

# Sefton M.B.C.

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

### Standards for accommodation in HMO's

#### ***Introduction***

This guide is intended to advise on the standards that apply to HMO's as defined in Sections 254 and 257 of the Housing Act that although not subject to Mandatory HMO Licensing, are situated in areas that are designated as 'Additional (HMO)' and 'Selective' licensing areas. The standards will also apply to other categories of HMO that do not currently need to be licensed.

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 Regulation 12 of S.I. 1903:2007) and Schedule 4 of The Housing Act 2004 'Mandatory Conditions' (as amended by S.I. 616: 2018) and the standards adopted locally by Sefton MBC. They also reflect guidance given in Sefton's current 'HMO –Supplementary Planning Document' (HMO-SPD).

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***

##### **1.1 Habitable Letting Room Space Standards**

##### **1.2 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 are based on those applied to properties that currently subject to Mandatory H.M.O. Licensing.

Please note that for premises that require Planning Permission for 'change of use', reference must also be made to Sefton's '*HMO & Flats, Supplementary Planning Document*' (SPD) which is available on the Planning pages of the Sefton website.

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.

### **1.3 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.

### **1.4 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.

### **1.5 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>**/ 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.

## **1.6 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 litre or 9 cu ft capacity, instead of 142 litre 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.

### **1.7 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, oven and grill or a four-ring cooker with 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.

### **1.8 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.

### **1.9 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.

### **1.10 Shared 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.

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.

### **1.11 Individual Bathrooms and WC's**

In 'Section 257 HMOs' (premises comprising entirely of self-contained flats), all bathrooms contained within in each flat must be of an adequate size and layout with wash hand basins, toilets, baths and/or showers, suitably located and fit for purpose.

### **1.12 Water Closets**

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.

### **1.13 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.

### **1.14 Space Heating in Shared Accommodation**

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.

### **1.15 Space Heating in Individual Self-Contained Flats**

In 'Section 257 HMOs' (premises comprising entirely of self-contained flats), all flats must have a fixed, efficient, economical and fully controllable 'whole flat' heating system, heating all rooms and circulation spaces. The heating system must be capable of maintaining a minimum temperature of 21°C in the living room and 18°C in all other rooms, when the outside air temperature is -1°C. The system must have suitable thermostatic controls and a timer device, to allow effective control throughout the flat. Any heating system should be appropriate to the design, layout and construction of the accommodation and be properly installed and maintained.

### **1.16 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.

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

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

### **1.17 Fire Precautions**

All HMO premises as defined under sections 254 and 257 of the Housing Act 2004, must have adequate fire precautions in accordance with risk. The level of risk associated with any residential premises will be determined by a range of factors. These can include the building's age, standard of construction or conversion, size and number of storeys, internal arrangement, nature and level of occupancy, and usage (i.e. mix of commercial and residential), to name but a few.

The appropriate national guidance for fire safety in HMO premises is entitled '**Housing – Fire Safety, Guidance on Fire Safety Provisions for Certain Types of Existing Housing**' but is generally referred to as 'the LACORs Guide'. The guide is non prescriptive in nature however it does contain a range of 'case studies' covering various types of residential premises and giving an indication of the appropriate level of fire precautions for each. An extract of these case studies is attached or can be obtained from Sefton's website.

The following general requirements will apply to all HMOs however if you need further advice regarding particular circumstances, please contact the **Housing Standards Team**.

### **1.18 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.

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

Polystyrene tiles and other inappropriate surface coverings are not permissible on escape routes.

If an unoccupied basement is present, there must be a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance between the basement and ground floor. This can be achieved by under-drawing the basement ceiling / 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. The stair soffit and spandrel should likewise be underdrawn and access to the basement should be via an FD30S door-set.

If the basement contains accommodation, then it will be necessary to provide one-hour separation between the 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 will also need to be provided to the access stairway, with FD30s door-sets positioned at both ground floor and basement levels.

Where the premises are 'mixed use' and commercial areas are present within the building (situated either above or below the residential accommodation), a minimum one-hour fire separation must be provided between the commercial and residential areas. It will also be necessary to provide smoke or heat detection within the commercial area and interlinked to the fire detection system within the residential portion of the property in order to give early warning in the event of a fire.

### **1.19 Means of Escape / Doors**

Where accommodation is situated 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> (750mm x 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 should be provided either to a 'protected route' or direct to external ground level or alternatively the internal arrangement of the accommodation should be changed to resolve the inner room situation.

Use of an escape window as a secondary means of escape may be accepted to certain first floor rooms, dependent upon circumstances. These would likely include the provision of additional detection & sounders within the inner and outer rooms, fitting of an FD30S door-set with fire resistant vision panel to separate the inner and outer rooms, where the distance between internal room floor level and external ground level does not exceed 4.5m and where the external 'landing point' directly beneath the escape window is safe and unobstructed.

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 secured with additional bolts if there is a significant security risk and so long as they are readily accessible and operable in the event of emergency

Doors should 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: Part 8 and or 22, which will include the fixing of a combined intumescent strip / flexible cold smoke seal and self-closing device when indicated; FD30S. The self-closing device should be adequately adjustable to ensure that the fire door closes smoothly and quietly into the rebate of the doorframe and is capable of overcoming any resistance by flexible seals and / or latching device. The door is to be hung on 3 x 100mm steel butt hinges – rising butt hinges are **not** approved for this purpose.

Doors situated on the means of escape and that open directly onto the protected route (i.e. flat entrance doors, bedsit/shared house accommodation doors, or other 'risk' rooms), must be to the FD30S fire resisting standard.

In circumstances where existing doors may be capable of being upgraded to provide appropriate fire resistance, any upgrading must be carried out in accordance with BS476 and evidence must be provided to verify suitable upgrading.

Any basement access door must be at minimum to the FD30s standard. Where 1-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 suitable insulating / intumescent material 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 fastenings to bedroom doors are not permitted.

## **1.20 Fire Alarm Systems**

All privately rented accommodation (including unlicensed HMOs) is currently subject to the '*The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015*' which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015.

The regulations require that:

A smoke alarm is installed on each on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation; and

A carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance.

The landlord must ensure that alarms are in proper working order at the start of any new tenancy

While the provision of battery-operated smoke alarms in suitable locations, would generally satisfy the regulations, the limited and localized protection given by such alarms is not considered adequate for HMO type premises.

HMOs will generally require an ‘Automatic Fire Detection & Alarm System’ (AFDS) of a suitable type and grade, in accordance with national guidance (the LACORs Guide’) and commensurate with the risk at the property concerned.

Appropriate AFD systems for various types of premises are covered in the afore-mentioned ‘case studies’ in the LACORs Guide. The following table indicates an appropriate grade & type of system for the various premises covered in this guidance:

<b>HMO Type</b>	<b>AFD System</b>
<b>Shared House type HMO up to two storeys (includes lodgings where <u>more</u> than 2 tenants are in occupation with resident landlord &amp; family).</b>	BS 5839 part 6:2013, Grade D, Type LD3 system
<b>Shared House type HMO of 3 to 4 storeys (includes lodgings where <u>more</u> than 2 tenants are in occupation with resident landlord &amp; family).</b>	BS 5839 part 6:2013, Grade D, Type LD3 system
<b>Shared House type HMO of 5 to 6 storeys (includes lodgings where <u>more</u> than 2 tenants are in occupation with resident landlord &amp; family).</b>	BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade A, Type LD2 system
<b>Bedsit type HMO up to two storeys (non self-contained accommodation and sharing of amenities)</b>	BS 5839 part 6:2013, Grade D, Type LD2 system
<b>Bedsit type HMO of 3 to 4 storeys (non self-contained accommodation and sharing of amenities)</b>	<u>Mixed System</u> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade A, Type LD2 system to protected route and adjacent risk areas (bedsits, shared kitchens and living rooms, etc) <b>plus</b> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 in bedsits (and / or LD2 in multi-room units of accommodation)

<b>HMO Type</b>	<b>AFD System</b>
<b>Bedsit type HMO of 5 to 6 storeys (non self-contained accommodation and sharing of amenities)</b>	<p><u>Mixed System</u> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade A, Type LD2 system to protected route and adjacent risk areas (bedsits, shared kitchens and living rooms, etc)</p> <p><b>plus</b> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 in bedsits (and / or LD2 system in multi-room units of accommodation.</p>
<b>Section 257 HMO up to two storeys (conversion comprising all self-contained flats)</b>	<p>BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD 2 system to protected route and adjacent risk areas (i.e. within entrance to each flat)</p> <p><b>and</b> BS 5839 part 6:2013, Grade D, Type LD3 system in each flat</p>
<b>Section 257 HMO of 3 or 4 storeys (conversion comprising all self-contained flats)</b>	<p><u>Mixed System</u> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade A, Type LD2 system to protected route and adjacent risk areas ((i.e. within entrance to each flat)</p> <p><b>plus</b> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 (or LD2 in all flats, dependent on risk / internal arrangement)</p>
<b>Section 257 HMO of 5 or 6 storeys (conversion comprising all self-contained flats)</b>	<p><u>Mixed System</u> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade A, Type LD2 system to protected route and adjacent risk areas ((i.e. within entrance to each flat)</p> <p><b>plus</b> BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 (or LD2 in all flats, dependent on internal arrangement)</p>
<b>Flat in Multiple Occupation – single storey</b>	BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 (or LD2 dependent on risk / internal arrangement)
<b>Flat in Multiple Occupation – up to two storeys</b>	BS 5839 Part 6: 2013, Grade D, Type LD3 (or LD2 dependent on risk / internal arrangement)

Further information on the configuration of the above AFD systems, recommend type and arrangement of detection for various scenarios is contained within the LACORs case studies, which are attached or can be accessed via the Sefton website.

An audibility test should be carried to ensure that the alarm system 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.

Design, installation, and commissioning certificates **must** be obtained from the installation engineer and retained. A user manual must also be provided and be available at the property.

### ***Maintenance***

The person in control or managing the HMO must ensure that the AFD system is suitably maintained by a 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 remain familiar with the fire alarm signal.

### ***Inspection, Servicing and Certification***

Routine 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.

License Holders of HMO premises situated within designated 'Additional' or 'Selective' Licensing areas must produce a current 'Fire Alarm – Periodic Inspection and Servicing Certificate' if requested to do so, by the Local Housing / Licensing Authority.

## **1.21 Other Fire Precautions**

A **fire blanket** conforming to the requirements of BS 6575: 1985 must be provided (mounted in a suitable container) in each **kitchen area**.

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 obstruction and combustible materials.

A Fire Precautions log book must be used to record the periodic inspection and maintenance of the alarm system, fire-fighting 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.

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.

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'.

## **1.22 Emergency Lighting**

Emergency lighting sufficient to enable persons to see their way out of the building in the event of failure of the general mains lighting, should be provided in applicable premises.

Further information on the requirement for Emergency Lighting in various categories of HMO, is contained within the LACORs case studies, which are attached or can be accessed via the Sefton Website.

Where systems are provided, they should 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.

## **1.23 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.

## **1.24 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 responsible for the management of the house has sufficient competency to do so and that the proposed management structures and funding arrangements are suitable.

In the case of licensable properties, the licence holder must at all times comply with relevant Management Regulations applicable to HMOs defined under Sections 254 & 257 of the Housing Act 2004 and any Approved Code of Practice made under S233 of the that Act.

Note that the following safety checks and certification (whether required under HMO Management Regulations or other applicable legislation) are likely to be legally required, irrespective of whether the premises concerned are subject to licensing or not, namely;

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 for safety and serviced by a GasSafe Registered Engineer, on an annual basis.

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/>

Electrical Appliance Test Certificates (PAT Certificate) are required annually, where appliances are provided for tenants use.

The following are also required in accordance with relevant British Standards and to confirm compliance with fire safety regulations;

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>*

An emergency lighting 'Periodic Inspection & Test Certificate' in the format as prescribed in Annex M of BS 5266-1: 2016.

**Please Note** that the common parts to bedsit type and Section 257 HMOs (certain blocks of converted flats) are subject to requirements under the '**Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**'. Persons managing or in control of such premises (i.e. 'the responsible person') are required to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) and in the case of applicable Licensed HMO Premises they must retain their written FRA and produce it, if requested to do so

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