

Coventry City Council Property Licensing Team



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

HMO licensing

Email: hmo@coventry.gov.uk

Tel: 024 7697 5467

Coventry City Council
PO Box 15
Council House
Coventry
CV1 5RR



Coventry City Council

Contents

Introduction **3**

Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) **4**

Planning **6**

Building Control **6**

Management **6**

Recycling and Waste Management **9**

Gas and Electricity Supplies **7**

Space Standards **10**

Personal Washing Facilities **11**

Sharing Ratios for Bathrooms and Sanitary Conveniences **13**

Facilities for Storage, Preparation and Cooking of Food **13**

Fire Safety **17**



Introduction

This document outlines those standards that Coventry City Council considers are appropriate for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). It has been written to provide guidance to landlords and agents operating in the area in relation to what standards are considered appropriate in such accommodation and to ensure that their properties meet or exceed these minimum requirements.

Summary

Under the Housing Act 2004 all licensed HMO's must be reasonably suitable for occupation and need to be supplied with adequate amenities such as heating, insulation, kitchen facilities, washing facilities and toilets. The number and type of amenities depend on the type and size of the house.

Legal framework

What is an HMO

An HMO is defined in the Housing Act 2004, Sections 254 -260. The definition can be complicated; if there is any dispute over a premise status, reference should be made to this legal definition. For simplicity, below is a summary of the main parts of the definition.

- An entire house (or flat) which is let to three, or more people, who form 2, or more households, and who share a basic amenity e.g. a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.
- A house which has been converted entirely into bedsits, or other non-self-contained accommodation, and is let to three, or more, people who form 2, or more, households and who share a basic amenity e.g. a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.
- A converted house which contained one, or more flats, which are not wholly self- contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom or toilet) and which is occupied by three or more tenants who form 2 or more households.
- A building which is converted entirely into self-contained flats and the standard of the conversion does not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations, and more than one third of the flats are let on short-term tenancies.
- As a general rule for a building to be a HMO it must be used as the tenant's only or main residence, or they are treated as so occupying it (i.e. properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same applies to properties used as domestic refuges); and rents must be payable, or some other consideration is to be provided, in respect of one of the tenants.



Definition of a 'household'

Under the Housing Act 2004 a household is defined as either a single person or members of the same family who are living together.

A family is defined as:

- Married or living together as husband or wife
- Parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces or cousins. Half-blood and step children are classed as the same family.

Mandatory HMO licensing

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

- It is occupied by five or more persons;
- Is occupied by persons living in two or more separate households.

Additional Licensing of HMOs

Under the Housing Act 2004 the Council can introduce additional licensing of HMOs to cover certain types of HMOs that are not subject to Mandatory Licensing. In Coventry, the Additional Licensing scheme requires all HMOs in the city to be licensed. This includes Section 257 HMOs (poorly converted blocks of flats).

IMPORTANT – If you are operating an HMO which falls within any of these definitions you must apply for a licence. Failure to do so could mean you are breaking the law.

Legal Standards in HMOs

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

All properties shall be free of Category 1 hazards, as determined using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 provides a risk-based methodology for assessing hazards in dwelling houses including HMOs. The assessment considers the type of hazard, severity, potential for harm, etc. The HHSRS is not a standard but a system to enable the hazards to be identified and the risks minimised or removed.

The HHSRS consists of 29 hazards which should be assessed in a domestic property. Landlords are required to manage all these hazards to reduce the risk to tenants and visitors to reasonable levels.

Some of the most common hazards are as follows:



Damp & mould growth:

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

Excess Cold:

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

Entry by Intruders:

Houses should be capable of being secured against unauthorised entry. Windows and doors must be robust and fitted with adequate security. Externally, the curtilage of the property should be restricted and secure. Sheds and outbuildings should be maintained secure and in good repair.

Lighting:

All habitable rooms should have an adequate level of natural lighting. All rooms and circulation areas should have provision for electric lighting.

Electrical Hazards:

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

Flames, hot surfaces, etc.:

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

Falls:

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

Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage:

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

Water supply:

An adequate supply of potable drinking water should be available from the kitchen sink. All pipework should be adequately protected from frost damage.

Further guidance can be found on the Housing and Safety Rating

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



Licensing and Management Regulations

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

A copy of regulations can be found at:

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/373/contents/made>

Management Regulations

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

Copies of the HMO Management Regulations can be found at:

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

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

Other legal considerations

- **Planning permission** - Owners must also satisfy themselves that the property has appropriate planning approval and can lawfully be used as a House in Multiple Occupation under planning legislation. Currently, if you wish to convert a residential house to an HMO with seven or more lets you will need to seek planning permission. Further information can be found at www.planningportal.co.uk
- **Building Regulations** - Approval under the Building Regulations is likely to be required for a range of HMO conversion works including: Installation of additional kitchen or bathroom facilities that require waste connections, changes in layout including adding or removing walls and or doors and windows.
- **Council Tax** - HMOs occupied entirely by full time students will be exempt from Council Tax, subject to submission of the documentation required by the council tax department. The landlord should clarify the position of liability for paying Council Tax in relation to each individual property with the local council. Council Tax fraud is an offence which deprives funding for local services.



Pre-Licensing Advice

If you require further advice after reading this guide, our experienced team can provide pre-application advice for a small fee. To find out more about these services visit https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/280/housing_enforcement/3348/hmo_licensing/6

Non-Compliance with legal requirements

Where landlords fail to comply with legal requirements, the Council can issue a civil penalty of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution. The Council could also prosecute, which on summary conviction is liable for an unlimited fine.

Amenities and Facilities

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

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

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

Electrical Safety

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

The Regulations require all landlords to ensure that the electrical installation in any privately rented property is inspected by a qualified and competent person every 5 years. An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be provided to all new tenants before they occupy the dwelling (from 1 June 2020) and to all existing tenants within 28 days (from 1 April 2021). A copy of the EICR must also be provided to the Council within 7 days on request.

Where the inspection and report shows that remedial work is needed, this must be carried within 28 days (or within a shorter period if indicated in the report). Confirmation that any necessary work has been satisfactorily completed must be given to the tenant and to the Council within 28 days of completion. The Council can issue a financial penalty of up to £30,000 on a landlord who is found to be in breach of their duties under these Regulations



Location of meters

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

Heating

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

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

Natural Lighting

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

Artificial Lighting

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

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

Ventilation

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

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

Water Supply

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



Refuse Storage and Disposal

There shall be provided and maintained in a convenient and accessible position an adequate number of suitable refuse containers, so sited as to be readily accessible to the refuse collection service.

Furniture

All furniture should comply with current regulations – ‘The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993)’.

Asbestos

Landlords have a duty to identify and manage any Asbestos containing materials in their property. If the material is in good condition and not liable to damage or disruption, for example during alteration work, then it is normally appropriate to leave it alone. If in doubt, you should seek further advice. If you are aware of any Asbestos containing materials you should keep a record of the location and type of material and confirm that it is in a sound condition. You should then check every 6 months to see there has been no damage etc, and date and sign the record to show that you have done this.

Personal safety and security

Sufficient measures must be in place to provide a secure environment for the occupiers, including appropriate locks to external doors and tenant’s own rooms to prevent unauthorised access but permit safe keyless egress. Vulnerable windows must also be capable of being effectively secured against entry without compromising the means of escape in case of fire. Appropriate arrangements must be in place to control the issue and return of house keys on changes of tenancy, or the changing of locks. Any advice on crime prevention measures provided by the Police Crime Prevention Officer must be acted on. Simple locks must be provided to communal bathrooms and toilets to provide privacy. Window restrictors, will be required for all windows above ground floor level, where the sill height is within 1100mm of the floor level, preventing the window from being opened more than 100mm. Any restrictor must be of a type which can be easily over-ridden by an adult in the event of fire. Where any glazing is within 800mm of the floor level (including glazing within doors) it should be guarded or comprise of safety glass. Windows, on second floors and above, where the glazing is within 1100mm of the floor level should be guarded with a safety rail. Guarding (e.g. balustrade) should be provided to staircases, balconies and landings to prevent falls. It should be at least 1,100mm high and designed and constructed so as to discourage children climbing and strong enough to support the weight of people leaning against it. There should be no openings to the guarding which would allow a 100mm sphere to pass through.

Space standards

Legal requirements:

This requirement is set out in the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018 SI 616, which amends the Housing Act 2004 Schedule 4 Mandatory Conditions. From 1 October 2018, all HMO licences issued on or after this date must include conditions relating to minimum bedroom floor area as follows:

- 6.51 m² for one person over ten years of age
- 10.22 m² for two persons over ten years of age
- 4.64 m² for one child under the age of ten years

Any room of less than 4.64m² must not be used as sleeping accommodation. The licence holder will need to notify the Council of any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64m².



The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 require kitchens, bathrooms and WC's to be of adequate size, as set by this guide.

Coventry City Council has adopted the following minimum space standards:

Coventry City Council requirements

Coventry City Council requires different room size requirements depending on whether the property has additional communal space. Where there is no additional communal space Coventry City Council

Important notes on calculating the minimum room size

When measuring the size of any room, the officer must take into account the 'useable space' by considering the height and shape of the room. Measurements will include all floor space including floor to ceiling fitted wardrobes/walk in cupboards, but not chimney breasts, bulkheads or en-suite facilities. Skirting boards will also be ignored. Rooms must be able to allow the effective use of the required amount of furniture and allow sufficient movement around the room. Where this is not possible (e.g. narrow layout), a higher minimum floor space may be required. All rooms should have a minimum floor to ceiling height of at least 2.3 metres over 75% of the room area. Where the ceiling height is less than 1.5 metres the floor area underneath it shall be disregarded and not counted as 'useable space'.

Room Sizes for HMOs with Shared Kitchen Guidance (m ²)			
Persons in Bedroom	Minimum Room size		
	Minimum Room Size	if separate Living Room provided	
1	10	6.51	
2	15	10.22	
Minimum sizes of other rooms (square metres)			
Total Residents in House	Kitchen (obligatory)	Living Room (optional)	Dining Rooms (optional)
2-5	7	11	11
6-10	10	16.5	16.5
11-15	13.5	21.5	21.5
16+	16.5	25	25
<p>In HMOs with a shared kitchen for the landlord to take advantage of the lower bedroom sizes they must also have at least a shared living room but they can have additional shared rooms. If you wish to make the kitchen your main living space, it must equal or exceed the minimum kitchen size plus the minimum living room size.</p>			



Personal washing facilities

Legal requirements:

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 SI 373 sets standards for washing facilities and sanitary conveniences as set out below:

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

Coventry City Council has adopted the following minimum standards:

1. All facilities to be property connected to a proper drainage system.
2. Bathrooms, shower rooms and toilet compartments must be constructed to ensure privacy. Locks/bolts are needed to ensure privacy. Obscured glazing/film to be fitted as necessary ensure privacy.
3. Where a child under ten years of age lives in the property, a bath must be provided.
4. Bathrooms and shower rooms require an efficient and safe fixed space-heating appliance that is capable of maintaining each room at a minimum temperature of 21°C when the outside temperature is – 1°C must be provided. The fixed space heating appliance may be an adequate central heating system with thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) or a fixed electrical appliance. The heating must be under the control of the occupiers for timings and temperature settings.



5. Bathrooms and shower rooms must have mechanical ventilation to the outside air at a minimum extraction rate of 15 litres/second in addition to any window(s). The system is to be either coupled to the light switch and incorporate a suitable over-run period or an appropriately set humidistat. Continuous ventilation systems are also acceptable.

6. Each toilet in a separate compartment is required to have a window equivalent to 1/20th of the floor area or mechanical ventilation to the outside air at a minimum extraction rate of six litres/second. Continuous ventilation systems are also acceptable.

7. A tiled splash-back or alternative impervious, cleanable surface, shall be provided to all baths and wash hand basins. Shower cubicles shall have fully tiled walls (or alternative impervious, cleanable surface) and be provided with a suitable water resistant curtain or door to the cubicle.

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

9. Separate toilet compartments should be a minimum dimension of 1300mm × 900mm with 750mm in front of the toilet. A suitable wash hand basin must be provided in the same compartment as the toilet.

The following minimum dimensions shall apply:

Item	Dimension
Wash hand basin	500mm X 400mm
Splashback	300mm high
Bath	1700mm X 700mm
Shower	800 X 800mm



Sharing ratios for bathrooms & sanitary conveniences

Legal requirements:

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 set standards for the number of bathrooms/showers and toilet facilities in HMOs. The information below explains this requirement in more detail:

Number of people (irrespective of age)	Facilities required (If a child under 10 lives at the property, a bath must be provided)
1 – 4 people	The minimum provision is 1 bathroom containing toilet, bath or shower and wash hand basin. The bathroom and toilet may be in the same room.
5 people	The minimum provision is 1 bathroom with a bath or shower and 1 separate toilet with wash hand basin. The separate toilet may be located in a second bathroom.
6 - 10 people	The minimum provision is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 bathrooms containing a bath or shower• 2 toilets with wash hand basins, one of which must be in a separate room.
11 – 15 people	The minimum provision is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 bathrooms containing a bath or shower• 3 toilets with wash hand basins, one of which must be in a separate room.
Bedrooms with en suites	Where a room is provided with a complete en-suite facility (bath/shower, toilet and wash hand basin) for the exclusive use of that occupant then that occupant will be disregarded when considering the provision of sanitary facilities. Six occupants and one occupant had exclusive use of a fully equipped en-suite. The requirement for the remaining occupants would be for five people. If, however, the en-suite only provides one facility (either a bath/shower or a WC) then the occupant will not be disregarded for the missing amenity.

Kitchen facilities

Facilities for the storage, preparation & cooking of food

Shared kitchens legal requirements:

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 SI 373 require:

1. A kitchen, suitably located in relation to the living accommodation, and of such layout and size and equipped with such facilities so as to adequately enable those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food.



2. The kitchen must be equipped with the following equipment, which must be fit for purpose and supplied in a sufficient quantity for the number of those sharing the facilities:

- (i) sinks with draining boards;
- (ii) an adequate supply of cold and constant hot water to each sink supplied;
- (iii) installations or equipment for the cooking of food;
- (iv) electrical sockets;
- (v) worktops for the preparation of food;
- (vi) cupboards for the storage of food or kitchen and cooking utensils;
- (vii) refrigerators with an adequate freezer compartment (or, where the freezer compartment is not adequate, adequate separate freezers);
- (viii) appropriate refuse disposal facilities; and
- (ix) appropriate extractor fans, fire blankets and fire doors.

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

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

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

Food Storage Cupboards must be of minimum capacity 0.1 cubic metres (which is equivalent to a standard single wall unit). The internal and external surfaces must be of durable and easily cleansable materials and, where wall mounted, must be fixed securely to take the considerable weight of stored tinned/bottled foods. Food storage underneath a sink is not acceptable. In shared kitchens a lockable food store should be provided for each let.

Cooking appliances must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and, electrical appliances must be connected via an appropriately rated switch and fuse. For gas cookers, care must be taken in siting these away from draughts. All cooking appliances must be sited with safety in mind having regard to the ergonomics of handling hot food: In particular, cooking appliances should be located adjacent to food preparation surfaces.

For all shared kitchens it is important that residents do not have to carry hot food and drink long distances to rooms, especially if this means climbing stairs. Careful consideration must be given to which rooms in a house are used for kitchens and a kitchen should not, where practicable, be more than one floor distant from each user. Alternatively, a suitably furnished dining facility can be provided on the same floor as the kitchen.



Legal requirements:

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

To achieve compliance with the above requirements for adequate size, layout and equipment, Coventry City Council has adopted the following minimum standards:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Layout: The same principles of safe layout and design apply in bedsits as for shared kitchens. Cookers must not be located near doorways to avoid collisions.

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

	Persons Using a Shared Kitchen (square meters)							
	Up to 5	Up to 10	Up to 15	Up to 20	Up to 25	Up to 30	Each Additional 5	Each Additional 10
Sinks	1	2	2	3	3	4	-	1
Hot Plates	4	6	8	10	10	12	-	2
Ovens	1	1	2	2	2	3	-	1
Grills	1	1	2	2	2	3	-	1
Food Prep Surface	0.5m ²	1.00m ²	1.25m ²	1.5m ²	1.75m ²	2.00m ²	0.25m ²	0.50m ²
Refrigerated Storage	0.1m ³	0.2m ³	0.3m ³	0.4m ³	0.5m ³	0.6m ³	0.1m ³	0.2m ³
Food Storage Cupboards	One per person each of 0.1 m ³ capacity							
	Up to one third of the hotplates specified can be substituted with microwave ovens in the ratio of one microwave oven per two hotplates							

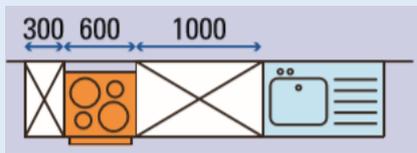


Best practice for kitchen layouts

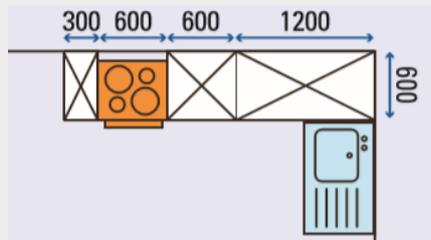
Good practice

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

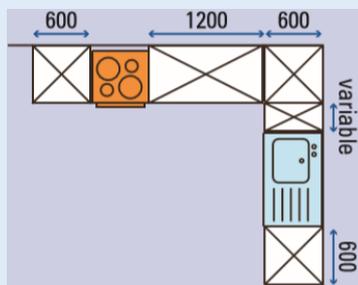
✓ **This is the minimum provision for a kitchen.** It incorporates worktop on both sides of the cooker and working space both sides of the sink bowl. Note 300mm is a minimum width and should be made wider where possible.



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



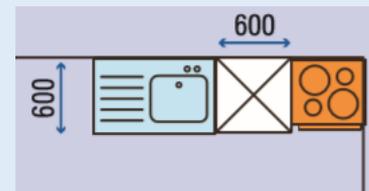
✓ **This is a good kitchen layout.** It is well set out and has plenty of usable workspace.



Unacceptable

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

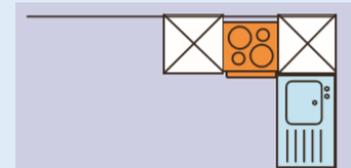
✗ **Cooker may not be located in a corner.** This arrangement is impractical and unsafe.



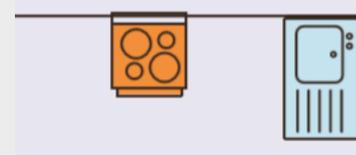
✗ **The sink bowl must not be located in a corner.** This is an impractical arrangement and because there is no worktop next to the bowl and it is impossible to separate clean and dirty utensils, it also creates a hygiene hazard.



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



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



Fire Safety

Legal requirement:

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

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

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

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

Coventry City Council requirements:

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

All licensable HMOs must have a fire risk assessment.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires the 'responsible person', who could be the landlord/licence holder or an agent with full management control, to carry out and regularly review a fire risk assessment. This is enforced by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

The fire risk assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient', and assistance from an appropriately competent person should be sought as necessary to achieve this.

Further information and guidance on completing a fire risk assessment is available from the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Gov website.

Fire Precautions

The risk of a fire occurring and the harm a fire could cause is increased in multiple occupied dwellings. Therefore measures must be taken to reduce the levels of risk to occupiers in the event of fire.

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

There is no "one size fits all" approach to fire safety in HMO's. The following information is not a schedule of works; it is a guide on the general requirements. You will need to carry out more in-depth research. Be as accurate as possible in your assessment of the property and try to avoid categorizing the risks lower than they are in order to save costs. This may end up costing more in the long run if the Council finds that the risks are not adequately reduced.



General Information

The Council's fire precaution standards generally require:

- An automatic fire detection system which should be in accordance with BS5839 Part 6-2019, with the most commonly used systems being: **Grade A:** Fire alarm system with detectors and a central control panel. Usually with call-points (break glass units) near exits and on each landing **Grade D:** System of (usually interlinked) mains-powered smoke and heat alarms with backup batteries.

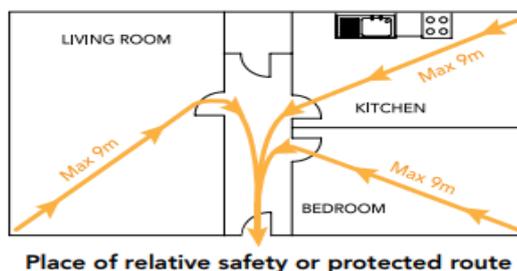
The coverage within the building by the detection system is described with the following codes:

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

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

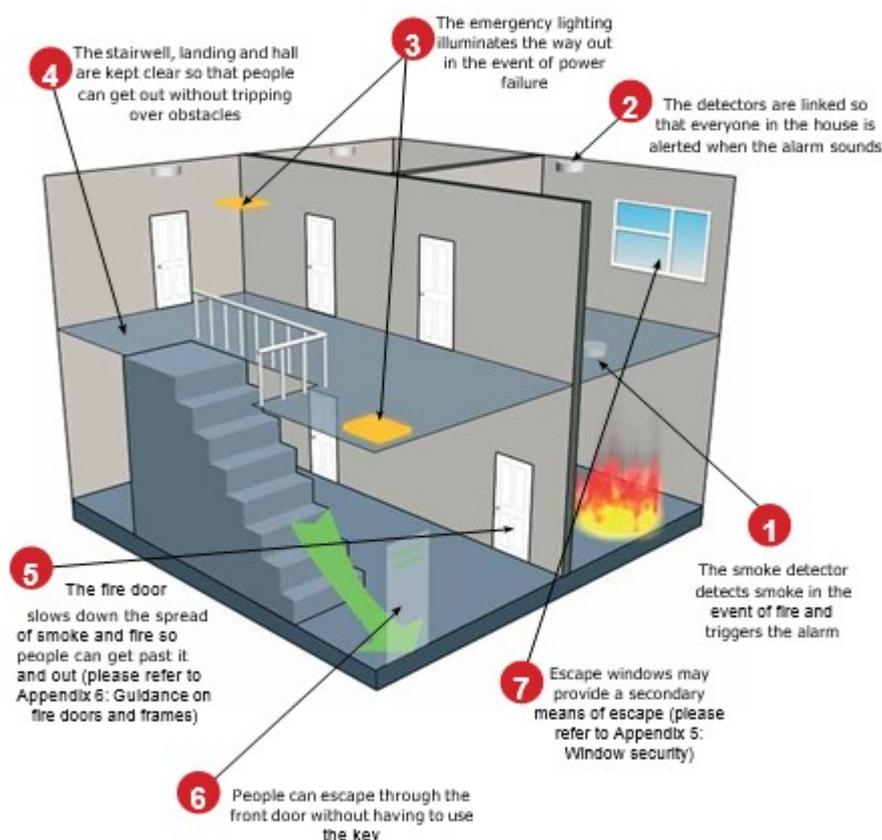
LD3: Covers circulation spaces that form part of the escape routes

- Where required, Emergency Lighting system conforming to **BS5266**
- Half-hour fire resistance to all walls and ceilings throughout (**including basement ceilings and under the stairs**), in order to achieve adequate fire separation between units of accommodation and compartmentation of the means of escape.
- Fire doors fitted and certified as capable of achieving full half hour fire resistance in conjunction with their frames. All doors should be rendered and maintained self-closing and close fitting. Provide intumescent strips and smoke seals as required. All fire door components must comply with **BS476:1987 (Part31 (1))**. The installation and maintenance of all fire doors must be in compliance with **BS8214:1990 Code of Practice for fire doors with non-metallic leaves**.
- Fire blankets in containers to **BS6575:1985** in the kitchens. These should be positioned approximately 1.5m above floor level.
- Gas and electricity distribution panels, meters and fuse boxes in the common parts must be enclosed to give half hour fire resistance, and provided with a lockable door. Affix a standard blue disc 'FIRE DOOR KEEP SHUT' signs.
- Occupants must be able to exit the house from any room **without the need to use a key**.
- Travel distances within HMOs are an important matter. In the event of fire, occupiers need to be reasonably sure that they can reach a place of safety within reasonable time. The layout of the premises needs to be such that occupiers can quickly find their way across the room they are in and then through any protected route to the final exit. This must be achieved despite possible heat, flames and most importantly smoke. Smoke is often toxic but can also reduce visibility both by fogging and by causing irritation to the eyes. Occupiers need to be able to get through the escape route with a minimum of exposure to these hazards particularly by inhalation. Like most elements of fire safety, judging the adequacy of travel distances is a matter of risk assessment and needs to be considered along with all other risks. The distance between any point on the premises and a place of safety should ideally be a maximum of 9 metres. A place of relative safety would, for example, be a protected route within the building.



General principles

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



Emergency Escape Windows

A room from which the only escape route is through another room is an “**inner room**”. The room through which you have to pass is the “**access room**”. Inner rooms should not be used as bedrooms because there is a much greater risk to the occupants should a fire start in the access room. This situation could arise, for example, where a bedroom is accessed from a living room.

An inner room situation can be overcome by the provision of an emergency escape window or door leading to an alternative escape route.

Escape windows must enable a person to reach a place of safety free from danger from fire and are therefore generally provided to ground floor windows only. However escape windows may be provided to first floor rooms, provided that the distance from the window cill to external ground level does not exceed 4.5 metres. Such rooms should only be occupied by persons physically capable of escaping via this route.

The escape window should have an unobstructed openable area that is at least 0.33m² and at least 450mm high and 450mm wide (the route through the window may be at an angle rather than straight through). The bottom of the openable area should be not more than 1100mm above the floor.

Keys for escape windows **MUST** always be kept either in the lock or in a specially designated and clearly-signed location as close as possible to the window itself.



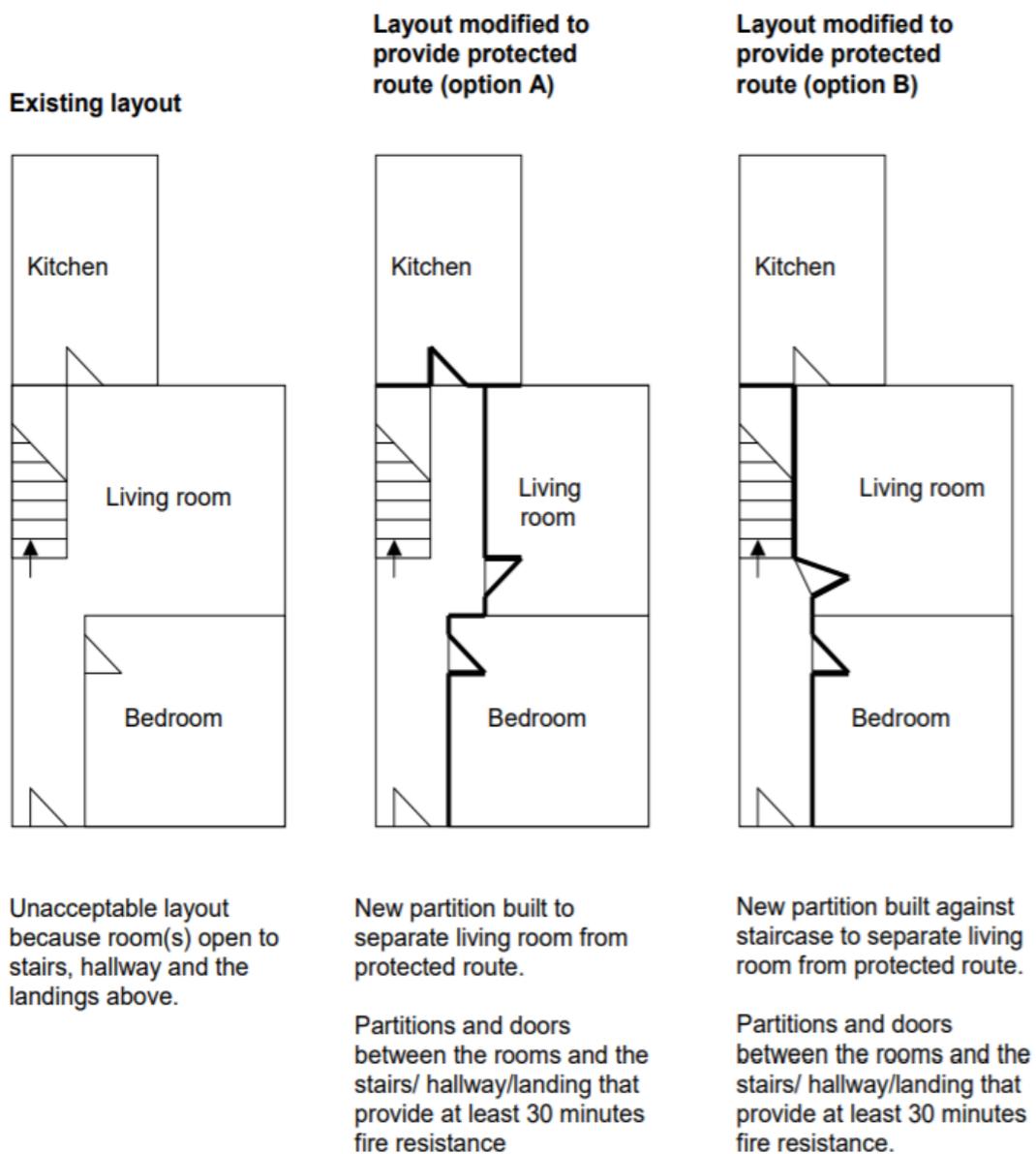
Adequate means of escape

What does provision of an “adequate means of escape from fire” mean? This refers to provision of a “protected route” (sometimes called an escape route), adequate lighting to that route, and also to the provision of fire resisting construction horizontally and vertically between units of accommodation.

The protected route is the normal route the occupants take from their accommodation to the final exit, and which is upgraded to provide 30 minutes fire protection from the rooms leading off it. It usually consists of the stairs, landings and hallway, often referred to as the staircase enclosure. The protected route must not be “open plan” with any room.

Example of ground floor of shared house

Where existing layout requires modification to provide protected route
(example 1)



Example of ground floor of shared house

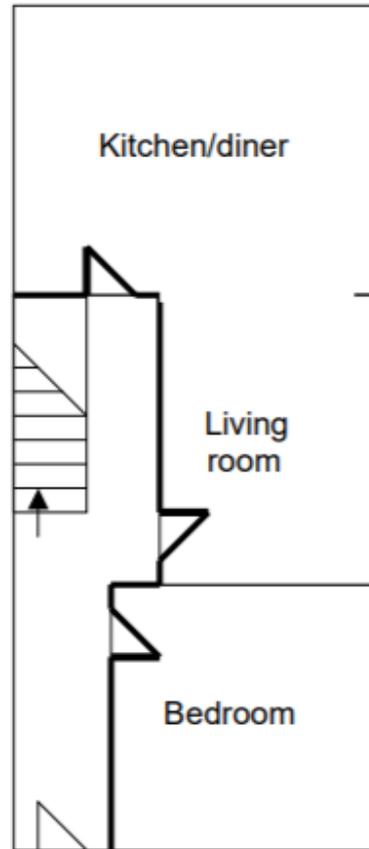
Where existing layout requires modification to provide protected route
(example 2)

Existing layout



Unacceptable layout because room(s) open to stairs, hallway and the landings above.

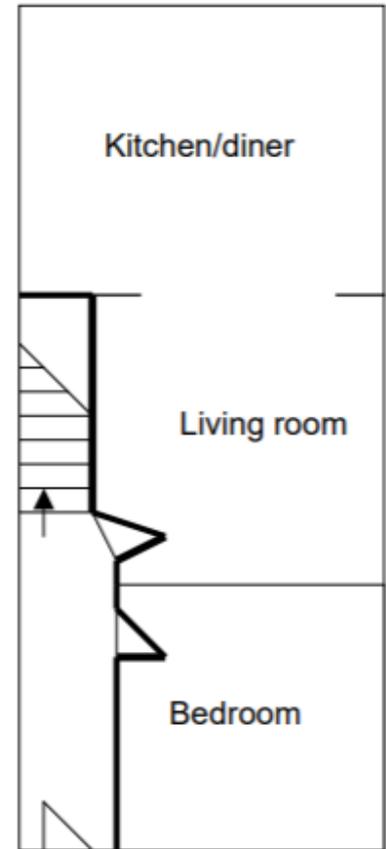
Layout modified to provide protected route



New partition built to separate living room from protected route.

Partitions and doors between the rooms and the stairs/ hallway/landing that provide at least 30 minutes fire resistance

Layout modified to provide protected route



New partition built against staircase to separate living room from protected route.

Partitions and doors between the rooms and the stairs/ hallway/landing that provide at least 30 minutes fire resistance.



The below tables provide some examples of typical property types and the fire precautions that would be appropriate. These examples are however very generalized and should be used for guidance only. The risks associated with each individual property will need to be assessed and the appropriate measures taken accordingly.

Low risk properties are those let on a joint contract with shared kitchen facilities and where the occupants are not vulnerable.

High risk shared houses (shared kitchen facilities, separate tenancy HMOs or vulnerable tenants) Properties that are let on individual contracts with shared kitchen facilities are a higher risk situation as there will be little or no communal living between tenants. These properties require additional fire precautions.

Property Type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
Low risk 2 Storey Shared House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound traditional construction • Kitchen door to be FD30s with intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted. • All other doors to be sound, well constructed close fitting doors • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade D LD3 • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each communal lounge • Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in each communal kitchen
High risk 2 Storey shared house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • FD30s doors to all bedrooms, lounges and kitchens (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade D LD2 • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels and in any under stairs cupboards. • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each communal lounge • Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in kitchen



Property Type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
2 Storey High risk (Cooking In lets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • FD30s doors to all bedrooms and lounges (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade D LD2 • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels including any under stair cupboard. • To provide an early warning to occupiers of a fire occurring within their rooms, single point smoke alarms are also required. These detectors are not interlinked between rooms • Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in each bedsit • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each communal lounge
2 Storey Self-Contained Flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • 30 minute fire resisting construction between flats • FD30s doors to all flat entrance doors and rooms opening onto the escape route (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • No requirement for fire doors within flats but sound, well constructed close fitting doors are required • Emergency escape lighting may be required if the escape route is long or complex or where there is no effective borrowed light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade D LD2 and LD3 (mixed system) • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels • Interlinked mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each flat in the room/ lobby opening onto the escape route • Non-interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each flat in the room/ lobby opening onto the escape route



Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
Low risk 3 or 4 Storey Shared House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • FD30 doors to all bedrooms, lounges and kitchens (intumescent strip fitted but not smoke seals) • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade D LD3 • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels including any under stairs cupboard. • Interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the lounge • Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back-up in the kitchen
High risk 3 or 4 Storey Shared House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • FD30s doors to all bedroom, kitchen and lounge doors (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade A LD2 • Control and indicating equipment (fire alarm panel) required • Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment • Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment • Mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each kitchen, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment



Property type	Protected Route	Automatic Fire Detection
High Risk 3 or 4 Storey cooking in lets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • FD30s doors to all bedroom, kitchen and lounge doors (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • Route must not pass through risk rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade A LD2 • Control and indicating equipment (fire alarm panel) required • Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment • Mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each bedsit, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment
3 or 4 Storey Self-Contained Flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minute fire resisting construction throughout the escape route • 30 minute fire resisting construction between flats • FD30s doors to all flat entrance doors and rooms opening onto the escape route (intumescent strip and smoke seals fitted) • No requirement for fire doors within flats but sound, well constructed close fitting doors are required • Emergency escape lighting may be required if the escape route is long or complex or where there is no effective borrowed light • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade A LD2 and Grade D LD3 (mixed system) • Mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in the escape route at all floor levels, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment • Mains wired heat detectors with battery back-up located in each flat in the room/lobby opening onto the escape route, linked in circuit to the control and indicating equipment • Non-interlinked mains wired smoke detectors with battery back-up located in each flat in the room/lobby opening onto the escape route



Coventry Landlord Accreditation Scheme



Our Landlord Accreditation Scheme (CLAS) is a free, voluntary scheme that private residential Landlords and Letting Agents are encouraged to join. The scheme applies to the private rented sector only and not to Local Authority owned or Housing Association properties where other Service Level Agreements apply. The scheme comprises an element of self-regulation and accordingly relies on a degree of goodwill and trust on the parts of Landlords, Letting Agents, tenants and the Local Authority.

Aims of the scheme:

The aims of the scheme are to improve the condition and management of the private rented sector in Coventry. We will encourage, acknowledge and actively promote good standards of privately rented accommodation with the aim of assisting Landlords, Letting Agents and tenants to undertake their respective responsibilities to each other.

Compliance with the scheme will ensure that:

Landlords, Letting Agents, tenants and local residents enjoy the benefits of good property conditions, competent management standards and considerate neighbourly behaviour; misunderstandings and disputes are reduced; the Council's Local Commitment policy will be actively promoted and where problems do occur, they are promptly resolved.

Benefits of joining the scheme:

- You will receive free training from us on a variety of areas of Housing law;
- You will be able to advertise yourself as being accredited by Coventry City Council;
- You may be eligible for a five-year licence for your licensable properties; and
- Your fees for property licences are likely to be cheaper.

