

# Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO'S)

A landlord's guide

Updated June 2023

## **What is a house in multiple occupation (HMO)?**

In simple terms: A house, which is occupied by three or more unrelated persons, who do not form a single household – this definition is supported by Sections 254, 257 and 258 of the Housing Act 2004

In more depth: "HMO" means a House in Multiple Occupation as defined by sections 254 to 259 of the Housing Act 2004 and it applies to a wide range of housing types. A building or a part of a building constitutes an HMO if:

- a building or a part of a building, 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 - Households are defined as comprising families (including foster children, children being cared for) and current domestic employees, single persons, or co-habiting couples (whether or not of the opposite sex).
- 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.
- The building is converted into self-contained flats and more than one third of the flats are tenanted and the conversion does not comply with Building Regulations 1991 or subsequent Building Regulations.
- To be an HMO, the property must be used as the tenants' only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants. Properties let to students undertaking a full-time course of further or higher education and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same will apply to properties which are used as domestic refuges.

## **Mandatory HMO Licensing**

Mandatory HMO Licensing applies where a building has five or more occupants living in multiple occupation. We work actively to identify unlicensed properties which would require a licence and will take appropriate steps when they are identified.

Please note it is an offence to have control of or manage an HMO which is required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 but is not so licensed. A person that commits this offence is liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine or civil penalty of up to £30,000.

We do not currently operate any additional or selective licensing schemes.

## How we deal with HMOs

All HMO's (both licensable and non-licensable) are required to meet certain standards relating to fire precautions, amenities, management standards and general housing conditions using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) as set out in the Housing Act 2004.

We proactively inspect all HMOs under Part I of the Housing Act 2004, as they become known to us. We carry out inspections under Part I of the Housing Act 2004 using the HHSRS. The HHSRS looks at the likelihood of an incident arising from the condition of the property and the likely harmful outcome.

There are 29 hazards we can assess which are grouped as follows:

- dampness, excess cold/heat.
- pollutants e.g., asbestos, carbon monoxide,
- lack of space, security or lighting, or excessive noise.
- poor hygiene, sanitation, water supply
- accidents – falls, electric shocks, fires, burns, scalds, collisions, explosions, structural collapse (all or part of the building falling down)

Where there are hazards, the assessment could show the presence of serious (category one) hazards and other less serious (category two) hazards. A category one hazard places a duty on us to take appropriate action to remove or reduce the risk and a category 2 Hazard gives us discretion to take appropriate action.

Where a hazard presents an imminent risk of serious harm, formal action will be taken, however the first step in most cases will be to informally address the deficiencies by writing to you and advising them you of the deficiency and what is required to address it. If the informal action fails, then there is a range of formal notices available to ensure that the works are completed, and timescales can be imposed.

If it is considered the most appropriate action, we can implement any of the following:

- Serve an improvement notice requiring remedial works (the most likely action).
- Make a prohibition order, which closes the whole or part of a dwelling or restricts the number of permitted occupants.
- Serve a hazard awareness notice.
- Take emergency remedial action.
- Make an emergency prohibition order.

Landlords, owners or managing agents face unlimited fines or a civil penalty of up to £30,000 for not complying with a statutory notice.

If your HMO is in good repair, then it should be free from significant hazards. The HHSRS is not a prescriptive standard; rather it is a method of assessing risk of harm occurring within a property. However, your HMO must meet the standards set out in this document to ensure that hazards are minimized.

## Fire Safety

HMO's must be provided with fire safety measures which include both a protected means of escape and fire safety equipment, in accordance with current legislation. The following information is a guide, based on previous risk assessments carried out on an HMO without any fire precautions. Exact requirements can only be made by arranging an inspection for a risk assessment to be carried out on the property.

	1 or 2 Storey Property	3+ Storey Property
<b>Fire Doors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 Minute rated fire resisting door between the kitchen and the means of escape compliant with BS 476, Part 22.</li> <li>• An intumescent strip and cold smoke seal must be fitted to the head and edges of the door, and it must be hung on a minimum of three non-combustible steel hinges and be self-closing.</li> <li>• Doors to bedrooms and living rooms must be solid and well fitting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 Minute rated fire resisting door to all habitable rooms, compliant with BS 476, Part 22.</li> <li>• An intumescent strip and cold smoke seal must be fitted to the head and edges of the doors, and they must be hung on a minimum of three non-combustible steel hinges and be self-closing.</li> </ul>
<b>Staircase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any under stairs cupboards should be afforded 30 minutes fire separation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any under stairs cupboards should be afforded 30 minutes fire separation.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Fighting Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and install a fire blanket compliant to BS EN 1869: to a prominent place approximately 1.5 metres above ground level in the kitchen.</li> <li>• Fire extinguishers are not required unless your fire risk assessment identifies them as being appropriate. Where fire extinguishers are provided occupants must be trained in their use and they must be maintained appropriately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and install a fire blanket compliant to BS EN 1869 to a prominent place approximately 1.5 metres above ground level in the kitchen.</li> <li>• Fire extinguishers are not required unless your fire risk assessment identifies them as being appropriate. Where fire extinguishers are provided occupants must be trained in their use and they must be maintained appropriately.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Alarms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install mains operated interlinked smoke alarms to the ground floor hallway, the first-floor landing and living room with a heat alarm in the kitchen. The system should comply with the requirements of BS5839, Part 6, Grade D1, LD2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install a mains-wired automatic fire alarm system with integral standby supply incorporating manually operated call points and sounders. The system should comply with the recommendations of BS 5839: Part 6, Type LD1, Grade A. It should incorporate a control panel, at least one break glass call-point at each exit to the building and the first-floor landing, a heat detector in the kitchen and smoke detectors in each</li> </ul>

		<p>bedroom and throughout communal hallways/escape routes (excluding bathrooms, unless they contain a gas appliance). Sufficient sounders must be located to ensure that a warning sound of 75 dB is achieved at each bed head in each bedroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The installer must be competent in installing automatic fire detections in accordance with BS 5839. A certificate of compliance must be provided (installation and commissioning).</li> </ul>
<b>Means of Escape and General Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final exit doors should be fitted with easy opening devices, i.e., they should not need a key to be opened from the inside.</li> <li>The means of escape must be always kept clear.</li> <li>Where bedroom doors are fitted with a lock, they should be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final exit doors should be fitted with easy opening devices, i.e., they should not need a key to be opened from the inside.</li> <li>The means of escape should be always kept clear.</li> <li>Where bedroom doors are fitted with a lock, they should be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key.</li> <li>Provision of suitable and sufficient escape lighting throughout the common parts of the building in accordance with the appropriate recommendation of BS 5266-1.</li> <li>Provision of a fully protected means of escape from all bedrooms to the final exit door.</li> </ul>

### **Maintenance of fire safety measures**

Fire alarm and emergency lighting systems installed in HMOs must be properly checked and maintained by a competent approved electrician, not less than every 12 months (6 monthly for Grade A systems). Inspection certificates must be retained and made available on request.

All exit routes within a dwelling such as hallways, landings, and staircases, so far as they are under the control of the landlord and as far as reasonably practicable, must be maintained safe, unobstructed, and free of fixtures and fittings to enable evacuation of the dwelling in the event of fire.

Tenants should be informed of their responsibilities not to tamper with fire alarm systems and to promptly report any observed defects.

A logbook should be used for recording all checks and servicing of fire safety measures in the property.

## **Kitchen facilities**

Kitchens must be suitably located in relation to the living accommodation and of such a layout and size and equipped with such facilities to adequately enable those sharing the facilities to store, prepare and cook food.

- A one four ring cooker with a grill and oven and a sink with drainer per five occupants is normally sufficient. A dishwasher may be used to replace the second sink where required.
- There must be sufficient worktop space provided in relation to the number of occupants.
- Each occupant must have a minimum of one cupboard for storage of dry food stuffs and one shelf or drawer in both a fridge and a freezer. In addition, there should be adequate storage space for cooking utensils, crockery, and cutlery.
- Refuse disposal facilities must be provided.
- There must be enough electrical sockets in relation to the number of people sharing those facilities.

## **Bathroom facilities**

All HMO's must have adequate bathroom facilities (WC, wash hand basin with hot and cold running water, bath, or shower with hot and cold running water) in the ratio of one set of bathroom facilities for every five people.

As well as meeting the minimum ratio standard in relation to bathroom facilities, the facilities must include:

- A wash-hand basin with a continuous supply of hot and cold water and WC and a tiled splash back to each wash hand basin.
- Where a house requires two or more WCs, at least one should be separate to any bathing facilities (where practicable).
- Shared bathrooms and shower rooms should be readily accessible (i.e., not located off a bedroom for example).
- Baths should have a suitably sized splash back. The floor surface should be slip resistant and easily cleaned. The walls and ceiling surfaces should be suitably decorated and readily cleansable.
- Showers should have a water-resistant shower curtain or door to the cubicle.

## **Bedroom sizes**

All HMO bedrooms must meet the following size requirements:

<b>Minimum floor area of bedroom</b>	<b>Maximum number of persons</b>
6.51m <sup>2</sup> (70sq.ft)	1 person
10.22m <sup>2</sup> (110sq.ft)	2 persons
Any area of the room in which the ceiling height is less than 1.5m cannot be counted towards the minimum room size in licensable HMOs.	

## **Lighting and Ventilation**

HMO's must be provided with adequate natural and artificial lighting and ventilation. There must be provision of sufficient natural lighting in habitable rooms to enable the normal activities of a household to be carried out, safely and conveniently, without the use of artificial light in normal daytime conditions.

There must be adequate provision of artificial lighting in all habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, WC, and circulation spaces to enable the normal activities of a household to be carried out safely and conveniently and to permit the normal passage of an occupant without the risk of an accident.

## **Energy Efficiency**

HMO's must be provided with a reasonable level of energy efficiency measures (for example - a hot water tank jacket and/or pipe lagging and/or loft insulation). An energy performance certificate is required. For further information please see: [www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property](http://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property)

## **Heating**

All habitable rooms must be provided with efficient and safe heating appliances such as central heating radiators or fixed gas or electrical heating appliances which are capable of adequately heating the property and are fully controllable by the occupants with both time and temperature controls.

## **Internal Layout**

The internal layout must not be prejudicial to the health, safety for well-being of the tenants e.g., shared WC's and bathrooms should be entered from a common passage or hallway.

Rooms must have an adequate floor to ceiling height, and 2.1 meters (7 feet) is normally satisfactory. Any area of the room in which the ceiling height is less than 1.5m cannot be counted towards the minimum room size for licensable HMOs.

## **Home Security Measures**

HMO's must be capable of being secured against unauthorized entry, which will both delay and deter intruders and will make the occupants feel safer. The use of approved deadlocks and burglar alarms can reduce the risk of an occurrence considerably.

However, there is a balance to be made between security features and any associated increased risk from other hazards, for example, security measures can hamper or obstruct means of escape in case of fire and may result in windows not being readily openable interfering with ventilation. In multi-occupied buildings there have been reductions in crime and fear of crime where entry-phone controls have been introduced.

## Gas safety

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.

In general, a landlord's gas safety duties apply to appliances (i.e., gas boiler, fire, cooker water heater) and flues in residential properties occupied for residential purposes under either a licence, a tenancy agreement for a set term, or a lease. Essentially any lease of less than seven years is covered.

Remember, safety checks are not only part of your legal requirements, but they also ensure that appliances are working correctly and guard against the dangers of carbon monoxide.

A carbon monoxide alarm is a legal requirement in any room containing a solid fuel appliance, such as a wood burning stove, and from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022, any room containing a fixed combustion appliance such as a gas or oil-fired boiler.

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.

A copy of the current Landlord's Gas Safety Record, should be issued to each existing tenant within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in.

These regulations are principally designed to prevent death or injury to tenants from carbon monoxide poisoning. Any breach of these regulations may attract substantial fines on conviction. The regulations are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Any breach of the regulations reported to us will be referred to the HSE for investigation.



## Electrical safety

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations require electrical installations to be maintained in repair and in good order and regular inspection must be carried out.

All electrical works must be undertaken by a competent contractor who is registered with a recognised professional body.

The regulations require that an electrical installation safety check is undertaken every five years, and you must obtain an electrical installation condition report (EICR) detailing any works required and the date of the inspection.

A copy of the report must be supplied to the tenants within 28 days of the inspection and test, to a new tenant before they occupy the premises and to any prospective tenant with 28 days of them requesting it.

If we request a copy of the report, you must send it to us with seven days. Where the report shows that remedial or further investigative work is necessary, this must be completed within 28 days, or any shorter period as specified in the report. Written confirmation of completion of remedial works from the electrician must be sent to the tenants and the local authority with 28 days of completion of the works.

There is a duty on all landlords and letting agents to ensure that any electrical equipment that is supplied as part of a letting is maintained in a safe condition. Such equipment may include:

- Washing machines
- Kettles, toasters and other small kitchen appliances
- Fridges and freezers
- Ovens
- Microwaves
- Televisions
- Vacuum cleaners

To help demonstrate that you have taken all reasonable steps to ensure compliance with these regulations, all such appliances should have a safety check carried out annually or at a change of tenancy by a competent person. You should obtain a portable appliance test (PAT) certificate from the person carrying out the checks.

A record of these checks should be made in your logbook, and it is good practice for a label to be attached to the appliance. Should the checks reveal that there is a significant safety hazard the appliance should be removed or repaired immediately.

If you are in any doubt about the wiring or the safety of any appliances, you should consult a qualified electrician.

There must be sufficient electrical sockets in all rooms to avoid the use of multi adaptors and overloading of circuits which increases the risk of a fire starting. Two double sockets should be provided as a minimum in bedrooms.

## Furniture and Furnishings

All furniture whether new or second hand, provided in rented accommodation must comply with the Furniture and Fire Safety Regulations. The regulations apply to landlords, estate agents and letting agents.

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 control the safety of upholstered furniture supplied in rented accommodation. These regulations were introduced to reduce the number of people killed and injured by toxic fumes given off when some upholstery materials burn. This includes any furniture which includes upholstery, (unless it was made before 1950) for example three-piece suites and armchairs, beds, headboards and mattresses, sofa-beds, futons, loose and stretch covers for furniture, scatter cushions and seat pads.

Upholstered furniture generally must have covers which resist ignition from a match flame test, upholstery which resists ignition from a smouldering cigarette test, filling materials which pass an appropriate ignitability test and permanent labelling to show compliance. Labelling is one of the best ways of showing compliance. Most furniture should have a permanent label, an example is given below:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CARELESSNESS CAUSES FIRE</b> Batch / ID No: AX1234 To comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations:</p> <p>This article does (or does not) include a Schedule 3 interliner. All foams, fillings and composites have been tested to ensure compliance with the relevant ignitability test. All covers, and fillings have been tested to ensure they are cigarette resistant. All covers have been tested to ensure they are match resistant. Further details are available from your retailer</p>
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Mattresses and bed bases are not required to have this type of label, but to show that they comply with the ignitability tests they may have a label stating compliance with BS7177. This label has a blue border with white lettering and black cigarette and flame symbols.

Further information is available from Surrey County Council Trading Standards [www.surreycc.gov.uk/business/trading-standards](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/business/trading-standards)

## Deposits

All deposits must be held and administered through one of the government backed schemes. If you fail to protect your tenants deposit, you could be liable for repayment of three times the deposit if your tenants take a successful case against you. For further information please see: [www.gov.uk/deposit-protection-schemes-and-landlords](http://www.gov.uk/deposit-protection-schemes-and-landlords)

## Gardens

It is a requirement of the HMO management regulations that all gardens are maintained. Front gardens and front driveways/forecourts must be kept tidy. Trees and hedges which obstruct the footpath or obscure the light from streetlights must be cut back and kept to a manageable level. These are a major source of complaints and dissatisfaction with neighbours and residents.

Where the duty to deal with this, is passed onto tenants in the tenancy agreement, you must regularly check that this is being done. Where this is not being done, you must make every attempt to seek the tenants' compliance by enforcing the condition of the tenancy. It may be that you can arrange with tenants to use a gardening contractor and recharge this to the tenants. Alternatively, it may be preferable to take back responsibility for maintaining some or all the gardens and recover reasonable costs through the rent.

The duty to maintain gardens under the management regulations remains with you regardless of what the tenancy agreement says. If we find that gardens are not kept in a safe and tidy condition, we will expect you to address the problem. If you do not address the problem, then we can prosecute you and you could be fined an unlimited amount by the Courts or receive a civil penalty of up to £30,000.

## Waste and refuse

It is a requirement of the HMO management regulations that the number of bins provided is adequate for the size of the household. The refuse allowance for HMOs as specified by the Council's recycling team is as follows:

Permitted Occupants*	Total maximum refuse bins allowed	Additional refuse bins allowed
1 to 4	1 x 180L	None
5 to 8	2 x 180L (360L)	1 extra 180L bin
9 to 13	3 x 180L (540L)	2 extra 180L bins
14 to 18	4 x 180L (720L)	3 extra 180L bins
19 to 20	5 x 180L (900L)	4 extra 180L bins
*as per HMO register		

Residents are expected to separate their food waste and there is also a minimum recycling requirement, as follows:

Occupants	Minimum recycling capacity
1 to 4	240L
5 to 8	480L
9 to 13	720L
14 to 18	960L
19 to 20	1200L

To order additional bins please contact our customer services department on 01932 838383. You will need to provide proof of how many tenants you have in the property. Payment is required for any extra bins provided.

Blue-lidded bins are provided for recyclable materials and a collection bin and kitchen caddy are provided for food waste. Additional blue-lidded bins can be obtained, providing there is sufficient space at the property to store them.

The council is unable to take excess waste not contained inside the waste bin. If there is excess waste at your property, it will need to be taken to Lyne Lane Community Recycling Centre (tip). [Lyne \(Chertsey\) Community Recycling Centre - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](http://www.lynelane.org.uk)

The Council can potentially issue Fixed Penalty Notices for excess waste if it remains on a property for a significant amount of time so, please remove excess waste quickly before it builds up.

Further information on recycling and waste in Runnymede can be found at: [www.runnymede.gov.uk/bins](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk/bins) or contact customer services on 01932 838383 or email [recycling@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:recycling@runnymede.gov.uk)

## **The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006**

These regulations apply to all HMOs, and they impose duties on managers (with some requirements on occupiers) to ensure that good conditions are maintained. You must ensure that you manage your HMO in accordance with the regulations.

### *Duty of manager to provide information to tenants*

- The manager must ensure that his name, address, and any telephone contact number are made available to each household in the HMO and that these details are clearly displayed in a prominent position in the HMO.

### *Duty of manager to take safety measures*

The manager must:

- Ensure that all means of escape from fire in the HMO are kept free from obstruction and maintained in good order and repair.
- Ensure that any firefighting equipment and fire alarms are maintained in good working order.
- Ensure that where there are 5 or more occupants, that all notices indicating the location of means of escape from fire are displayed in positions within the HMO that enable them to be clearly visible to the occupiers.
- Take all measures as are reasonably required to protect the occupiers of the HMO from injury having regard to the design, structural conditions, and number of occupiers.

- Take measures in relation to any roof or balcony that is unsafe, to either ensure that it is made safe or prevent access to it for so long as it remains unsafe, and in relation to any windowsill which is at or near floor level, ensure that bars or other safeguards are provided to protect the occupiers from accidents.

*Duty of manager to maintain water supply and drainage*

- The manager must ensure that the water supply and drainage system serving the HMO is maintained in good, clean, and working condition and in particular he must ensure that:
  - any tank, cistern or similar receptacle used for the storage of water for drinking or other domestic purposes is kept in a good, clean, and working condition, with a cover kept over it to keep the water in a clean and proper condition; and,
  - any water fitting which is liable to damage by frost is protected from frost damage.
- The manager must not unreasonably cause or permit the water or drainage supply that is used by any occupier at the HMO to be interrupted.

*Duty of manager to supply and maintain gas and electricity*

The manager must:

- Provide within seven days of request, the latest gas appliance test certificate for the HMO to the local authority.
- Not unreasonably cause the gas or electricity supply that is used by any occupier within the HMO to be interrupted.

*Duty of manager to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings, and appliances*

- Managers must ensure that all common parts of the HMO are maintained in good repair, in a safe and working condition, in good and clean decorative order where appropriate, and kept reasonably free from obstruction. This includes:
  - water, gas and electricity supplies
  - drainage facilities
  - appliances such as cookers, heaters, washing machines
  - shared lighting and heating facilities, including hot water supplies
  - shared toilets, baths, sinks and basins
  - shared cooking, food storage and other installations

- staircases, handrails, halls, passages, and landings, including floor coverings
- windows and other means of ventilation
- outbuildings, paths, boundary walls, fences, railings, yards, and garden areas
- The manager must ensure that:
  - the common parts are fitted with adequate light fittings that are available for use at all times by every occupier of the HMO; and
  - if any part of the HMO is not in use, including any passage and staircase directly giving access to it, is kept reasonably clean and free from refuse and litter.

*Duty of manager to maintain living accommodation*

- The manager must ensure that each unit of living accommodation within the HMO and any furniture supplied with it are in clean condition at the beginning of a person's occupation of it.
- The manager must ensure, in relation to each part of the HMO that is used as living accommodation, that:
  - the internal structure is maintained in good repair.
  - any fixtures, fittings or appliances within the part are maintained in good repair and in clean working order; and
  - every window and other means of ventilation are kept in good repair.

*Duty to provide waste disposal facilities*

- Managers must provide enough bins for refuse disposal, ensure that rubbish does not accumulate, and make arrangements for the disposal of refuse and litter having regard to any service provided by the Council.

*Duties of occupiers of HMOs*

Tenants must:

- conduct themselves in a way that will not hinder or frustrate the manager in the performance of his duties.
- take reasonable care to avoid damage and disrepair.
- cooperate in a reasonable way with the manager and provide information to allow him/her to carry out their duties.

- allow the manager to access their living accommodation, at all reasonable times, for any purpose connected with the carrying out of duties imposed on him by these Regulations.
- provide the manager, at his request, with any such information as he may reasonably require for the purpose of carrying out any such duty.
- comply with any reasonable arrangements or instructions made by the manager regarding means of escape from fire and the storage or disposal of refuse.

**A person who fails to comply with these Regulations commits an offence under section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004, punishable on summary conviction with an unlimited fine or civil penalty of up to £30,000 for each breach of regulation.**

### **Guidance on best practice**

The following recommendations represent best practice but are not legal requirements. We would encourage you to follow this guidance to ensure that your HMO is well managed.

- You should issue written tenancy agreements that provide you tenants detailed information on landlord and tenant responsibilities including written information to the tenants that sets out the rent and what the rent covers, dates for payment and who is responsible for payment of all utilities (this is a licence condition in the case of licensable HMOs).
- You should complete an accurate written inventory that is agreed and signed by you and your tenants detailing the condition and contents of each room in the property. You should ensure that provision is made for a check-in and check-out inventory and a schedule of condition.
- You should give your tenants a copy of our guidance for living in HMOs.
- You should issue written information to your tenants on the following:
  - the name, address, and telephone number of the person responsible for managing the property and the name of the person responsible for maintenance of the property (if different).
  - the fire alarm system and procedure to follow in the event of a fire, ensuring that your tenants know what their actions should be in the event of a fire.
  - refuse collection days and the correct storage and disposal of household waste.

- recycling collection days, recyclables collected, and provide the customer services number in the event of any queries.
  - the characteristics of the neighbourhood and advice on any on-going problems that are of relevance.
  - the operation of all major appliances in the property such as central heating systems and cookers.
  - The available arrangements for car-parking including a recommended total number of cars that can be reasonably kept at the accommodation.
- You should give a minimum of 24 hours' notice to your tenants of any intended inspection or viewing of the property (except in a genuine emergency when no notice need be given).
  - You should always manage the tenancy and property in a professional, courteous, and diligent matter, including:
    - Replying to all requests from tenants regarding disrepair promptly and keep a record of all such requests.
    - Regularly monitor the state of the property including the state of hygiene and cleanliness and make suitable arrangements to address any deficiencies.
    - Maintain a basic up to date knowledge of landlord and tenancy legislation.
    - Be an up-to-date member of a professional landlord association and comply with any professional codes of membership. Accommodation agencies managing property should be up to date members of a professional association of accommodation and letting agents and should comply with any professional codes of membership.
    - Ensure that receipts for all rent and other payments are issued to tenants containing details of the payment and the date.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

As a landlord, you should take all reasonable and practicable steps for preventing and dealing effectively with anti-social behaviour by people occupying or visiting the premises and for the use of the premises for illegal purposes.

- Ensure that a written statement of the terms and conditions of the tenancy/licence agreement is provided to all occupiers at the start of their



occupation. The tenancy agreement/licence should include a clause about not causing nuisance and anti-social behaviour and include provisions for bringing the tenancy/licence to an end for anti-social behaviour, through the proper legal process.

- Ensure that all occupants are aware of the existence of this clause by advising them upon taking up residence.
- Respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour that concern occupiers of the premises or their visitors. Where anti-social behaviour is discovered, the landlord must inform the tenant of the matter within 14 days and of the consequences of its continuation. Examples of action which can be taken by the landlord include issuing warnings, both verbal and in writing and in the event that anti-social behaviour persists, the landlord/manager must be prepared to take appropriate legal action to regain vacant possession as soon as possible.

Note: Anti-Social Behaviour, includes noise nuisance including the playing of loud music at any time of the day but particularly between 11.00pm and 8.00am. Anti-social behaviour also includes, but is not limited to, violence and criminal behaviour, domestic abuse, the supply and use of controlled drugs and intimidation or racial harassment. (A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person).