



South Somerset District Council

Advice on the Legal Obligations of Tenants and Occupiers in the...

Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are houses that have been separated into bedsits where a number of people (usually single people or couples) live as separate households under one roof and will share some facilities (usually the kitchen, bathrooms, seating areas as well as the hall, landing, stairs and entrances).

HMOs are seen as a higher risk than single houses or flats where single people, couples or families live as one household. Therefore, HMOs are regulated by law to have fire detection and alarm systems that are more comprehensive than normal houses, has fire doors throughout the property along with a protected route to allow you to escape safely in the event of a fire.

As an occupier/tenant of a HMO you have certain obligations to ensure that you and all the other people who live there or visit the property are safe. You should also assist the person (or people) who manage the HMO to keep it safe, keep it well maintained and fulfil their legal obligations too. This means that you must:

- Conduct yourself in a way that will not prevent, hinder or frustrate the manager of the HMO in the performance of his or her duties to keep the HMO safe and well run. Be helpful and cooperative.
- Allow the manager to enter your living accommodation at all reasonable times in order that they can carry out the duties imposed on them by the Regulations. They may want to check alarms, electrical fittings etc.
- Provide the manager with any information requested so that they can perform the duties required by the Regulations and keep the house safe and well managed.
- Take reasonable care to avoid causing damage to anything which the manager is under a duty to provide, maintain or repair under the Regulations. If you do damage anything then report it to him/her.
- Store and dispose of refuse in accordance with the arrangements made by the HMO manager under the Regulations
- Comply with basic, reasonable instructions from the HMO manager in respect of any escape route from fire, the prevention of a fire and the use of fire equipment. For example, there should be no smoking inside the HMO, fire doors must not be propped open as they will not work if you do and the fire detection and the alarm system must not be compromised.

Remember to assist the HMO manager and be safe!