

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION



LANDLORD'S HANDBOOK



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Introduction

Many privately rented houses are let to people from several different families, either as flats, bedsits or as shared houses. Houses like this are known as houses in multiple occupation, or HMOs.

This handbook is a guide to the legal requirements of landlords of HMOs to ensure that their property meets an acceptable standard. In addition, it has information about which HMOs must be licensed and gives details of the student housing accreditation scheme. It also contains some useful contact information.

What is a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)?

Under the Housing Act 2004, a house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a building, or part of a building, occupied by persons who do not form a single household (see below for the definition of household). Examples of HMOs include:

- a house converted into three or more bedsits
- a house converted into self-contained flats where less than two thirds of the flats are owner occupied and the flats were not converted in accordance with the 1991 Building Regulations
- a house occupied by three friends who rent from a private landlord
- a house let to a group of three students
- a flat with three or more bedsits (even if the flats were converted in accordance with the 1991 Building Regulations and more than two thirds of the flats in the building are owner occupied), (tenanted)
- a house occupied by a married couple and a friend.

If you are not sure whether your property is classed as an HMO, or if you want more information, contact us on 01473 433003 or email environmental.health@ipswich.gov.uk

What is a household?

A household is a group of people who live together. They must be connected by marriage, civil partnership, be a recognised couple (same sex or opposite sex), be related - a child, parent, sister, brother, nephew, niece or in-law for instance - or have another

recognised connection such as fostering or adoption.

People that live in the same place, but are not connected in this way, are not counted as a single household. So, for example, a group of five students or adult friends count as five households, even if they live at the same address and share facilities.

Licensing of HMOs

Mandatory HMO licensing applies across England has changed. As from 1 October 2018, all HMOs occupied by five or more persons forming more than one household will need to have applied for an HMO licence.

If you own or manage an HMO, answer these questions to find out if you need a licence:

1. Is the property occupied by five or more people?
2. Do these people live in two or more households?
3. Do tenants share any amenities such as the bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities?

If you have answered 'yes' to all these questions you will need to apply for a licence as soon as possible; operating a licensable HMO without a licence could result in heavy penalties which can result in a unlimited fine upon conviction in the Magistrates' Court. A tenant living in a property that should have been licensed, but was not, can apply to the Residential Property Tribunal to claim back any rent they have paid during the unlicensed period (up to a limit of 12 months). The Council can also reclaim any housing benefit that has been paid during the time the property was operating without a licence.

The Council charges a fee in order to cover the administration costs of the licence procedure.

For further information and to obtain a licence application form please contact Private Sector Housing on 01473 433003 or email environmental.health@ipswich.gov.uk

UoS Student (University of Suffolk) Accreditation Scheme

If you are the landlord of a student property, you may consider renting your property through the UoS (University of Suffolk) Accreditation Scheme.

The UoS (University of Suffolk) Accreditation Scheme has been developed by Ipswich Borough Council with our partners; University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Fire and Rescue and Suffolk Constabulary.

This is a voluntary scheme that aims to promote good management practice and high standards amongst student landlords. If you want to join the scheme you must sign up to a code of conduct and pay a fee to register. Your property must meet all necessary health and safety requirements, and the university or the Council will carry out spot checks to ensure that accredited houses are up to standard. Once accredited, landlords can advertise on the universities accommodation list.

For further information please contact the UoS (University of Suffolk) Accommodation Office on 01473 338833 or email accommodation@uos.ac.uk.

Council's Rights of Entry

The Council's authorised officers are empowered by the Housing Act 2004 to enter premises at any reasonable time, on giving 24 hours written notice of their intentions to the occupier and owner, if the owner is known.

For certain specific reasons, officers may enter at any reasonable time without giving 24 hours written notice.

Legal powers of entry are only used where difficulty is anticipated and in most cases officers will enter premises where invited by occupier or tenant.

The reasons for entry may include inspections of the property to check compliance with housing legislation, to assist tenants in securing necessary repairs or improvements by the landlord, to advise the landlord on the standards required and enforcement of fire safety and management standards.

Guidance on Fire Precautions and Fire Safety

People who live in HMOs are more likely to die in a fire than those who live in a house occupied by a family. Therefore, fire safety is an important consideration in HMOs. The following standards are the minimum to be achieved. **Please note, these standards**

should be used as a guide only; the actual provisions required will be dependent on a risk assessment undertaken by a Council officer.

Where reference is made to a specific standard e.g. a British Standard (BS), then it is the latest version of that standard that should be followed.

The guidance specifications below refer to *shared houses* and *bedsit* type properties:

A **shared house** is one where all tenants share the same tenancy agreement and have exclusive access to all areas of the property, for example, a group of friends who know each other and arrived in the property at the same time.

A **bedsit** type property is one where the tenants rent a bedroom and have shared use of a kitchen, bathroom and lounge. The tenants will not always know each other and will have locks on their bedroom doors.

Shared house scenario - no more than 2 storeys

- sound general construction to partition walls and ceilings
- 30 minutes fire separation between basement/cellar and ground floor
- mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in the common area (hallways, lounge/dining room) and basement/cellar and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6 Grade D, LD3)
- escape windows where assessed as being required (to current building regulation standard), see Approved Document B, Volume 1 - Dwelling Houses)
- close fitting doors
- provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen



Shared house scenario - 3 or 4 storeys

- mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in the common area (hallways, lounge/dining room) and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6 Grade D, LD3)
- 30 minute fire resisting doors to all habitable rooms and the kitchen
- 30 minute fire resisting structure to walls and ceilings separating habitable rooms from other habitable rooms, kitchens and the common escape route
- 30 minutes fire separation between basement/cellar and ground floor
- provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen



Bedsit scenario - no more than 2 storeys

- mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in common parts, basement/cellar and in all habitable rooms and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6 Grade D, LD2)
- 30 minute fire resisting structure to walls and ceilings separating habitable rooms from other habitable rooms, kitchens and the common escape route
- fire doors with 30 minute fire and smoke resistance, complete with intumescent heat strips and cold smoke seals (FD30S) and an overhead self-closing device (BS ENG 1154)
- emergency lighting to common parts (BS5266-1) where the escape route is long or complex
- fire escape signage (BS 5499) where escape route is long or complex
- provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- a 9 litre water extinguisher to each floor level

Bedsit scenario - 3 or 4 storeys

- mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in common parts, basement/ cellar and in all habitable rooms and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6 Grade A, LD2)
- 30 minute fire resisting structure to walls and ceilings separating habitable rooms from other habitable rooms, kitchens and the common escape route
- fire doors with 30 minute fire resistance, complete with intumescent smoke seals (FD30S) and an overhead self-closing device (BS EN 1154)
- emergency lighting to common parts (BS5266-1)
- fire escape signage (BS 5499) where escape route is long or complex
- provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen and a 9 litre water extinguisher to each floor level



Purpose-built flats and buildings converted into flats

Purpose-built flats and buildings converted into flats that can demonstrate compliance with the 1991 Building Regulations, or Building Regulations thereafter, will usually be considered sufficient and may not require additional fire safety measures as described above.

Where any doubt exists, this must be discussed with the local authority on a case-by-case basis who will advise on the measures that may need to be taken.

Suppression Systems

This authority is committed to protecting the community of Suffolk by ensuring suitable and sufficient fire safety measures are in place. We proactively endorse the installation of suitable suppression systems e.g. Sprinklers and Water Mist, and firmly believe that they save lives and improve safety. Where installed they reduce the environmental, social and economic impact of fires in domestic, and other premises.

As such, this authority recognises there may be relaxations in some fire safety measures where a suitable suppression system is installed, this should be discussed with the local authority on a case-by-case basis.

Sprinkler systems should be installed to BS 9251 and Water Mist systems installed to BS 8458.

Space standards

All licensable HMO's have to comply to the National minimum room size. The following space standards will be required in HMOs. We recommend that you consider these standards when buying houses to let or when improving existing HMOs.

If a room is smaller than the minimum acceptable size, a legal notice can be served on the landlord, either prohibiting the use of the room or limiting the number of people who may occupy it.

Bedrooms

The following space standards will be required in all HMOs:

Minimum bedroom size with separate living room:

1 Person	6.51m²
2 Persons	10.22m²

Minimum bedroom size study/living room where there is no separate living room:

1 person	10m²
2 persons	15m²

Unless related, persons should not be required to share bedrooms. It is accepted, however, that some groups may wish to share rooms.

Living room

Minimum living space

1-5 persons	11m² or 13m combined kitchen/living room
6-10 persons	14m² or 16m² combined kitchen/living room

Guidance on amenities

The kitchen and bathroom facilities that you are expected to provide depend on the type of HMO and the number of occupants sharing the accommodation. The following table indicates the level of amenities that must be provided regardless of the level of risk.

Schedule of amenity provisions in relation to number of persons	
1 - 5 Persons	<p>At least 1 kitchen, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance an additional kitchen should be provided, or, a dining room provided on the same floor as the kitchen.</p> <p>At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC. Where there are 5 persons the bathroom and WC must be separate, although the bathroom may also contain a WC</p>
6 - 10 Persons	<p>At least 2 kitchens, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen or 1 large kitchen with dining room, with 2 sets of facilities - dependant upon the actual number of tenants.</p> <p>2 bathrooms AND 2 separate WCs with WHBs (but one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms)</p>
11 + Persons	<p>At least 2 kitchens, not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. Where there is more than 1 floor distance a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen or 1 large kitchen with dining room, with sets of facilities dependant upon the actual number of tenants.</p> <p>3 bathrooms AND 3 separate WCs with WHBs (but two of the WCs can be contained within the bathrooms)</p>

Additional guidance on kitchen requirements

Minimum floor area of kitchen: 1-5 persons 7m² 6-10 persons 10m²

Kitchens shall be provided no more than one floor away from any occupied rooms, unless a dining area is available.

Each kitchen for up to 5 persons shall be provided with the following:

- 1 cooker with 4 rings, oven and grill
- 1 sink with hot water, cold drinking water, base unit and drainer
- 1 single wall or floor cupboard per person for food storage (min size 300 x 1000 x 900mm) or
1 double wall or floor cupboard for food storage per 2 persons (min size 300 x 1000 x 900mm)
- 1000mm x 600mm worktop for food preparation per 3 persons or
2000mm x 600mm worktop for food preparation per 5 persons
- 1 standard fridge per 3 persons (with separate shelf for each person) or
1 large fridge per 5 persons (with separate shelf for each person)
- 1 dedicated electrical socket per fixed appliance (such as a fridge)
- 2 undedicated electrical sockets above an area of worktop
- Separate cooker panel for electric cookers.

The kitchen shall be of sufficient area for the safe provision of all necessary facilities. Cookers shall not be placed adjacent to doorways and there shall be sufficient floor space for the safe retrieval of items from the oven and for the safe circulation of occupants.

Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation

We aim to ensure that all HMOs in the district are managed in a proper manner so that tenants can live in safe conditions. The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 places legal duties on both managers and tenants to ensure that the property is maintained to a good standard.

This demands a more active approach from landlords and letting agents.



The Management Regulations are summarised below:

Duties of manager

- to display his or her name, address and phone number prominently in the house.
- to keep the premises generally safe, but in particular:
 - keep the means of escape from fire in good order and free from obstruction
 - make any unsafe roofs or balconies safe or inaccessible
 - fit bars or alternatives to low windows to prevent accidents
- to keep water supply and drainage in proper working order and fit covers to all water tanks
- to supply to the Council the latest Gas Safety Certificate and the latest Electrical Safety Certificate within seven days of being asked to do so (gas appliances must be tested annually and electrical testing must be carried out every five years)
- to maintain in good repair, clean condition and proper working order all stairs, banisters, carpets, lights and any other parts that are used in common by two or more households
- to maintain in good repair, clean condition and good order any outbuildings, yards, forecourts, boundary walls, fences and railings
- to keep the garden safe and in a tidy condition
- to make sure every letting room and any furniture supplied with it is clean at the beginning of every tenancy
- to make sure all fixtures, fittings or appliances are in good repair and in proper working order and maintain them in this condition
- to make proper arrangements for the storage of refuse and litter pending their disposal
- to make appropriate additional refuse disposal arrangements for occasions when the local authority's collection service is insufficient (for example at the end of term or when furniture has been replaced)

The Council may request certificates which should be provided within seven days of the request.

Duties of occupiers

- to take reasonable care to avoid causing damage and disrepair
- to co-operate in a reasonable way with the manager and provide information to allow the manager to carry out his/her duties.
- to comply with any reasonable arrangement made by the manager regarding means of escape from fire, refuse storage and disposal.
- to allow the manager access to their rooms at all reasonable times to carry out their duties.

Failure to comply **with the Management Regulations** is an offence for which you may be prosecuted. If taken to Court and found guilty, you could be fined up to an unlimited amount for each offence.

We all know that a well-managed HMO gives fewer problems for the owner, manager, occupiers, neighbours and the Council.

One of the biggest complaints from people living close to HMOs is the problems caused by tenants not putting their household waste out on the right day/in the right place or in the right bag.

For further information on Waste and Recycling please contact Ipswich Borough Council on 01473 432090.

Fire alarm systems

If you have a fire alarm and detection system this must be maintained in working order.

You should keep a log book to record the regular inspections of the system. Table 1 at the back of this handbook is offered as a model 'log book' for recording purposes.

It is strongly recommended that you take out a maintenance contract with a suitably qualified person to undertake maintenance of the system on your behalf.

You should ensure that regular tests on the automatic fire detection system are undertaken. In the case of a system with control panel, detectors, sounders and call points etc. the following is required:

- **Weekly** a manual call point should be operated during normal working hours. It should be confirmed that the control equipment is capable of processing a fire alarm signal and providing an output to fire alarm sounders. A different call point should be tested each week.
- **Six monthly and annual attention must be carried out by a competent person with specialist knowledge of fire detection and alarm systems.**

The frequency of the testing will largely depend on the alarm system and the type of the property. A judgment therefore needs to be made in each case as to what frequency of visit is necessary.

The landlord of a large four storey 15 bed hostel for vulnerable people for example, might be expected to stick to the letter of the code. On the other hand it may well be acceptable for the landlord of a 5 person, three storey shared house HMO occupied by young professional people to visit the house on a less frequent basis to carry out the required checks.

The important thing is to be proactive rather than reactive in the maintenance of the alarm system.

Emergency Lighting System

If your property is fitted with an emergency lighting system you have a responsibility to ensure it is maintained in working order.

You should keep a log book to record the regular inspections of the system. Table 2 at the back of this handbook is offered as a model 'log book' for recording purposes.

It is strongly recommended that you take out a maintenance contract with a suitably qualified person to undertake maintenance of the system on your behalf.

You are required to ensure the following tests are undertaken:

- **Monthly** - each emergency light must be activated from its battery by simulating a failure in the normal supply and an inspection made of each luminaire (emergency light) to ensure that it is functioning properly
- **Six monthly** - each emergency light must be activated as before, but left on for a prolonged period. In the case of lights with batteries rated at three hours the light must be left on for one hour, and in the case of lights with batteries rated at one hour, these must be left on for fifteen minutes. An inspection must be made of each luminaire to ensure that they are functioning correctly.
- **Three yearly** - as for the six monthly test, but the batteries must be tested to their full duration - i.e. luminaires with batteries rated at three hours should remain lit for that period.

Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire Extinguishers

You should ensure that any fire extinguishers within the premises are serviced by a competent engineer **at least annually** to ensure that the extinguishers are safe and will always function in an emergency. Competent engineers are often registered by the British Approvals for Fire Equipment (B.A.F.E.) and are members of the Fire Industry Association (F.I.A).

You should also conduct an 'in house' examination of your fire extinguishers at least monthly to check for any signs of tampering, missing or used extinguishers. Document any issues found and ensure suitable remedial action is taken (e.g. ensure tamper tags are replaced and the extinguisher is refilled). Table 3 at the back of this handbook is offered as a model 'log book' for recording purposes.

It is advisable that you follow the simple guidelines below when siting fire fighting equipment, as it is essential that the appliances provided are positioned in the correct locations i.e.:





- hung on brackets with handle approximately 1m from the floor
- away from heaters
- not obstructing escape routes
- not in recesses or out of direct sight.


Fire blankets

Ensure that only fire blankets which conform to the current British Standard are provided, and are wall mounted in the kitchen so that the base of the container is about 1.5m above floor level.

Types of Extinguishers/Fire Blankets

The following table is a useful guide as to the different types of fire extinguisher and how to use them. It also discusses fire blankets.

Type of Extinguisher	Best used for	How to use
<p>RED - WATER</p> 	<p>Wood, cloth, paper, plastics etc. Fires involving solids.</p>	<p>Point the jet at the base of the flame and keep it moving across the area of the fire. Seek out any hotspots after the fire is out</p> <p>DANGER: Do not use on live electrical appliances or on burning fat or oil such as chip pan fires.</p>
<p>BLUE - DRY POWDER</p> 	<p>Fires involving solids and fires involving liquids, i.e. paint and petrol. Safe on live electrical equipment, although does not penetrate the spaces in equipment easily and the fire may flare up again.</p>	<p>Point the jet or discharge horn at base of flames and with a rapid sweeping motion drive the flames towards the far edge until all the flames are out. If the extinguisher has a shot off control, wait until the air clears and if you can still see the flames, attack the fire again.</p> <p>DANGER: Do not use on chip pan fires</p>
<p>CREAM - FOAM</p> 	<p>Fires involving liquids.</p> <p>WARNING: Not suitable for all liquids - check instructions</p>	<p>Do not aim the jet straight at the liquid. Where the liquid on fire is in a container, point the jet at the inside edge of the container or on a nearby surface above the burning liquid, allow the foam to build up and flow across the liquid.</p> <p>DANGER: Do not use on chip pan fires. Not generally recommended for home use.</p>
<p>BLACK - CARBON DIOXIDE</p> 	<p>Fires involving liquids. Clean, effective and safe on live electrical equipment.</p>	<p>WARNING: This type of extinguisher does not cool the fire very well and you will need to watch out that the fire does not start up again.</p> <p>DANGER: Do not use on chip pan fires. Fumes from CO2 extinguishers can be harmful to users in confined spaces, ventilate the area as soon as the fire has been controlled</p>

Type of Extinguisher	Best used for	How to use
<p data-bbox="84 225 247 248">FIRE BLANKET</p> 	<p data-bbox="348 225 626 475">Fires involving solids and fires involving liquids. Good for small fires in clothing and chip pan fires provided the blanket completely covers the fire.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="650 225 990 288">1 Turn off the gas or electricity supply. <li data-bbox="650 300 1001 403">2 Remove the fire blanket from its container and hold it by the fabric straps <li data-bbox="650 411 1031 552">3 To prevent burns on the hands and arms, make sure you wrap the top edges of the blanket around your hands to protect them. <li data-bbox="650 560 1014 624">4 Roll up your sleeves so they do not catch in the flames. <li data-bbox="650 632 1023 815">5 Carefully cover the flames with the fire blanket, making sure that you cover the whole area so that you can effectively cut off the airflow and extinguish the flames. <li data-bbox="650 823 1014 963">6 However, if the fire is larger than the blanket, do not attempt to put it out. Get out and call the fire brigade immediately. <li data-bbox="650 971 1025 1123">7 Do Not touch the fire blanket or anything underneath it until at least an hour has passed since the fire was extinguished.

Fire doors and structural means of escape

It is strongly recommended that regular inspections of the property are undertaken to check that passive fire safety measures are in a well maintained condition. Fire doors should be regularly checked for damage to surfaces or heat/smoke seals, and to ensure that they are self-closing and self-latching.

Check that the main final exit door **does not** require the use of a key to escape. Any lock requiring the use of a key **must** be removed.

Check that partitions around the staircase are complete and undamaged. Check that walls and ceilings are complete and undamaged. Check that no items are stored on and obstructing the escape route.

The frequency of inspection is a matter of judgment in each case. It is accepted that access to lettings may be difficult in some cases and that landlords should not intrude unduly on tenants privacy. However most of the 'fire escape' provision in an HMO will in fact be visible from the common areas and there should be no difficulty whatsoever in gaining access to such areas on a regular basis.

It is advisable that you record any issues found. Table 4 at the back of this handbook is offered as a model 'log book' for recording purposes.

Fire instructions to tenants

All tenants must be familiarised with the routine to be followed in the event of fire and advised how the fire alarm system works. It is well worth incorporating such fire safety information in the tenancy agreement paperwork.

Advise your tenants that in the event of a fire they should:

1. Sound the alarm/alert the other residents
2. Get out of the building as quickly as possible and close all doors
3. Telephone the Fire Brigade (999)
4. Do not go back into the building for any reason

You should also advise them of the following:

- DO NOT** block corridors, landings etc, which are an escape route
- DO NOT** tamper with self closing devices on fire doors
- DO NOT** prop open fire doors
- DO NOT** tamper with fire equipment eg smoke detectors, fire extinguishers
- DO** know where fire exits are located
- DO** report any damage to fire equipment to the landlord immediately.

It is recommended that a copy of Leaflets 1 & 2 at the back of this handbook are displayed in the house and given to each occupant at the start of a tenancy.

Electrical safety

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 requires landlords to ensure that the wiring within HMOs is maintained in a safe condition and in good working order.

The wiring must be inspected periodically (normally every 5 years) and you must get a certificate that shows the test results and confirms that the installation is safe for continued use. Someone registered with one of the following organisations is regarded as competent:

- ECA (Electrical Contractors Association)
- ELECSA (part of the ECA group)
- NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting)
- NAPIT (National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers)

If the electrical installation in your HMO is found to be in a defective condition, you should arrange repairs without delay. The Council can serve notices on landlords requiring remedial works to remove the risk of injury to tenants.

You should also arrange, at least once a year, for a qualified electrician to carry out a portable appliance testing (PAT) safety test on any portable electrical equipment you provide for tenants, like kettles, fridges and toasters. The PAT tester will give you a dated certificate and put stickers on the plugs of appliances to show that they are safe.

Gas Safety

Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, all landlords have a duty to ensure that gas appliances provided within rented accommodation are properly maintained. The regulations are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) but the Council can also ask you to show the latest certificate to us.

Landlords must:

- ensure that any gas appliance or pipework in houses let by him/her should only be maintained in a safe condition by a GAS SAFE registered gas installer
- ensure all appliances (ie gas boiler, fire, cooker, water heater and flues) are checked for safety at intervals of not more than 12 months by a Gas Safe registered gas installer
- keep a record of such safety checks, which must be kept for at least 2 years
- provide evidence to all tenants within 28 days of gas safety inspection that annual safety checks of gas appliances and flues have been carried out
- provide new tenants with a copy of the gas safety record when the Tenancy Agreement is signed.

These regulations are principally designed to prevent death or injury to tenants from carbon monoxide poisoning. Any breach of these regulations is an offence and you risk being prosecuted, and this could result in you facing imprisonment or a fine of up to £20,000, or both, for each offence.

If you think there is a gas leak in your building, call the National Grid gas emergency number immediately on 0800 111 999.

Fire safety of furniture and furnishings

If you let furnished accommodation, all furniture you provide must be fire resistant. The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 set levels of fire resistance for domestic upholstered furnishings. These regulations are enforced by Trading Standards Officers from Suffolk County Council.

Upholstered furniture filled with polyurethane foam tends to burn quickly and gives off large amounts of smoke and poisonous fumes. Older or second-hand furniture may only be used if it has the appropriate label showing that it is cigarette and match-resistant.

The regulations apply to:

- beds, mattresses, headboards and pillows;
- sofa beds, futons, scatter cushions and seat pads; and
- loose and stretch covers for furniture.

The regulations do not apply to:

- sleeping bags or loose covers for mattresses;
- bed clothes, duvets and pillow cases; and
- carpets and curtains.

New furniture that complies with the regulations is sold with a permanent label stating that it is cigarette and match-resistant. Landlords should ensure that they do not let accommodation with furniture that is not fire resistant.



Building Control

Building regulations are designed to protect the health and safety of people living in or near a building, control structural stability, drainage, fire escape routes and many other things.

Building regulations approval is required for:

- new building work;
- conversion of a building into flats;
- installing toilets, sinks, baths, showers etc;
- replacement windows;
- replacement heating systems;
- structural alterations including removing load bearing walls; and
- most electrical work within a building.

If you intend to carry out works that may require Building Control approval you must contact a Building Control Officer to discuss your plans on 01473 432951.

Planning

If you want to change the use of a house into a HMO for more than six people you will need planning permission. Planning does not have to be sought to revert back to a single dwelling. Please contact a Planning Officer to discuss your plans on 01473 432000.

If you are making any external alterations or extensions to a building planning permission is usually required.

If you wish to alter a listed building you will also need to contact the Conservation Officer, please telephone 01473 432000.

FIRE KILLS

Advice to Occupants of Houses in Multiple Occupation

If you live in a house in multiple occupation, you are more at risk from fire than if you live in a single-family dwelling house.
In order to reduce the likelihood of fire:-

REMEMBER:

1. **NEVER** wedge open fire doors
2. **NEVER** remove door closing devices
3. **NEVER** tamper with fire alarms or equipment
4. **NEVER** overfill chip pans
5. **NEVER** leave children alone with matches or in rooms with cooking or heating appliances
6. **NEVER** smoke in bed
7. **NEVER** block halls and stairways
8. **DO** become familiar with escape routes and exits from the building
9. **DO** unplug electrical appliances at night
10. **CLOSE** room doors
11. **CHECK** for burning cigarettes before going to bed
12. **DO NOT** use paraffin or bottled gas heaters
13. **DO** report any damage to fire equipment to the landlord immediately

FIRE!

Notice to all tenants

The stairway in this building is protected to provide a route to safety in the event of a fire.

This protection also depends upon the manner in which you and the other occupants observe certain basic rules.

Fire resisting self-closing doors can be found in most parts of the building including the entrance doors to all of the individual rooms/flats. These doors are provided to stop the spread of smoke and fire and **they must be kept closed.**

As tenants you must not:

- Remove any doors
- Tamper with any self-closing devices
- Wedge doors open
- Block or obstruct any doors, corridors or passageway

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

Make sure the door of the room on fire and your front door are closed on vacating. Alert other occupants in the building and call the fire service.

If you have any problems or defects occur to the means of escape from fire at your house, these should be reported to:



Useful contact details

Private Sector Housing	01473 433003
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service	01473 260588
Refuse Collection	01473 432090
Building Control	01473 432951
Planning	01473 4322000
Gas Safe Register	www.gassaferegister.co.uk 0800 408 5500
National Grid Emergency	0800 111 999
NICEIC (Finding a registered electrician)	www.niceic.com 0333 015 6625
ECA (Finding a registered electrician)	020 7351 5000
UoS (University of Suffolk) Accommodations Team	accommodation@uos.ac.uk 01473 338833
Housing Options (Matters relating to tenancy rights and regulations)	01473 433003
Anglian Water (reporting a leak)	0800 771 881