



Bristol City Council

Private Rented Sector Fire Safety Standards

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a basic guide to the fire precautions that are required in privately rented properties in the area under the authority of Bristol City Council. It is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all the examples of properties in the city and the appropriate fire safety precautions.

This basic guide has made the following assumptions about the property: -

- the occupants are all able bodied and are not considered to be vulnerable;
- all the bedrooms in the property are accessed via a hallway without the need to pass through a higher risk room (a kitchen, utility room, lounge or dining room);
- the hallway is separated from all rooms by well-fitting doors in good repair;
- all the internal walls and ceilings of the property provide a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance.

If these assumptions do not apply to your property or the property does not fit the any of descriptions included in the guide please contact the Private Rented Team to discuss as additional works maybe required.

Some of the terms and definitions are included in the [glossary](#) at the end of the document. If there are any terms or definitions in this document that you do not understand please contact Private Rented team.

It should also be noted all properties inspected by the Council will be assessed using the [Housing Health and Safety Rating System](#) (HHSRS) which may result in additional works being required.

If your property is required to be licenced then it will be inspected as part of the licencing process and additional works may be required.

Please note that this guide describes the lowest legally enforceable standard of fire precautions for each type of property, if you require additional information on fire safety in privately rented accommodation please follow this [link](#) to LACoRS – Housing Fire Safety guidance and contact the Private Rented Team.

Before proceeding with any works please contact the Private Rented Team on 0117 351 5010 to discuss your plans for the property and arrange a visit if necessary.

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Fire Safety Standards for Properties Occupied by Single Households.

A house or flat occupied by a single household that is not required to be licenced

A single battery smoke detector located in the means of escape on each floor of the property. The smoke detector should be 10 year life battery smoke detectors conforming to BS5839: Part 6:

A house or flat occupied by a single household that is required to be licenced

A single battery smoke detector located in the means of escape on each floor of the property. The smoke detector should be 10 year life battery smoke detectors conforming to BS5839: Part 6:

Fire Safety Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) That Do Not Require a Licence.

A two storey HMO.

Fire Detection

A single battery smoke detector located in the means of escape on each floor of the property. The smoke detectors should be 10 year life battery smoke detectors conforming to BS5839: Part 6:

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape should be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

A three storey HMO.

Please contact the Private Team to discuss the layout and options.

For more guidance and information on fire safety in privately rented accommodation please follow this [link](#) to LACoRS – Housing Fire Safety guidance and contact the Private Rented Team.

A four storey HMO.

Please contact the Private Team to discuss the layout and options.

For more guidance and information on fire safety in privately rented accommodation please follow this [link](#) to LACoRS – Housing Fire Safety guidance and contact the Private Rented Team.

A five plus storey HMO.

Please contact the Private Team to discuss the layout and options.

For more guidance and information on fire safety in privately rented accommodation please follow this [link](#) to LACoRS – Housing Fire Safety guidance and contact the Private Rented Team.

Fire Safety Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that Require a Licence.

A low risk two storey HMO.

Fire Detection

An LD3 - Grade D fire alarm system that conforms to BS5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following areas:-

- The means of escape.

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape should be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
- an electricity meter
- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

A high risk two storey HMO.

Fire Detection

An LD3 - Grade D fire alarm system that conforms to BS5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following areas:-

- Means of escape
- Kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities.

Fire Safety Standards for HMO's that require a Licence.

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

Fire Separation

The means of escape should be protected from all kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities by walls and ceilings that are resistant to the passage of fire for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The means of escape to be separated from the kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape must be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
- an electricity meter
- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

A low risk three storey HMO.

Fire Detection

An LD3 - Grade D fire alarm system that conforms to BS5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following areas:-

- kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities and [utility rooms](#)
- Lounge / dining rooms
- The means of escape

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

Emergency Lighting

The means of escape should be provided with a non maintained three hour duration emergency lighting system complying with BSEN1838 and British Standard 5266: Part 1: 1999, if the escape route has no borrowed light or if the route is long or complex.

Fire Separation

The means of escape should be protected from all kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities, utility rooms and all habitable rooms by walls and ceilings that are resistant to the passage of fire for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The means of escape to be separated from the kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities and any utility rooms by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

Doors to all habitable rooms should be separated from the means of escape by well maintained, close fitting, solid doors.

If there are cupboards that are located in the means of escape, this includes under stair cupboards please contact the Private Housing Team on 0117 351 5010 to discuss the level of fire separation that will be required.

If there is a basement it should be separated from the floors above by a structure (including a fire door) that achieves a minimum of 20 minutes fire separation. *If your property has a basement please contact the private renting team to discuss layout and options available.*

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape must be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
- an electricity meter
- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

Other Items

A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869 should be provided in each shared kitchen.

A high risk three storey HMO.

Fire Detection

An LD2 – Grade A fire alarm system that conforms to BS:5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following rooms:-

- Kitchens, [utility rooms](#) , communal rooms (lounges and dining rooms) and bedrooms.
- For bedsits there should be the addition of stand-alone battery operated smoke detector installed in the room.
- Lounge / dining room
- Means of escape

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

Emergency Lighting

The means of escape should be provided with a non maintained, three hour duration emergency lighting system complying with BS EN 1838 and British Standard 5266: Part 1: 1999.

Fire Separation

The means of escape should be protected from all kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities, utility rooms and all habitable rooms by walls and ceilings that are resistant to the passage of fire for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The means of escape to be separated from the kitchen and any utility rooms by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

Doors to all other habitable rooms should be separated from the means of escape by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

If there are cupboards that are located in the means of escape, this includes under stair cupboards please contact the Private Housing Team on 0117 351 5010 to discuss the level of fire separation that will be required.

If there is a basement it should be separated from the floors above by a structure (including a fire door) that achieves a minimum of 30 minutes fire separation. *If your property has a basement please contact the private renting team to discuss layout and options available.*

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape must be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

Fire Safety Standards for HMO's that require a Licence.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
- an electricity meter
- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

Other Items

A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869 should be provided in each shared kitchen.

A low risk four storey house in multiple occupation.

Fire Detection

An LD3 - Grade D fire alarm system that conforms to BS5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following areas:-

- kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities and utility rooms
- Lounge / dining rooms
- The means of escape

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

Emergency Lighting

The means of escape should be provided with a non maintained three hour duration emergency lighting system complying with BSEN1838 and British Standard 5266: Part 1: 1999, if the escape route has no borrowed light or if the route is long or complex.

Fire Separation

The means of escape should be protected from all kitchens, [utility rooms](#) and all habitable rooms by walls and ceilings that are resistant to the passage of fire for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The means of escape to be separated from the kitchen, utility room and all habitable rooms by self closing 30 minute fire resistant door. *If a smoke detector has not been installed in a habitable room then the fire door to that room should be provided with intumescent seals only and should not be provided with cold smoke seals.*

If there are cupboards that are located in the means of escape, this includes under stair cupboards please contact the Private Housing Team on 0117 351 5010 to discuss the level of fire separation that will be required.

If there is a basement it should be separated from the floors above by a structure (including a fire door) that achieves a minimum of 30 minutes fire separation. *If your property has a basement please contact the private renting team to discuss layout and options available.*

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape must be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
- an electricity meter
- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

Other Items

A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869 should be provided in each shared kitchen.

A high risk four storey HMO.

Fire Detection

An LD2 – Grade A fire alarm system that conforms to BS:5839:Part 6 with the appropriate detectors in the following rooms:-

- Kitchens, [utility rooms](#) , communal rooms (lounges and dining rooms) and bedrooms.
- For bedsits there should be the addition of stand-alone battery operated smoke detector installed in the room.
- Lounge / dining room
- Means of escape

Fire Safety Standards for HMO's that require a Licence.

For bedsit style accommodation, a standalone 10 year life sealed battery operated smoke detector will be required in addition to any interlinked mains power heat detector provided in the room.

Emergency Lighting

The means of escape should be provided with a non maintained, three hour duration emergency lighting system complying with BS EN 1838 and British Standard 5266: Part 1: 1999.

Fire Separation

The means of escape should be protected from all kitchens and rooms containing cooking facilities, utility rooms and all habitable rooms by walls and ceilings that are resistant to the passage of fire for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The means of escape to be separated from the kitchen and any utility rooms by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

Doors to all other habitable rooms should be separated from the means of escape by self closing 30 minute fire resistant doors.

If there are cupboards that are located in the means of escape, this includes under stair cupboards please contact the Private Housing Team on 0117 351 5010 to discuss the level of fire separation that will be required.

If there is a basement it should be separated from the floors above by a structure (including a fire door) that achieves a minimum of 30 minutes fire separation. *If your property has a basement please contact the private renting team to discuss layout and options available.*

The Means of Escape

The walls of the means of escape must be 30 minute fire resistant. Generally this means the walls should be of a solid construction that is in good condition (no holes, opening or breaks). Any glazing in the construction between risk rooms must be 30 minute fire resistant.

If any of the following are located in the means of escape they must be separated from the means of escape by a 30 minute fire resistant barrier: -

- a gas meter
- a gas boiler
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- an electrical installation distribution board
- any white goods (washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers etc.)

The means of escape should be clear of furniture and other items that could cause an obstruction in the event of a fire.

Any lock provided in a door or a window that forms part of the means of escape should be capable of being opened without the use of a key.

Fire Safety Standards for HMO's that require a Licence.

Other Items

A fire blanket conforming to BS EN 1869 should be provided in each shared kitchen.

A five plus storey HMO.

Please contact the Private Rented Team to discuss the layout and options.

Glossary

How many storeys is my property?

For the purpose of determining the appropriate level of fire precautions etc. the following method for determining the number of storeys should be followed: -

When counting the number of storeys all floors from the level of the final exit to the topmost floor (include mezzanines as storeys) should be counted. Where the final exit is located on the ground floor (or raised ground level) any lower ground/basement/cellar should not be counted”.

Therefore, a house with a basement, ground, first and second floors with its entrance/final exit at ground level should be counted as a three- storey house.¹

Does the property require a licence?

A property will be required to be licenced if it is located in a property licencing area as declared by the Authority. If you are not sure if this includes your property please follow this [link](#) to our website where details of the Councils licencing area can be found.

A property will also be required to be licenced if it : -

- has three storeys or more (including cellars, attics, basements, mezzanine floors and loft conversions) and
- is occupied by five or more people from two or more households and
- has tenants who share some amenities like kitchen, bathroom or laundry
- in some cases a maisonette in a house or above commercial premises may need a licence if similarly occupied.

For more information about the licencing of privately rented properties in Bristol please follow this [link](#).

A single household.

Persons are to be regarded as forming a single household if : -

- they are all members of the same family;
- they are persons who are married to each other or live together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex);
- one of them is a relative of the other; or
- one of them is, or is a relative of, one member of a couple and the other is a relative of the other member of the couple.

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

A building or a part of a building is normally defined as a HMO if it meets the following criteria : -

¹ LACORS – HOUSING – FIRE SAFETY Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing Housing - Page 73.

- it consists of one or more units of living accommodation not consisting of a self-contained flat or flats;
- the living accommodation is occupied by persons who do not form a single household;
- the living accommodation is occupied by those persons as their only or main residence or they are to be treated as so occupying it;
- two or more of the households who occupy the living accommodation share one or more basic amenities or the living accommodation is lacking in one or more basic amenities.

For further information on HMO's please contact the Private Rented team on 0117 352 5010.

Bedsit Accommodation

This accommodation normally consists of space / facilities for the occupants to live, sleep, cook and eat independently from the other occupants of the HMO while sharing bathroom and toilet facilities.

HHSRS

The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.

The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having category 1 (serious) or category 2 (other)[For more information please follow this link.](#)

Means of Escape

The route an occupier would need to take from any to exit the property in the event of a fire. This normally includes the landings, stairs and hallways.

Utility Room

A room used containing kitchen appliances and white goods i.e. fridges, freezers, washing machines or tumble dryers.

High or Low Risk Property?

For the purpose of deciding on the appropriate level of fire precautions that should be installed in a property, properties are defined as High or Low Risk.

A Low Risk Property.

A low risk property is described as a property: -

- occupied by no more than 6 persons;
- where all the occupants are able bodied and capable of using the means of escape without assistance;
- where there is a low risk of a fire occurring in the property;

- where a fire in the property will be detected quickly and the alarm raised with sufficient time for the occupants to exit safely;
- with a layout that enables the occupants to escape from the building in the event of a fire without passing through a higher risk room i.e. a kitchen, utility room or communal room;
- and where the existing fire precautions, including the means of escape are well maintained and in a good condition;

A High Risk Property

A high or higher risk property is essentially a property that cannot be described as a low risk property ([see above](#)). If a property is not described as a low risk property additional fire precautions to those required in a “low risk” property will be required.

Properties often described as high or higher risk include bedsits, hostels, properties occupied by vulnerable tenants (alcohol/mobility or drug dependency), high occupancy level (more than 6 occupants), properties with long or complex layouts.

Properties where there is a very low confidence in the owner or manager to maintain the property at an appropriate standard are also classed as high risk properties.