

# **Sefton M.B.C.**

## **Houses in Multiple Occupation (H.M.O.)**

### **Guidance on standards for accommodation in HMO's subject to Mandatory Licensing**

#### **Introduction**

This guide is intended to advise on the standards applicable to HMO's that are subject to Mandatory Licensing. Certain of the standards may also apply to other categories of HMO that do not need to be licensed. For further guidance on standards applicable to these smaller HMO's, please contact Sefton's HMO Team.

The standards produced in this document are based on the provisions of the Housing Act 2004, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006, the minimum standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (H.M.O.) as prescribed in Schedule 3 of S.I. 373: 2006 (as amended by S.I.1903 :2007) and Schedule 4 of The Housing Act 2004 'Mandatory Conditions' (as amended by S.I. 616: 2018) and standards adopted locally by Sefton MBC.

Not all the standards given in this document are legal requirements. However, where standards have not been prescribed by legislation, they have been formulated in accordance with similar standards adopted by other Merseyside local authorities and those accepted for use nationally.

#### **Space Standards - Habitable Letting Room Space Standards**

##### **1.1 Crowding & Space**

To determine the number of persons who may occupy the house, consideration must be given to the number, type and quality of amenities available in the property. The standards below will be applied to all properties that are subject to Mandatory H.M.O. Licensing

The HMO must not be overcrowded. Sleeping accommodation must provide for adequate privacy for the user. Any sharing of the sleeping accommodation will be dependent on the size of the room and the relationship of those sharing.

Where different sex children are in occupation there should be no sharing of a sleeping room from age 10.

Every room used for sleeping should at least be capable of accommodating the minimum occupancy standards of:

- a bed
- a wardrobe, unless there is a built-in wardrobe or cupboard of adequate size.

- a chest of drawers

plus, sufficient activity space to use each item.

## 1.2 Single unit - occupied by one person

The minimum room size should not be less than **10m<sup>2</sup>** except in the case of premises most typically occupied by students, where a separate communal lounge is provided (not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room) in which case the bedroom shall be not less than **8.5 m<sup>2</sup>**.

All habitable rooms shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.3m, except in the case of an underground room, which shall have a minimum height of 2.14m and an attic room, which shall have a minimum height of 2.3m over an area of floor equal to not less than half of the area of the room, measured on a plane 1.5m above the floor.

Where the unit of accommodation has integral kitchen facilities, as typically found in bedsits, the minimum room size shall be not less than **13m<sup>2</sup>**

Where rooms do not meet this standard, discretion may be exercised if there are compensatory factors. The HMO team should be contacted for advice in such circumstances.

## 1.3 Single unit - occupied by two persons

In bedsit and shared house type of accommodation, the minimum room sizes shall be not less than **15m<sup>2</sup>**, except where a separate communal lounge is provided (not a kitchen or a kitchen/dining room) in which case the bedroom shall be not less than **11m<sup>2</sup>**.

Where the room has integral kitchen facilities, the minimum room size shall be not less than **19m<sup>2</sup>**.

Irrespective of its size, no room shall be occupied by more than two persons.

All habitable rooms shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.3m except in the case of an underground room, which shall have a minimum height of 2.14m and an attic room, which shall have a minimum height of 2.3m (over an area of floor equal to not less than half of the area of the room, measured on a plane 1.5m above the floor).

These space standards **MUST** be met, however in some situations compliance with the standard may be postponed for a short period, for instance; until the expiry of a particular tenancy. Discretion may be exercised where the space standards cannot be met but only where there are compensatory factors. The HMO Team should therefore be contacted in such circumstances to determine the appropriate space standard.

## 1.4 Kitchen Space Standards

Shared kitchen facilities must not be shared by more than 5 persons and the kitchen or kitchen area should have a total floor area of not less than **7m<sup>2</sup>** (measured wall to wall) and should be not less than **1.8m** across at the narrowest point.

If the house is occupied by more than five persons and up to a maximum of ten persons, then an additional **1.0 m<sup>2</sup>** per person is required up to a maximum of **10m<sup>2</sup>**, and an adjacent dining area of suitable size must be provided.

Where the minimum kitchen sizes described above for 6 to 10 persons is not practicable, additional kitchens must be provided, in the following ratio:

6 to 10 persons	2 kitchens,
11 to 15 persons	3 kitchens,
and so on.	

Where more than one kitchen is provided these must be on separate floors. Kitchens should be no more than one floor distant from the user's accommodation.

All kitchens must have a suitable layout that is safe and practical, taking account of the arrangement and location of cooking appliances and food preparation areas to reduce the risk of health and safety hazards.

Any room containing kitchen facilities should be provided with mechanical ventilation achieving a minimum extract rate of 60 litres per second.

### 1.5 Shared Kitchen Facilities

Where shared kitchens are provided (typically in student accommodation), no more than five persons must use these, and each shared kitchen must contain the following facilities:

- A suitable fixed worktop (not including the drain board) of not less than 2m by 0.6m
- A cooker with four cooking rings, oven and grill
- Two 13amp double socket outlets in addition to any sockets serving major electrical appliances. They must be adjacent to the work surface and at a suitable safe distance from any sink/wash basin.
- A standard 1m sink unit and integral draining board fixed within a base unit, together with an adequate supply of permanent constant hot water and potable mains water, and tiled splash-back. The sink unit must be properly plumbed into the water supply and drainage systems.
- A suitable storage cupboard with a minimum capacity equivalent to a 500mm wall unit per person.
- A refrigerator of not less than 142 litres or 5 cu ft capacity, plus an adequate freezer compartment
- A suitable bin of adequate capacity for the storage and disposal of refuse and litter.

Where there are **more** than **five** persons sharing, an additional set of kitchen facilities to those mentioned above should be provided. Where this is not practicable, additional facilities must be provided within the main kitchen, and an adjacent **dining area** of suitable size **must** be provided.

No kitchen must have more than two sets of facilities, or be used by more than ten persons and

additional facilities to an existing kitchen must also include the following:

- A suitable fixed worktop (not including the drain board) of not less than 3m by 0.6m, instead of the 2m worktop for a single set of kitchen facilities.
- Fridge/freezer of approximately 255 litres or 9 cu ft capacity, instead of 142 litres or 5 cu ft as above.

Consideration may be given to the provision of a dishwasher in place of one of the additional sinks/drainers.

### **1.6 Individual Kitchen Facilities**

In bedsit type of accommodation where the units of accommodation have their own kitchen facilities, each occupancy must, in addition to the above contain the following:

- A storage cupboard that must be suitable and a minimum capacity, equivalent to a standard 500mm wide wall unit per person.
- A refrigerator of not less than 142 litres or 5 cu ft capacity, plus an adequate freezer compartment.
- A suitably sized sink and drainer provided with a satisfactory supply of potable mains water and constant hot water, properly connected to the drainage system.
- A cooker with two cooking rings, an oven and grill (four-ring cooker where two persons are sharing).
- A 13amp double socket outlet, in addition to any sockets already serving major electrical appliances. It must be adjacent to the work surface and at a suitable safe distance from any sink/wash basin.
- A suitable worktop (not including the draining board) of not less than 1m by 0.6m.

### **1.7 Hostel/B&B Accommodation**

In accommodation where all main meals may be provided by the registered establishment, such as hostel type accommodation, consideration must be given to the provision of additional kitchen facilities in accordance with the requirements detailed below, to allow residents to prepare drinks and light meals. These facilities must be available for use 24 hours a day.

These should be used by no more than 5 residents, have a minimum floor area of **7m<sup>2</sup>**, and contain the following:

- A refrigerator of not less than 142 litres or 5 cu ft capacity, plus and adequate freezer compartment.
- A suitable worktop not less than 2m x 0.6m in size.
- A 13amp double socket outlet, in addition to any sockets already serving major electrical appliances. It must be adjacent to the work surface and at suitable safe distance from any sink/washbasin.
- A cooker with 4 cooking rings, oven and grill.
- A suitably sized sink and integral drainer, provided with a satisfactory supply of potable mains water and constant hot water, properly connected to the drainage

system.

- A suitable bin of adequate capacity for the storage and disposal of refuse and litter.

## 1.8 Bin Storage

Sufficient bins or other suitable receptacles shall be provided for the storage of refuse and litter pending their disposal. The bins shall be of suitable design and adequate capacity for the requirements of each household occupying the house.

It is considered that either individual or communal (i.e. 'euro bins') refuse storage bins, should be situated on a suitably located and drained hard standing with appropriate access for cleansing and removal of the refuse, would generally suffice. In some cases however, the provision of a purpose built, fully enclosed and ventilated, refuse storage facility to store plastic refuse sacks prior to disposal, may be appropriate. Any such facility should be designed to reduce the likelihood for attraction of pests

Additional arrangements for the disposal of refuse and litter should be made as necessary, having regard to any such service for disposal provided by the Local Authority.

## 1.9 Bathrooms and WC's

The provision of such facilities must be appropriate to the number of occupants or potential occupants as indicated in S.I. 373:2006.

A bathroom and WC must be provided with adequate supply of hot and cold running water, and properly connected to the buildings drainage system.

Adequate ventilation and electric lighting and the adjacent/surrounding walls must have a non-porous and easily cleanable finish.

The provision of such facilities is as follows:

- A bathroom compartment containing a bath/shower, with a WC and wash hand basin must be provided for every 4 persons.
- Where there are 5 persons sharing, a WC in a separate compartment must be provided regardless of whether there is a WC in the bathroom.
- The bathroom facilities must be readily accessible, adequately heated and situated in a proper room.
- Where the amenity is provided in a house likely to be occupied by children then the facilities must include a bath.
- A suitable locking mechanism must be fitted to the access door to ensure privacy.

Where there are more than **five** people occupying the property the ratio of bathroom and WC facilities are as follows:

6 to 10 persons	2 bathrooms and 2 WC's (one of the WC's can be contained within one of the bathrooms).
11 to 15 persons	3 bathrooms and 3 WC's (two of the WC's can be contained within two of the bathrooms)

## 1.10 Water Closets (WC's)

Every toilet must have a wash hand basin within the compartment or within an adjacent ante-space, which provides the sole means of access to the toilet. The wash hand basin must be provided with a satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water and be properly connected to the drainage system.

A toilet must be provided in a proper compartment separate from the bath/shower room, where there are 5 or more persons in occupation.

WC compartments must be located within 30 metres of the furthest occupancy and preferably on the same floor. Where this is not possible, the WC should be no more than one floor distant from the user's accommodation.

The room should be provided with adequate ventilation and electric lighting, and a suitable locking mechanism must be fitted to the access door to ensure privacy.

## 1.11 Wash hand basins

A wash hand basin with a tiled splash back and satisfactory supply of cold and constant hot water, properly connected to the drainage system must be provided for up to 4 persons sharing and must be situated in a bathroom or shower room.

A wash hand basin as described above, must also be provided in any separate WC compartment.

In properties where there is a sharing of facilities with 5 or more occupants, an additional wash hand basin **must** be provided in every room used as sleeping accommodation. This must have a tiled splash back and satisfactory supply of constant hot and cold running water, and properly connected to the drainage system.

In licensable properties such as shared houses, that do not currently provide a wash hand basin to each letting room, the Council will allow a period of up to 5 years to comply with this standard, and up to 3 years to comply for bedsit type of accommodation.

In those properties where rooms have integral cooking facilities (typically bedsits) and a sink is provided, an additional wash hand basin will **not** be required.

## 1.12 Space Heating

The whole of the dwelling including all habitable rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms and common rooms must be adequately and efficiently heated with the provision of a permanent, fixed heating appliance or space heater, where the house is not provided with central heating. Any heating system should be appropriate to the design, layout and construction of the building and provide adequate heat output to efficiently heat the whole of the property.

Any heating system should be capable of achieving a healthy indoor temperature for each habitable letting room of 21°C, and 18°C in all other rooms.

Any form of heating must be controllable by the occupier and safely and properly installed and maintained.

In properties where the heating is centrally controlled, such systems should be operated to ensure that occupants are not exposed to cold indoor temperatures and should be provided with controls to allow the occupants to regulate the temperature within their dwelling.

### **1.13 Security**

All ground floor and other accessible windows should be protected by the provision of suitable window locks or other appropriate security measures. In the case of key operated window locks, such keys must be so located as to be readily available at all times - see fire precautions section for escape windows.

The front and rear doors must be of sound construction and be well maintained. Outward opening doors must have hinge bolts fitted.

The front door must be fitted with a suitable viewer if the door does not have a useable vision panel.

The main front door and that of each individual letting should be provided with a suitable safety chain.

Front and rear final exit doors must be provided with a secure lock. Any doors fitted with a lock, including final exit doors from the building or any that form part of the means of escape in event of a fire, must be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key. The rear door should in addition be provided with a minimum 200mm barrel bolt (unless the door is of a type already fitted with a shoot bolt mechanism providing 3-point or 5-point locking).

Where locks are fitted to bedroom doors, they must be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key to facilitate escape in the event of a fire.

Where electronic door entry systems are provided these must be in good working order and regularly maintained.

Where necessary, pedestrian routes to the main entrance of the property should be fitted with adequate security lighting.

Where the property is fitted with an intruder alarm, key holder details should be notified to the Council's Environment Team.

### **1.14 Fire Precautions**

***N.B. the following guidance specifically relates to Fire Precautions required in licensable HMO's of 3 or more storeys. Please note however that the information is 'general' and may not therefore take into account any additional issues that could increase the level risk in a particular property. Such matters could include; the nature and/or level of***

***occupancy, the internal arrangement of accommodation, any mixed use (i.e commercial / residential), etc.***

***Furthermore, a slightly lower standard of fire precautions may be acceptable within licensable HMO's of up to 2 storeys and certain other types of HMO that may not be subject to Mandatory HMO licensing.***

***For further guidance on these situations, please contact Sefton's Housing Standards (HMO) Team.***

### **1.15 Fire separation / Walls & Floors**

The premises must have adequate means of escape (M.O.E) to convey occupants to a place of safety in the event of a fire. This will be in the form of a 'protected route' providing a suitable level of protection from smoke and fire. The 'protected route' will usually comprise of the common halls, stairways, landings, and corridors that the occupants would normally need to negotiate, in order to leave the building. This may include;

A minimum of 30-minute fire resisting construction is required to all walls, floors ceilings, doors, etc. that form part of the protected route. Further compartmentation and / or separation between floor levels and stairways may also be necessary, depending on the internal arrangement.

It is assumed that all existing walls, ceilings and floors that are in good condition and free from defects should achieve this standard. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure compliance with the standards detailed below.

Where timber stud walls are present, half-hour fire-resistance will be achieved with 75mm x 50mm vertical timber studs at maximum 600mm centres, faced on both sides with 12.5mm gypsum wallboard or fire-resistant wallboard, and 3mm skim finish plaster.

Where the upgrading of existing lath and plaster ceilings and walls is necessary due to poor integrity and defective existing surfaces, this can be achieved by the application of 12.5mm fire resistant plasterboard over the existing surface secured with long screws into the existing joists/studs and finished with 3mm skim plaster to provide the necessary fire resistance.

Polystyrene tiles and coverings must be removed from ceilings. Where upgrading is necessary as a result, the application of 12.5 mm plasterboard and 3mm skim coat to the risk side will provide the necessary fire resistance. Walls may be over boarded using long reach nails.

Any floor between the basement and ground floor is to be a minimum of 30-minute fire-resistant construction. This can be achieved by under-drawing the underside of the floor (joists) with minimum 12.5 mm thick fire-rated plasterboard, fixed with staggered joints each backed by timber and then 3mm skim coat of plaster.

In certain circumstances it may however be necessary to provide one-hour separation between an occupied basement and ground floor level. In such cases the basement ceiling will need to be under-drawn with two layers of 12.5mm thick plasterboard (staggered joints) and 3mm skim coat. Double door separation may also need to be provided to the access stairway, with FD30s door-sets positioned at both ground floor and basement levels.

All stairway soffits and spandrels must be fully under-drawn to provide a minimum half-hour fire-resistance by fitting a suitable half-hour fire-resistant wallboard to **BS 1230: Part 1 1985 Type 5**, e.g. Fire line board, Fire check board or similar. Boards are to be fixed with minimum 63mm steel screws at 150mm centres to each support, with a tight butt joint finish to existing surfaces.

Provide one-hour fire resisting structure between any ground floor commercial unit and all parts of the separate occupancy. A break-glass-call-point and detector head must be fitted within the commercial area and interlinked to the fire detection system within the separate occupancy.

### **1.16 Means of Escape / Doors**

Where accommodation is within a basement, there should be an alternate means of escape from the basement rooms, direct to the external. This secondary means of escape must be maintained available at all times without recourse to keys.

Under no circumstances must the means of escape from a bedroom or bedsitting room, be via a room of higher fire risk, such as a lounge, kitchen, study, etc.

Where such an 'inner room' (a room where the exit route would be through another room) is a bedroom on the ground floor, then provision of an escape window will be necessary. This window must have an unobstructed opening of at least 0.33 m<sup>2</sup> with no dimension being less than 450mm and with a cill height between 800 and 1100 mm from the room floor level. Where the distance between the window cill and external ground level exceeds 2m then a suitable platform and ladder or steps must be provided.

On floors above ground floor level, either an appropriate secondary means of escape must be provided either to a 'protected route' or direct to external ground level (but not an escape window) or alternatively the internal arrangement of the accommodation should be changed to resolve the inner room situation.

Doors or windows providing a secondary means of escape should be available for use at all times, without the use of a key. However, a secondary means of escape from within an individual flat or bedsit, may be locked if there is a significant security risk and so long as an additional key is made permanently available within that room (i.e. within a 'break glass' box).

All doors are to be a minimum height of 1981mm and a minimum width of 750mm. Any fire resisting door shall be taken to include the frame and to conform to BS 476: Parts 20 & 22, which will include the fixing of an intumescent seal to its edges and the fitting of a flexible smoke seal when indicated (**FD30s**) tested to BS 476: Part 31. All doors shall be fitted with a self-closing device adequately adjustable to ensure that the fire door closes smoothly and quietly into the rebate of the doorframe overcoming any latching device. The door is to be hung on 3 x 100mm steel butt hinges – rising butt hinges are **not** approved for this purpose.

Fire doors within the means of escape that open directly onto the single staircase enclosure (i.e. flat entrance doors, bedsit/shared house accommodation doors), must be fire resisting to a standard of **FD30s**

Where existing doors may be capable of being upgrading to provide appropriate fire resistance, any upgrading must be in accordance with BS476 and evidence must be provided to verify the conversion.

Any basement access door must be at minimum to the FD30s standard. Where one-hour fire separation is necessary, this will usually require the fitting of two x FD30s doors (i.e. one fitted at the foot of the basement stair and one at the head of the basement stair).

Where glazing panels are fitted in or above doors or in walls, they must be capable of achieving at least 30 minutes fire resistance. 6mm thick Georgian Wired glass, bedded in intumescent paste and secured with a stout hardwood capping, would generally be acceptable.

All main exit doors and doors that open onto the means of escape (internal staircase) must be easily openable on egress, without recourse to keys, by the provision of 'thumb turn' mechanisms to mortise locks. Hasp and staple/padlock type of fastening to bedroom doors are not permitted.

### 1.17 Fire Alarm Systems

The following standard of Automatic Fire Detection and Alarm System (AFDS) would be applicable to most common types of licensable houses in multiple occupation (HMO's) that comprise 3 storeys or more.

Provision of an automatic fire detection and alarm system conforming to **BS5839: Part 6: 2019** with an **LD2** level of coverage and installed to **Grade A** specification throughout the whole of the property. The design and installation shall be in accordance with the recommendations of **BS 5839: Part 1: 2017**, incorporating control and indicating equipment with hard-wired system, linking detectors in the following areas:

- All common escape staircases on each landing level
- All corridors
- All habitable rooms that open directly onto the common staircase escape route
- Commercial accommodation (where applicable)

Detectors to be **Optical point** type smoke detectors to **BS 5445: Part 7** to the protected route and circulation areas. They must be hard wired to the Grade A system and operate from the battery backup supply upon mains failure. The maximum spacing between smoke detectors is 7.5m. The final arrangement and siting of the detectors to be as per the manufacturer's recommendations, Local Authority and Fire Service requirements.

**Ionisation** type smoke detectors installed to each of the habitable rooms including bedrooms, common lounge and dining rooms. They must be hard wired to the Grade A system and operate from the battery backup supply upon mains failure. The maximum spacing between smoke detectors is 7.5m. The final arrangement and siting of the detectors to be as per the manufacturer's recommendations, Local Authority and Fire Service requirements.

Ambient rate of rise **Heat Detectors** to **BS 5445: Part 5** to all kitchen areas. They must be hard wired to the Grade A system and operate from the battery backup supply upon mains failure. The maximum spacing between heat detectors is 5.3m. The final arrangement and siting of the detectors within each kitchen and adjacent commercial accommodation (where applicable) to be as per the manufacturer's recommendations, Local Authority and Fire Service requirements.

Control and indicating equipment to **BS EN 54-5** must have a standby power supply (battery backup) with minimum 24 hours duration. The control and indicating equipment should be sited within the common staircase area near the main entrance, and at least 1.5m above floor level.

The electrical supply to the alarm system must be arranged so that the continuity of the supply is ensured. The circuit serving the fire alarm system should be solely dedicated to the alarm and not serve any other equipment. It is important that any switches necessary to isolate the supply to the system (for maintenance purposes) are protected from unauthorised operation and are suitably labeled 'fire alarm – do not switch off'.

An audibility test is to be carried out after installation of the system by the installing engineer to ensure it is audible throughout the premises. The required sound level is **85dB** at the doorway to each bedroom with the door open unless otherwise stated. The alarm should not exceed **110dB**, and the frequency should lie between 500Hz and 1000Hz and not exceed 3500Hz.

All wiring in accordance with clause 26.2 of **BS 5839-1: 2017** and I.E.E. Wiring Regulations; to BS 7671.

Upon completion of the design, installation, and / or commissioning of the alarm system, certificates must be completed and submitted by the installing / commissioning engineer. A user manual must also be provided and suitably located at the property.

### **Summary of the Maintenance Requirements of BS5839-1: 2017**

This summary is provided to inform licence holders and/or managing agents on the general maintenance requirements for fire alarm systems under the current British Standard/s. The licence holder /or managing agent should nevertheless seek advice from a suitable competent person, who is fully conversant with maintenance of AFDS systems in accordance with BS5839.

#### **Routine testing**

It is vital that regular testing is carried out by a responsible person to confirm satisfactory operation of the alarm system and to ensure that there has not been a major system failure, that might otherwise go unnoticed. Routine testing of the system also provides an opportunity for occupants of the building to become and remain familiar with the fire alarm signal.

Test a manual call point during working hours to check that the control panel and alarm sounders operate satisfactorily each week, a different manual call point should be tested.

Testing of any automatically started generator used for the fire detection and fire alarm system.

Inspection of any vented batteries used as a standby power supply for the fire detection and fire alarm system.

#### **Inspection and Servicing**

The inspection and servicing should only be undertaken by a competent person with specialist knowledge of AFD systems. This can be assured by the use of contractors that are third party certificated, by a UKAS accredited certification body, specifically to carry out inspection and servicing of fire alarm systems

Vented batteries should be examined by a person with relevant competence and should be topped up if necessary.

The period between visits to undertake inspection and service, should be based upon a risk assessment but the maximum period between visits should not exceed six months.

A visual inspection should be made to check whether structural or occupancy changes have been made that would require changes to the AFD system.

The log-book should be inspected.

False alarm records should be checked, and relevant action taken if necessary:

- Batteries should be checked and tested
- Control panel functions should be checked and tested
- Fire alarm devices should be tested
- All fault indicators and circuits should be tested and checked
- Other checks and tests recommended by the manufacturer should be carried out.
- Outstanding defects should be reported, the logbook completed, and servicing certificate issued.

#### **Inspection and test of a system over a 12-month period**

- The switch mechanism of every manual call point should be tested
- Every automatic fire detector should be examined and functionally tested. Note: this includes, but is not limited to; smoke detectors, re-settable heat detectors, optical beam smoke detectors, aspirating fire detection systems, carbon monoxide fire detectors and flame detectors.
- All fire alarm devices (both visual and audible) should be tested.
- Certain filament lamps should be replaced.
- Visual inspection of readily accessible cable fixings should be undertaken.
- The cause and effect programme should be checked.
- The standby power supply capacity should be checked.
- Other annual checks and tests recommended by the system component manufacturers should be undertaken.
- Outstanding defects should be reported, and the servicing certificate issued.

#### **Recommendations for action to address an unacceptable rate of false alarms**

- This Clause recommends that any false alarm investigation and subsequent modifications to the system takes into account the guidance provided in Section 3 of BS5839-1: 2017.

## 1.18 Other Fire Precautions

A **fire blanket** conforming to the requirements of BS 6575: 1985 and a suitable container is to be provided and sited in each **kitchen area**. The fire blanket container is to be fixed to the wall so that the base of the container is approx 1500mm above floor level.

It is recommended that a simple multi-purpose extinguisher be provided and sited on each floor of the building and in a location accessible to all occupiers.

Any cupboard within the means of escape must not be used for the storage of combustible materials unless the access door meets the 30-minute standard and is kept locked (the door does not require a self-closing device or cold smoke seals).

All escape routes must be kept clear of obstacles and combustible materials.

The Landlord must provide adequate fire safety instructions for residents and any employees. They must be brought to the attention of all tenants and must be kept available for inspection at the premises. A copy should be included with the application to satisfy the Management Arrangements.

A Fire Precautions log book must be used to record the periodic inspection and maintenance of the alarm system, firefighting equipment and emergency lighting. It should be maintained and kept available for inspection at the premises. If the property is to be left untenanted for 4 weeks or longer, the systems and equipment must be checked before tenants take up occupancy and always before re-letting the accommodation.

Any proposals to provide alternative means of protection in the event of fire e.g. sprinkler or fire suppression systems will be considered in consultation with the Fire Service.

All gas/electricity distribution panels, meters and fuse boxes situated on the common parts and in units of accommodation, must be within a suitable half-hour fire resisting enclosure with a lockable door.

All new and replacement floor coverings within the protected routes and circulation spaces must fully comply with the British Standard 'Low radius of fire spread (up to 35mm) when tested in accordance with BS4790'.

## 1.19 Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting to be sufficient to enable persons to see their way out of the building in the event of failure of the general mains lighting. The system is to include all circulation areas, escape routes, changes in direction and floor levels and notices indicating means of escape, with at least one emergency light on each floor level, both internally and externally. The system is to provide no less than three hours duration and be a non-maintained system. The system must operate in the event of mains and sub-circuit failure to comply with **BS 5266: 2016**. All wiring to comply with I.E.E Wiring Regulations (pvc insulated or sheathed cable)

Following installation of the emergency lighting system, forward the relevant installation and commissioning certificate to the Housing Standards Team.

## **1.20 Signs and Notices**

Shall to be placed between 2m and 2.5m from floor level throughout the property to identify Fire doors, Escape routes etc, in accordance with BS 5499: Part 1 1990 and European signs directive S.I. No 341: 1996.

## **1.21 General Conditions and Management Arrangements**

In deciding whether the proposed management arrangements for the house are satisfactory, the Council must be satisfied that the person proposed to be responsible for the management of the house has sufficient competency to do so and that the proposed management structures and funding arrangements are suitable.

The licence holder must at all times comply with The Management of HMOs (England) Regulations 2006 and any Approved Code of Practice made under S233 of the Housing Act 2004.

The following conditions **MUST** be met with immediate effect.

## **1.22 General Conditions**

1. The property must be in good repair and structurally sound.
2. The property must be kept in a clean condition and in good repair internally.
3. The property must be maintained in good external decorative repair.
4. All reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that gardens, yards and paved areas are kept in good order, tidy condition and free from all accumulations of refuse and litter.
5. Adequate facilities must be provided for the storage and disposal of domestic refuse.
6. All furniture, furnishings and other domestic contents provided by the landlord must be kept in good repair, serviceable condition and comply with the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.
7. All electrical appliances provided by the landlord for use by the tenants must be tested annually for safety and a record kept of the examination. Testing must be carried out in accordance with the IEE 'Code of Practice for In-Service Inspection

## **1.23 Property Management**

The intended license holder must provide evidence on the arrangements for the proper management of the property, including appropriate finance. To satisfy this requirement the applicant must provide a statement detailing the arrangements that cover the following matters:

1. In particular, where a manager is employed, a declaration stating that adequate funding is available to ensure compliance with these standards and relevant legislation.

2. Periodic inspection of the property both internally and externally to identify where repair or maintenance is needed.
3. Planned maintenance programme.
4. Measures to respond to problems identified through periodic inspection/planned maintenance and notification by tenants of defects
5. Visual inspection of items such as socket outlets, light switches and distribution boards at regular intervals and prior to the commencement of a tenancy; and, where the property is subject to the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, at intervals determined under a relevant risk assessment. The determination of the intervals for checking should be on a risk-assessed basis (i.e. the likelihood of damage) and should always be carried out prior to the commencement of a new tenancy
6. Information provided to tenants and employees (if applicable) regarding the action to be taken in the event of a fire, including details of the escape route.

The License holder must provide the following documents to the Council when requested:

1. A 'Landlords Gas Safety Record' (LGSR) from a GasSafe Registered Engineer must be provided for all gas appliances in use at the property. All gas appliances must be checked or safety and serviced by a GasSafe Registered Engineer, on an annual basis.
2. A full 'Electrical Installation Condition Report' (EICR) on all fixed electrical installations at the premises, at no more than 5 yearly intervals. This report must be in the format as prescribed in Appendix 6 of BS 7671: 2018

***N/B It is strongly recommended that the inspecting electrical engineer is a member of a registered competent person scheme and is registered to undertake electrical safety reports. Suitably accredited Electrical Engineers can be found via the following link: <https://www.electricalcompetentperson.co.uk/>***

3. A fire alarm 'Inspection & Servicing Certificate' in the format as prescribed in Annex H of BS 5839-6: 2019.

***N/B the inspecting engineer should be a member of a registered competent person scheme for the installation, inspection and maintenance of fire alarm systems, such as; 'LPS 1014', 'BAFE SP203-1' or 'BAFE SP201 (LPS 1014)' where the company also holds LPS 1014 certification). Suitable BAFE and LPS accredited Alarm engineers can be found via the following links: <https://www.bafe.org.uk/advanced-search/> or <https://www.redbooklive.com/browse/advancedsearch.jsp>***

4. An emergency lighting 'Periodic Inspection & Test Certificate' in the format as prescribed in Annex M of BS 5266-1: 2016.
5. Electrical Appliance Test Certificates (PAT Certificate) are required annually where appliances are provided for tenants use.

## 1.24 Tenancy Management

The intended licence holder must provide evidence of the arrangements for the proper management of the property. All tenants must be issued with either a legal tenancy agreement or a signed statement confirming the terms and conditions for the tenancy.

This evidence should also detail the arrangements for:

1. Dealing with anti-social behaviour of the occupants or of persons visiting the HMO.
2. The enforcement of the tenancy agreement when appropriate.
3. Tenants' reporting of defects, including emergencies and tenancy issues.
4. Instructing tenants and any employees regarding actions to be taken in the event of a fire, including the means of escape.
5. Informing tenants of their duty and responsibility not to frustrate the efforts of the landlord to comply with the conditions of the licence and to allow access at all reasonable times to enable compliance.

-----End-----