 19.4 below.
- 11.2 Management Regulations apply to the property made under Section 234 of the housing Act 2004. It will be a licensing requirement that houses shall also comply with the requirements of the management regulations.
- 11.3 A Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector is required for any property with a gas or solid fuel fire, boiler or gas oven/hob. This must be to BS EN 50291:2001. The CO detector must be fitted in a suitable location, following the manufacturer's specific fitting instructions. Where there are multiple gas appliances additional detectors must be provided and positioned in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. The CO detector must be tested 12 monthly by the landlord and at the commencement of new tenancies, using the manufacturer's instructions.
- 11.4 All accommodation above shops etc. shall have separate water, gas and electric supplies to the shops, separately metered as appropriate. Access to meters, fuse-boards and gas and water cut offs shall be readily available.

Section 2 - The Fire Standards

12.0 Introduction

- 12.1 These fire standards are based on the Housing Fire Safety guidance published by the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) for houses whose occupiers who are considered a normal risk and in some even as lower risk. Accommodation occupied by higher risk tenants such as hotels and motels, large hostels, refuges, family accommodation centres and half-way houses; will need an individual assessment, as will houses with a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats. In addition, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) may also apply. This places a burden on the responsible person to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment for the purposes of identifying general fire precautions and any other measures needed to comply with the FSO.
- 12.2 In this section, we have aimed to cover the general principles about fire safety and protection as well as showing some example house layouts to help you apply the fire precautions appropriately. We will develop further floor layouts for our website, but if you are unsure about whether your particular property is covered, please contact us, as we may need to do a separate assessment with the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

13.0 Achieving the standards

- 13.1 Our overall aim is to improve the standard of private rented properties in Sheffield. This includes making sure they are safe for the residents that occupy them and that they have excellent standards of fire protection. Therefore, when carrying out any initial conversion works, or refurbishing your property - you must always upgrade to the highest specification or recommendation in these standards. For existing properties, officers will look at a range of factors that will influence the level of risk – and apply the fire safety standards accordingly.
- 13.2 In the licence we send to you, we will always indicate timescales for completing any upgrading works, but we aim to be flexible where possible. However, works with high risk factors must always be prioritised. We will give advice about what is expected to achieve the required standard, but recognise that there may be other construction methods that achieve the same effect. Please contact us if you are unsure about any aspects of these standards.

14.0 Definitions

- 14.1 Throughout this section, we will make reference to the following terms;

Shared house Shared Houses are HMOs where the whole property has been rented out to an identifiable group of sharers such as students, work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. They will usually have rented out the house as one group and there will usually be one single joint tenancy agreement. In summary, although technically an HMO, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household. For a full description see Lacors Fire guidance

Storey A storey is a complete floor level commencing at the main access at ground level.

A cellar/basement will be considered to be a storey where it is used for a washing machine or a bathroom or for recreational activities. Use for the situation of a boiler or gas/electric meters will not be considered use as a storey in considering whether a licence is or is not required.

Escape route

This is the route that residents will have to travel along to get out of the property if there is an emergency. This could be a hallway/ corridor on all floors but could also be through another room such as a ground floor kitchen or bed/living room. The escape route should always be free of any obstructions and/or fire risks including any portable electric, gas or oil heaters, any fixed heaters using a portable heating source such as liquefied gas, any cooking facilities and any furniture or storage.

The escape route will usually be to the street. Where the primary escape route discharges into a rear enclosed area there shall be escape from the area without the use of a key or a coded lock or the area shall extend back from the external elevation of the property a distance greater than the height of the elevation.

15.0 General principles

- 15.1 There are some general principles that apply to all house types, and these are shown below. Again, if your property falls outside of these general principles, please contact us. Please read all the paragraphs in these sections in conjunction with each other to see the full range of fire protection expected.
- 15.2 You should always achieve 30 minutes fire separation – this includes walls, ceilings and doors except as provided in paragraph 16.3 below.
- 15.3 Smoke detectors must be hard wired and interlinked and comply with recommendations within BS 5839, Part 6. You can see more information about this below
- 15.4 All kitchens must have heat detectors that are hard wired, interlinked to the main system with a battery back up
- 15.5 Polystyrene ceiling and wall tiles are not permitted
- 15.6 External doors and any bedroom doors fitted with locks require a lock that can be operated from the inside without the use of a key (see also paragraph 19.4 for where an internal door is on a means of escape) Standard night latch locks are not recommended due the frequency of lock-outs,
- 15.7 Overall travel distances to escape must not be excessive
- 15.8 Fire blankets must be provided in all kitchens and bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities

The Fire Specifications

16.0 The escape route

- 16.1 In the examples, you will see the escape route shaded yellow.
- 16.2 Other than provided in paragraph 16.3 below 30 minutes fire separation to the walls and ceilings of the escape route is required. The usual way to achieve this is by the installation of 12.5mm plasterboard and skim with 30 minute fire doors and frames. Suitable alternative methods of achieving 30 minutes construction may be accepted.
- 16.3 In existing low risk 3 storey shared houses with a direct means of escape lath and plaster construction in sound condition and doors of solid construction, close fitting, fitted with self-closers and appropriate intumescent seals will be acceptable. For the avoidance of doubt, panels in panel doors should be a minimum of 8mm depth and eggbox construction doors are not acceptable. Houses with a travel distance of over 18m do not fall into this category. Where the walls/doors of a room are below 30 minutes fire resistance we recommend that those rooms are fitted with a smoke alarm connected to the fire alarm system of the house.

- 16.4 All escape routes require a smoke detection and alarm system as detailed below
- 16.5 All houses will require some lighting to aid escape in case of emergency as follows:
- In houses of bedsitting rooms and a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats and HMOs of 4 storeys or those with long escape routes, emergency lighting to BS 5266 will be required.
 - In smaller shared houses the fire escape route will usually need additional illumination in case of mains failure. This will be from emergency lighting fittings covering changes of direction and staircases. Alternatively, a risk assessment will need to be submitted by the landlord on our pre-prepared form showing that the premises have effective existing natural and borrowed lighting for means of escape purposes. This assessment will need to be made during the hours of least natural and artificial illumination. i.e after midnight and on a moonless night.
- 16.6 Internal staircases and the cellar steps if the cellar is in general use for the feeding of meters and operation of the consumer unit, shall have adequate handrails on any flight greater than 600mm. Balustrades are required where there is a drop to the side of a staircase or steps of 600mm or greater. Balustrades shall be constructed to prevent a sphere of 100mm passing through and balustrades should avoid having horizontal bars/planks which can be used for climbing.
- 16.7 External staircases and steps leading up to the house and to any other steps providing a means of escape shall have adequate handrails on any flight greater than 600mm. Balustrades are required where there is a drop off the side of a staircase or steps of 600mm or greater. Balustrades shall be constructed to prevent a sphere of 100mm passing through and balustrades should avoid having horizontal bars/planks which can be used for climbing.
- 16.8 Signage will be required on complex escape routes to indicate the means of escape e.g. where the routes have more than two changes of direction to get to the main staircase or if at the foot of the main staircase there is a change of direction and the onward escape route is not visible.
- 16.9 For emergency lighting to comply with BS 5266 it must be subject to routine inspections and tests. For new systems, the model certificate of completion must be provided. This model certificate can be seen in the Appendix to the British Standard.

17.0 Cellars and basements

- 17.1 If there is some storage and/or habitable use of the cellar, then there must be 30 minutes fire resistance to the entire cellar ceiling and cellar head. This includes when appliances are plugged into sockets in the cellar itself. (The preferred way of providing fire protection (and insulation) to the cellar ceiling is to fix 150mm of mineral fibre insulating material between the joists and held in place by chicken wire)
- 17.2 If cellars are only used for access to meters, then we require 30 minutes fire separation between the cellar and those areas of the house that form the escape route
- 17.3 Regarding the above fire resistance, suitable alternative construction may be accepted, providing it is in sound condition and there is a good range of fire protection in the property – particularly mains interlinked fire detection system
- 17.4 Storage of domestic items at the cellar head is permitted. Where ceilings under rooms not forming the escape route are insulated with exposed plastics or polystyrene or other materials the insulation must provide a low surface spread of flame

18.0 Fire detection and alarm system

- 18.1 In shared houses (as defined in Section 35 of Lacors fire guidance) with normal risk occupants automatic fire alarm and detection system with detectors in circulation areas forming the escape route is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade D LD3 plus. Smoke detectors will be required to:
- the ground floor hallway
 - First and second floor landing
 - Ground floor living room (if separated from the kitchen area)
 - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
 - Heat detector to the kitchen if accessed directly from the common escape route.
- 18.2 In other shared accommodation (outside the Lacors shared house guidance) with higher risk occupants (and shared houses where the occupants do not form a group) automatic fire alarm and detection system with detectors in circulation areas forming the escape route is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade D LD1. Smoke detectors will be required to:
- the ground floor hallway
 - First and second floor landing
 - Each living room (if separated from the kitchen area)
 - Each bedroom
 - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
 - Heat detector to the kitchen if accessed directly from the common escape route.
- An existing BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade A LD2 will be accepted providing it is maintained in accordance with the risk assessment for the house.
- 18.3 Detection to houses let out as bedsitting rooms (not blocks of flats or houses comprising a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats will require individual assessment), is required to BS 5839: Part 6 (2004) Grade A LD2. This type of system requires a control panel, manual call points, located next to final exits and fire proof cabling where necessary. In bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities additional individual detectors not linked to the alarm system of the house are required to BS 5839, Part 6 (2004) Grade D. Detectors are required as follows linked to the detection system of the house unless otherwise stated:
- To the ground floor hallway
 - First and second floor landing
 - Cellar compartment adjacent to the meters (and the cellar head where there are electrical appliances in use)
 - Heat detector to the bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities if accessed directly from the common escape route
 - Individual mains powered smoke alarms not linked to the escape system of the house to bedsitting rooms with cooking facilities.
- 18.4 High risk properties, high risk tenancies and blocks of self-contained flats and houses with a mix of bedsitting rooms and flats will require a separate individual assessment.

- 18.5 The following general rules will apply to all alarm system types:
- 18.6 One detector may be sufficient for each landing, however, when positioning smoke detectors, no point within the hallway or corridor should exceed 7.5m from the nearest detector
- 18.7 If detectors are not provided in bedrooms the bedroom door should be no further than approximately 3m from the nearest smoke alarm. Where the access door to a bedroom is on the storey below, smoke detection will be required in the bedroom
- 18.8 Detectors should be suitably positioned, preferably mounted on ceilings and should be located at least 300mm horizontally from any wall or light fitting
- 18.9 Where cellars are used only for access to meters a smoke detector interlinked to the detection system within the rest of the house is required in close proximity to those meters
- 18.10 An additional smoke detector will be required at the cellar head where there is a power outlet for the operation of domestic appliances e.g. a washing machine or refrigerator/freezer in use at the head of the cellar steps. The storage of small portable electrical appliances such as vacuum cleaners etc. would not require an additional detector at the cellar head
- 18.11 In rooms or areas where there are bulkheads or projections down from the ceiling which are greater in depth than 10% of the floor to ceiling height where fire alarm and detection systems are required these areas will be classed as separate compartments each of which will require its own detector

19.1 Internal doors

- 19.1 All doors required to ensure 30 minutes fire resistance where there is a fire risk room other than provided for in section 16.3 above.
- 19.2 Fire doors should preferably be installed with a matching frame. Alternatively, fire doors can be fitted to existing frames where the frames are of sound construction and in good condition. Door frames and rebates should also give half hour fire resistance and the fire doors should be hung on a minimum of 3 x100mm hinges
- 19.3 Fire doors should be fitted with appropriate self-closers (to BS 476, Part 2) matched to the weight of the fire door that will close the door firmly against the rebates
- 19.4 Doors should be latched or fitted with a roller ball and keep to ensure that they cannot be opened by a draught in a fire situation. Where locks are fitted, the lock must have a thumb turn lock on the inside. Where a lock is required to a room that is on the means of escape, the lock shall be a type that can be overridden in the case of emergency. Keys in break glass boxes are not permitted.
- 19.5 Where examples show that seals are required, doors to rooms containing a smoke detector shall be fitted with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals.
- 19.6 Doors to rooms with only a heat detector or no detection should be fitted with intumescent strips only
- 19.7 From 1 October 2009 all new fire door ironmongery must be half hour fire resisting standard. Ironmongery to this standard usually carries the CE mark. Other ironmongery that is a minimum half hour fire resisting standard and complies with British Standards is acceptable
- 19.8 Where a vision panel is required in a fire door, it must be of equal fire resistance to the door

- 19.9 Sound doors of solid construction, close fitting and self-closing may be acceptable if they are improved in accordance with BS 476 and certified as such

20.0 Fire-fighting equipment

- 20.1 Fire blankets are required and must be situated away from the cooker but close to the exit door of every kitchen.
- 20.2 Any existing fire extinguishers can be retained only if they are serviced annually, they are covered by a risk assessment and training issued to all tenants at the commencement of the tenancy.

21.0 Floor coverings
















- 21.1 On escape routes these should comply with BS 5287. As a general rule, for existing carpets a mix of 80% wool and 20% synthetic fibre will comply. Most vinyl and linoleum is not suitable for escape routes. Where new carpeting is provided it should be labelled to BS 5287 or the European equivalent as a low radius of fire spread (up to 35mm)

22.0 Escape windows

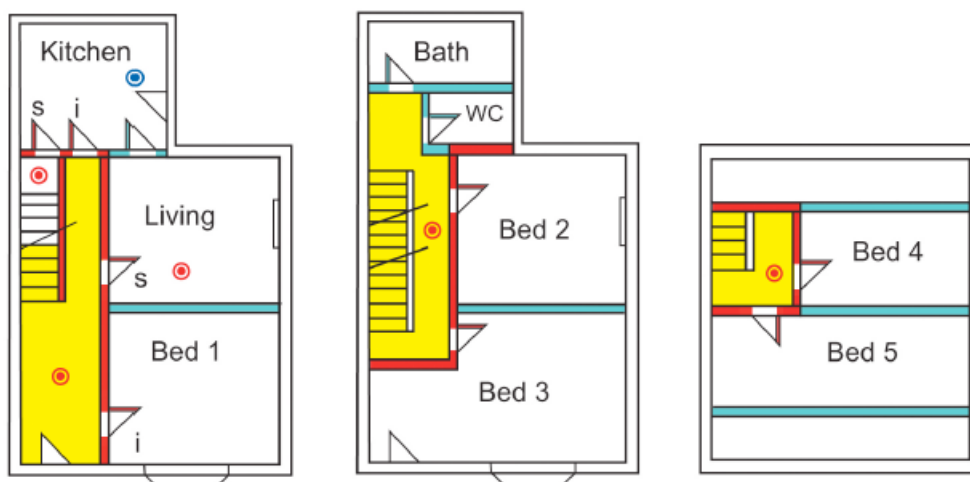
- 22.1 An escape window must have a minimum unobstructed opening area of 0.33m² and a minimum dimension of 450mm height and width. Please note that whilst the minimum dimension in either the height or width is 450mm to achieve 0.33m² opening area a minimum 735mm will be required for the other dimension. Escape windows can only serve rooms where the floor level is less than 4.5m from the outside ground which should be level and free from obstructions. The window shall open from the inside without the use of a removable key. The cill height of the opening area of the window should not be more than 1.1m from floor level. To be counted as an escape window, the occupiers of the rooms must be able bodied individuals who can be expected to exit via the window unaided

23.0 Examples

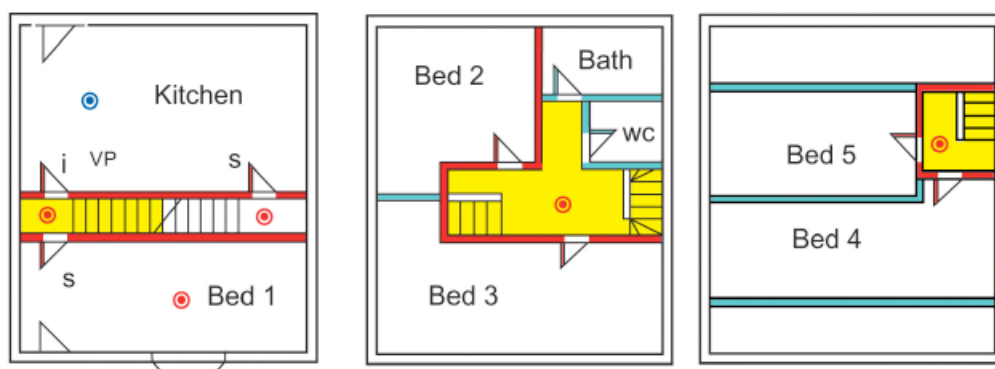
- 23.1 Here is a key and 3 examples of property floor plans to show how the standards apply. There are more floor plans/layouts available on our website. If your property falls outside of these plans or you cannot find a suitable example please contact us for advice.

Key	
 External/Party Wall	 Solid Construction Door with self closer
 Sound Construction Wall	 30 Minute Fire Door with self closer
 30 Minute Fire Resistance	 External Door Fitted with Thumb Turn Lock
 Escape Route	 Staircase
 Interlinked Smoke Detector	 Intumescent Strip
 Independent Smoke Detector	 Smoke Seal
 Heat Detector	 Vision Panel
 N6 – Break Glass Call Point	

Example 1 – This is an example of a 3 storey, 5/6 bed HMO with a Grade D LD3 fire alarm system and a direct escape route.



Example 2 – This is an example of a 3 storey 5 bed HMO with a Grade D LD3 fire alarm system and no direct escape route.



Example 3 – This is an example of a 3 storey bedsit HMO with a Grade A LD2 fire alarm system with a direct escape route.

