

Sheffield City Council



Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

Category A – Bedsits

October 2018

Category A HMOs

These HMOs are occupied as individual letting rooms and comprise a bedroom/living room with cooking facilities. There will be some sharing of facilities for example, bathrooms and WCs, otherwise each occupant lives independently of all others.

Licensing

A house in multiple occupation is required to be licensed by the Local Authority if it is occupied by 5 or more tenants, of which at least 2 households share one or more basic amenity including the kitchen, bathroom or WC. It is the landlords/manager's responsibility to apply to the Council to licence a property.

Management Regulations

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 applies to all HMOs regardless of whether or not they are required to be licensed. It is a licence requirement to comply with these regulations.

Section 1 – Fire Standards – Bedsit HMO of no more than two storeys

1.0 Automatic Fire Detection & Alarm System – A mixed system

Grade D, LD2 system:

- Interlinked mains wired smoke alarms with integral battery back-up located throughout the escape routes
- Additional mains wired smoke alarms with integral battery back-up located in any cellar and at cellar head where electrical appliances are in use
- Additional mains wired smoke alarms with integral battery back-up located in any laundry room etc
- Interlinked heat alarms with integral battery back-up located in each bedsit; and
- Additional non-interlinked, mains wired, smoke alarms with integral battery back-up located in each bedsit

In rooms, or areas, where bulkheads or ceiling projections exist, which are greater in depth than 10% of the floor to ceiling height, detection will be required to each of the compartments.

Detectors should be suitably positioned, preferably mounted on ceilings and should be located at least 300mm horizontally from any wall or light fitting.

One detector should be sufficient for each landing, however, when positioning smoke detectors, no point within a hallway or corridor should exceed 7.5m from the nearest detector.

1.1 Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting to BS 5266 Part 1 (or equivalent) is required as follows:

- Ground floor escape route; and
- Each landing

Where escape routes are complex or long, it may be necessary to install additional emergency lighting

1.2 Fire Doors

- FD30 fire doors are required to each bedsit, fitted as detailed in 1.5 below; and
- Additional FD30 fire doors are required to any cellar, laundry room etc

1.3 Escape Routes

- A full 30 minute protected route is the ideal option. However, in two-storey bedsit HMOs the provision of suitable escape windows from all bedsit rooms may be acceptable in lieu of a fully protected route
- Escape routes should not be excessively long and where other higher risk factors are present, a 30 minute protected route will be required
- Where a bedsit has two rooms and the route of escape, is through a risk room, i.e. kitchen/living room, emergency escape windows, a domestic water suppression system or, a suitable alternative route will be required

1.4 Fire Separation

- No requirement for additional fire resistance, but walls and floors should be of sound, traditional construction. In cases where the original construction has deteriorated, i.e. lath and plaster, replacement with 30 minute fire separation is required.
- If a basement/cellar is present, ceilings which are not in sound condition, particularly lath and plaster type, or where no ceiling covering exists, the ceiling should be replaced or upgraded to provide 30 minute fire resistance
- All wall and ceiling surfaces at cellar head, including the underside of the stairs to first floor, must be upgraded to 30 minute fire resisting
- All recessed ceiling lights must offer a minimum of 30 minute fire resistance

1.5 Fire Doors & Seals

- All fire doors will be hung on the required 3 x 100mm steel or brass hinges, or the appropriate number of other acceptable fire rated hinges certified to BS 476-22; or BS EN 1634-1
- Where a room contains smoke detection, the fire door, or frame, will be fitted with combined intumescent and cold smoke seals
- Where a room contains heat detection, or has no detection, the fire door, or frame, will be fitted with an intumescent seal only
- Where seals are required, they are to be fitted to the sides and the top of the door or frame leaving a gap of between 2mm – 4mm between the sides and the top of the door.
- A suitable self-closing device is required which will close the fire door firmly against the rebates (Gibraltar closers are not permitted).

- Ideally, fire doors will be fitted into a matching frame. However, where existing frames are original and in good order, these will be accepted as long as any gaps behind the frame are filled with plaster or an alternative fire resistant material.
- All ironmongery fitted to fire doors should be certified to BS 476-22: 1987; or BS EN 1634-1: 2014 to confirm 30 minute fire resistance
- All doors should be latched, or fitted with a roller ball and keep, to ensure they cannot be blown open in a fire situation.

Section 2 – Fire Standards – Bedsit HMO of three or four storeys

2.0 Automatic Fire Detection & Alarm System – A mixed system

Grade A, LD2

Detection to houses let out as Bedsits is required to BS 5839: Part 6, 2019+A1:2020 Grade A, LD2. This type of system requires a control panel, manual call points located next to final exits and, on each landing, and fire proof cabling. The alarm signal must achieve sound levels of not less than 65dB in all accessible parts of the building and not less than 75dB at all bed-heads when all doors are shut, to rouse sleeping persons

Detectors, linked to the detection systems for the house, are required as follows:

- Smoke detectors are required to all escape routes at all floor levels;
- Additional smoke detectors are required to any cellars, and to cellar head if electrical appliances are in use
- Additional smoke detectors are required to any laundry rooms etc; and
- Heat detectors are required to each bedsitting room where cooking facilities are present

In addition to the above, the following Grade D system is required:

- Individual mains wired smoke detectors with integral battery back-up are required in each bedsitting room. These are not linked to the main system of the house and their purpose is to alert the occupant at the early stages of fire, rather than the whole household

Grade A systems require routine testing – at least one detector or manual call point in each zone should be tested weekly to ensure correct operation of the system. All tests and any defect should be recorded in the log book and action taken to correct it.

Routine maintenance – a six monthly service should be carried out by a competent person, usually a specialist alarm engineer, under a maintenance contract. It should be recorded in the log book and a periodic inspection and test certificate issued.

2.1 Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting to BS 5266 Part 1 (or equivalent) is required as follows:

- Ground floor escape route; and
- Each landing

Where escape routes are complex or long, it may be necessary to install additional emergency lighting

2.2 Fire Doors & Seals

- FD30 fire doors are required to each bedsit, fitted as detailed below; and
- Additional FD30 fire doors are required to any cellar, laundry room etc
- All fire doors will be hung on the required 3 x 100mm steel or brass hinges or, the appropriate number of other acceptable fire rated hinges certified to BS 476-22; or BS EN 1634-1
- Where a room contains smoke detection, the fire door, or frame, will be fitted with combined intumescent and cold smoke seals
- Where a room contains heat detection, or has no detection, the fire door, or frame, will be fitted with an intumescent seal only
- Where seals are required, they are to be fitted to the sides and the top of the door or frame leaving a gap of between 2mm – 4mm between the sides and the top of the door.
- A suitable self-closing device is required which will close the fire door firmly against the rebates (Gibraltar closers are not permitted).
- Ideally, fire doors will be fitted into a matching frame. However, where existing frames are original and in good order, these will be accepted as long as any gaps behind the frame are filled with plaster or an alternative fire resistant material.
- All ironmongery fitted to fire doors should be certified to BS 476-22: 1987; or BS EN 1634-1: 2014 to confirm 30 minute fire resistance
- All doors should be latched, or fitted with a roller ball and keep, to ensure they cannot be blown open in a fire situation.

2.3 Escape Routes

- A 30 minute protected route is required, including 30 minute fire resisting construction. Travel distances must not be excessive
- Where a bedsit has two rooms and the route of escape, is through a risk room, i.e. kitchen/living room, emergency escape windows, a domestic water suppression system or, a suitable alternative route will be required

2.4 Fire Separation

- No requirement for additional fire resistance, but walls and floors should be of sound, traditional construction. In cases where the original construction has deteriorated, i.e. lath and plaster, replacement with 30 minute fire separation is required.
- If a basement/cellar is present, ceilings which are not in sound condition, particularly lath and plaster type, or where no ceiling covering exists, the ceiling should be replaced or upgraded to provide 30 minute fire resistance
- All wall and ceiling surfaces at cellar head, including the underside of the stairs to first floor, must be upgraded to 30 minute fire resisting
- All recessed ceiling lights must offer a minimum of 30 minute fire resistance

Section 3 – Amenity & Space Standards

3.1 Heating

- A suitable form of fixed space heating is required to all habitable rooms, bathrooms and circulation spaces which can be controlled by the tenants and incorporates a timer and a suitably positioned thermostat(s)
- The use of portable paraffin or individual oil fired heating, liquefied petroleum gas heaters (LPG or Bottled Gas Heaters) and halogen heaters is not permitted

3.2 Washing and Sanitary Facilities

There must be an adequate number of bathrooms, toilets and wash basins, suitable for personal washing, for the number of occupiers sharing those facilities:

Number of persons sharing	1 Bathroom with WC	1 Bathroom + 1 Separate WC	2 Bathrooms with WCs	2 Bathrooms with WCs and a separate WC or a third bathroom	3 Bathrooms with WCs	3 Bathrooms with WCs and 2 separate WCs
3 or 4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
10	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
11+	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
15+	X	X	X	X	X	✓

✓ means achieves agreed standards

X means does not meet agreed standard

- Where a separate WC is provided it should be fitted with a wash hand basin, with constant supplies of hot and cold running water, and an appropriate splashback.

- All bathrooms and separate WCs should not be more than two floors distant from sleeping accommodation
- All bathrooms and separate WCs must be suitably, and adequately heated and ventilated
- If any room is provided with its own bathroom or WC the facilities shall be provided in a separate, suitably heated and ventilated compartment
- Amenities shared by two or more households must be accessible from a common area
- Privacy door locks must be provided
- Where glazing exists in bathrooms, the glazing must be obscure
- The walls and floor covering of any bathroom, shower room or WC must be reasonably smooth, non-absorbent and capable of being readily cleaned
- Any alterations or additions, in respect of bathrooms or WC cubicles, shall be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulation requirements

3.3 Bedsits with kitchens

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 standards:

Item	Bedsits with cooking facilities
Cookers	One per bedsit which must have at least two rings, a grill and an oven. Where two occupiers share a bedsit a full size cooker will be required
Sinks	One full size sink with draining board and constant supplies of hot and cold drinking water is required for each bedsit.
Worktops	A suitable works surface a minimum of 0.5m deep and a length of 0.5m shall be provided per user
Sockets	A minimum of 3 single sockets shall be located above the worktop for the use of portable appliances. At least 2 double sockets will be located in the living/sleeping area
Fridge/Freezer	Fridge space shall be a minimum of 1 cu. ft. (28 litres) of space per person plus a freezer compartment
Dry food storage	1 x 500mm wall or base unit person. Storage for crockery, pans and cutlery must be supplied separately. Cupboards beneath the sink are discounted

Item	Bedsits with cooking facilities
Fire Blanket	1 blanket suitably located and wall mounted
Refuse disposal facilities	<p>Adequate refuse disposal facilities must be provided within the kitchen area</p> <p>Adequate and appropriate refuse disposal and recycling bins must be provided externally</p>

Where a bedsit shares a kitchen with other occupiers, please refer to the kitchen requirements for Category B HMOs

3.4 Space Standards

Room sizes should comply with the standards set out below:

One room unit of accommodation with cooking, living and sleeping facilities	
One room for one person	13.0m ²
One room for two persons*	18.6m ²

** The room may be occupied by no more than 1 household as defined by S258 of the Housing Act 2004*

** The sharing of rooms by children of opposite sexes over the age of 10 years is not permitted*

** Any persons sharing a room on a non-cohabitee, or non-family, basis will have to agree in writing*

- Any part of the floor area of a room in relation to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.5 metres is not to be taken into account in determining the floor area of that room
- All bedroom doors must be fitted with a privacy lock and they must be of the type that can be opened from the inside without the use of a key, i.e. thumb turn lock

3.5 Windows, Glazing & Natural Light

- All habitable rooms should be provided with a window which provides sufficient natural light to allow normal daytime activities without the need for artificial light. The window should be of a size not less than 10% of the floor area. To allow adequate ventilation to the room, the opening light of the window should be not less than 5% of the floor area
- Where bottom or side opening windows exist at first floor and beyond, and the sill level is below 900mm from the floor, window restrictors are required
- All windows must be operable without the need for standing on something
- Louvre windows are not permitted
- Glazing in critical locations, as defined by Part K of the current Building Regulations, must be safety glazing. Alternatively, safety film or an adequately solid bar can be fitted to the glazing and/or frame

3.6 Artificial Lighting

- All rooms, escape routes, staircases and cellars shall be adequately lit with suitable switching, including two way switching to stairs and landings
- All bedrooms should be fitted with sufficient artificial lighting which must be switched from the inside of the room

General Standards

- A Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarm is required to any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance or gas appliance. The alarm must be fitted and maintained using the manufacturer's instructions and should be tested at the commencement of any new tenancy by the landlord/manager.
- Any accommodation above shops etc shall have separate gas, electric and water supplies, separately metered as appropriate. Access to meters, fuse boards and gas and water cut offs shall be readily available at all times.
- Polystyrene ceiling and wall tiles are not permitted
- External doors/security gates and bedrooms doors (when fitted with locks) require a type of lock that can be opened from the inside without the use of a key.
- Internal staircases, including the steps to the cellar, must have a correctly fitted handrail when the flight is greater than 600mm
- External steps must have a correctly fitted handrail when the flight is greater than 600mm
- Any existing fire extinguishers can be retained if they are serviced annually and correctly sited. Any extinguisher must be sited in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Any furniture or furnishings, supplied as part of the tenancy, must comply with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988