

## Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

## Case Studies

Group D  
Psychological  
Requirements

Hazard D18  
Crowding and  
Space

Example D18.1  
Pre-1920  
Ground-floor  
Studio Flat  
(Non-HMO)

Vulnerable Group  
Persons of all ages

Multiple Locations  
No

Related Hazard A5  
Flames, Hot  
Surfaces, etc.

Related Hazard B14  
Excess Heat

Related Hazard B11  
Damp and  
Mould Growth

Related Hazard D20  
Noise

# Dwelling

---

## Description

This property is a pre-1920 ground-floor studio flat in a mid-terrace house, with solid brick walls, a slate roof and small gardens to front and rear. The flat is occupied by a single person.

The original layout of the house comprised a non-habitable cellar and, on the ground floor, a living room at the front and a dining-kitchen at the rear. There were two double bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and a further two single bedrooms on the second floor, being a former four-bedroomed family house. In recent years the ground-floor living room, dining-kitchen and both first-floor bedrooms have been converted into studio flats, having had kitchen and ensuite facilities installed in the rooms. The ensuite has a locking door. The two second-floor rooms have been converted into a single self-contained flat, with one room containing a kitchen (a kitchen/living/dining room) and the other room being an ensuite bedroom.



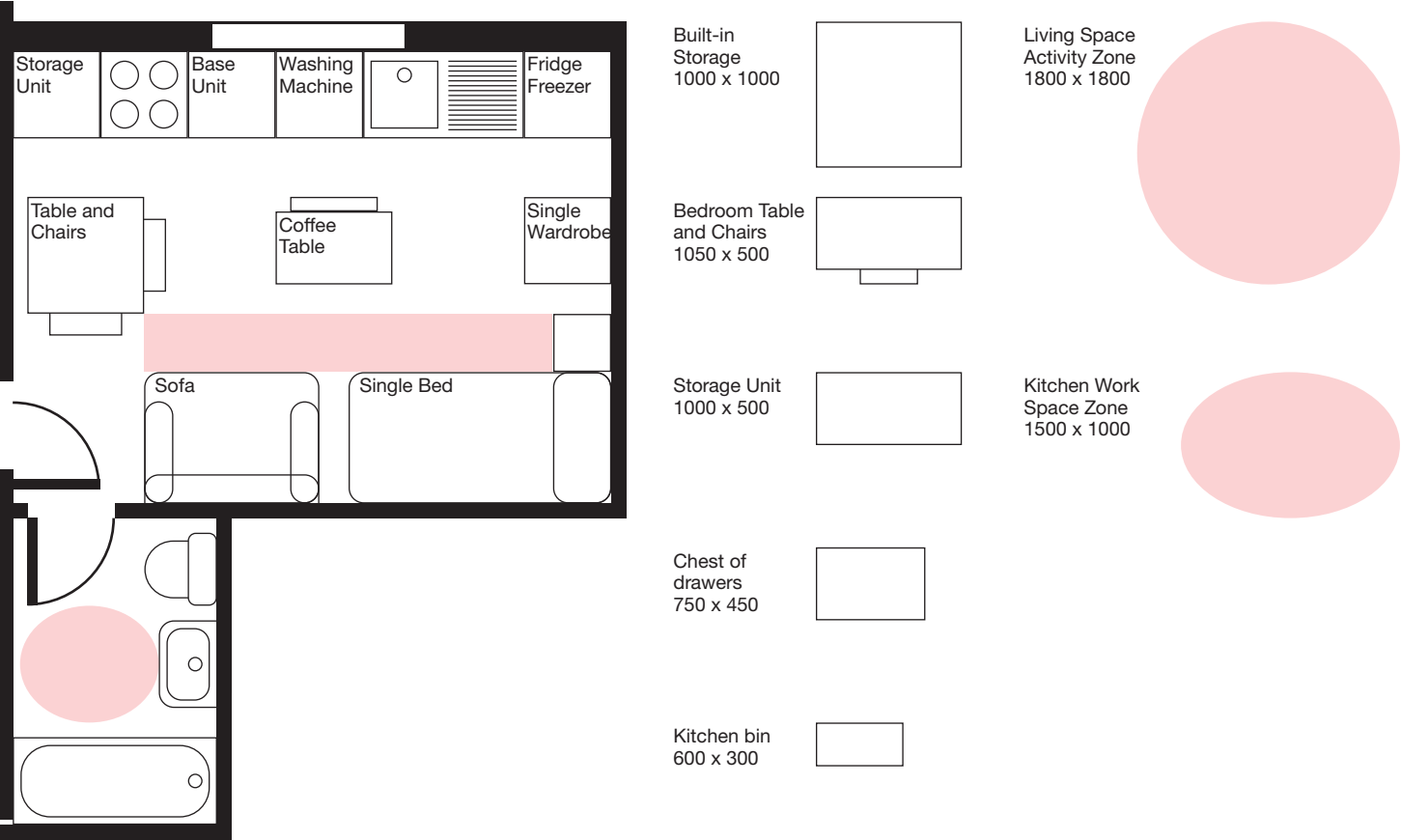
1  
Front exterior

# Deficiencies

## Description

The dwelling being assessed is the rear ground-floor studio flat, with a useable floor area of 13 m<sup>2</sup> and an ensuite bathroom with an area of 3.6 m<sup>2</sup>. Furniture and activity zones in the floor plan are those specified for one-person accommodation. Also, the built-in storage shown is specified in the Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) for one-person accommodation.

A much-reduced inventory of these items can be accommodated in the dwelling.



2  
Floorplan

## Relevant Baseline Indicators

Seriously  
Defective

Subject		Score				BI	Baseline Indicator	
4	Sanitary Facilities: Bathroom	A1	0	1	2	3	4.1	Every dwelling/HMO shall have a private bathroom, equipped and provided for the sole use of that dwelling/HMO.
		A2	0	1	2	3		
5	Sanitary Facilities: Kitchen	A1	0	1	2	3	5.1	Every dwelling/HMO shall have a kitchen or dedicated adequate space for the storage, preparation and cooking of food equipped and provided for the sole use of that dwelling/HMO.
		A2	0	1	2	3		
7	Space	A1	0	1	2	3	7.1	A bedroom shall not be the only passageway to the only bathroom in a dwelling unit with more than one bedroom.
		A2	0	1	2	3		
	A1	0	1	2	3	7.2	A bathroom or toilet room shall not be the only passageway to any habitable room, hall, basement or the exterior of the dwelling.	
	A2	0	1	2	3			
	A1	0	1	2	3	7.3	The floor area of any room in the dwelling used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged 10 years or over must not be less than 6.51m². The floor area of any room in the dwelling used as sleeping accommodation by two persons must not be less than 10.22m². The floor area of any room in the dwelling used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged under 10 years must not be less than 4.64m². Any room in the dwelling with a floor area of less than 4.64m² must not be used as sleeping accommodation. Depending on the gender of household members, their relationship, and the size of rooms, a dwelling containing one bedroom is considered suitable for up to two persons, irrespective of age. A dwelling containing two bedrooms is suitable for up to four persons. One containing three bedrooms is suitable for up to six persons and one containing four bedrooms suitable for up to seven persons.	
	A2	0	1	2	3			
	A1	0	1	2	3	7.4	The ceiling height of any habitable room shall be at least 2100mm. In a habitable room with a sloping ceiling, at least one-half of the floor area shall have a ceiling height of at least 2100mm. If any part of a habitable room has a ceiling height lower than 1500mm, its floor area shall be excluded when calculating the floor area. For the purposes of this requirement basement or subfloor rooms are excluded.	
	A2	0	1	2	3			

A1 Assessment of unoccupied dwelling  
A2 Assessment of current occupation

## Other Relevant Matters

0

Satisfactory  
or N/A

1

Not  
Satisfactory

2

Defective

3

Seriously  
Defective

Score					Matters affecting Likelihood of Harm
A1	0	1	2	3	Living area size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Kitchen size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bathroom/WC size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bathroom/WC door/lock
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) number
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) location
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Recreational space size
A2	0	1	2	3	

Score					Matters affecting Harm Outcomes
A1	0	1	2	3	Living area size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Kitchen size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bathroom/WC size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bathroom/WC door/lock
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) number
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) size
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Bedroom(s) location
A2	0	1	2	3	
A1	0	1	2	3	Recreational space size
A2	0	1	2	3	

# Likelihood of Harm

Scale Points

Likelihood of harm from this hazard over the next twelve months

Very Likely	1 in 1
	1 in 2
	1 in 3
	1 in 5
Likely	1 in 10
	1 in 20
	1 in 30
A1 + A2	1 in 50
Unlikely	1 in 100
	1 in 200
	1 in 300
	1 in 500
Very Unlikely	1 in 1,000
	1 in 2,000
	1 in 3,000
National Average	1 in 5,000

Score

1 in 50

Justification of Scoring

Likelihood of Harm

A1

Assessment of unoccupied dwelling

The single sleeping, living, kitchen room does not provide adequate space for safe movement when cooking or carrying out other daily living activities. There is also a lack of storage space and no space for any proper social interaction with others. Lingered cooking smells and absence of space for clothes drying are also issues likely to have a negative effect on the mental health of an occupant over a 12-month period.

A2

Assessment of current occupation

The single sleeping, living, kitchen room does not provide adequate space for safe movement when cooking or carrying out other daily living activities. There is also a lack of storage space and no space for any proper social interaction with others. Lingered cooking smells and absence of space for clothes drying are also issues likely to have a negative effect on the mental health of the occupant over a 12-month period.

# Harm Outcomes

Extreme		Severe		Serious		Moderate	
Death, permanent paralysis, etc.		Heart attack, serious fractures, etc.		Chronic stress, severe concussion, etc.		Broken fingers, moderate cuts, etc.	
Very Likely	50.0	Very Likely	50.0	Very Likely	50.0	A1 + A2 55.0	
	30.0		30.0		A1 + A2 + National Average 30.0	National Average 55.0	
	20.0		20.0		20.0	These scores are simply calculated as the sum of the other three harm outcomes subtracted from 100%	
A1 + A2 + National Average	10.0	Likely	10.0	Likely	10.0		
	5.0		A1 + A2 + National Average 5.0		5.0		
	2.0		2.0		2.0		
Unlikely	1.0	Unlikely	1.0	Unlikely	1.0		
	0.5		0.5		0.5		
	0.2		0.2		0.2		
Very Unlikely	0.1	Very Unlikely	0.1	Very Unlikely	0.1		
	0.0		0.0		0.0		
Score 10.0%		Score 5.0%		Score 30.0%		Score 55.0%	

**Justification of Scoring**  
Harm Outcomes

There is no reason to believe the potential spread of harm outcomes will be any different to the national average.

Safety Ratings

Scenario 1  
As described in this document

Key

Category	Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000
	Low	100

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 50			
Extreme 10.0%	Severe 5.0%	Serious 30.0%	Moderate 55.0%
Category	Band	Score	
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000	
	A1 + A2	2,291	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
	Low	100	
	National Average	23	
Score	2,291		



Scenario 2

After works meeting baseline indicators

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 50			
Extreme 10.0%	Severe 5.0%	Serious 30.0%	Moderate 55.0%
Category	Band	Score	
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000	
	Example Dwelling	2,291	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
	Low	100	
	National Average	23	
Score 2,291			

Justification of Scoring

After works meeting baseline indicators

This undersized flat has insufficient space to be capable of complying with the baseline indicators. There is insufficient space for cooking, living and social activity after accounting for the 6.5m<sup>2</sup> floor area required solely for use as a ‘sleeping room’.

Scenario 3

After further improvements

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 50			
Extreme 10.0%	Severe 5.0%	Serious 30.0%	Moderate 55.0%
Category	Band	Score	
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000	
	Example Dwelling	2,291	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
	Low	100	
	National Average	23	
Score	2,291		

Justification of Scoring

After further improvements

No improved score can be given as this undersized flat is not capable of being improved. To increase the floor area of the flat to a minimum acceptable size, reconfiguration of the rest of the property in which the flat is situated would be required.

## Other Relevant Legislation and Guidance

---

### Crowding and Space enforcement

Local authorities have a statutory duty to take enforcement action to tackle the Category 1 Crowding and Space hazard. However, the use of enforcement action, particularly prohibition orders, can lead to occupiers becoming displaced from their homes, creating a homelessness situation which results in a statutory duty to arrange suitable alternative accommodation. Priority-need cases will be provided with temporary accommodation; however, there is a risk these may also suffer overcrowding (case law does not prohibit overcrowding of temporary accommodation as short-term solutions are not bound by the same standards as permanent settlement). Local authorities are advised to adopt a holistic approach by involving their homelessness team and, where appropriate, early help/children's social care at the earliest opportunity to identify a course of action aimed at mitigating the effects of overcrowding, facilitating a managed move and ultimately avoiding displacement which results in homelessness.

Where there are high levels of overcrowding in the local housing stock, local authorities may choose to prioritise action, through consideration of the severity of the hazard, with high-scoring assessments reflecting those households living in conditions with the worst crowding, where adverse health effects will be most pronounced. Cases can also be assessed according to the statutory overcrowding tests of the room standard or space standard defined by the Housing Act 1985, which can add further categorisation. Dwellings failing these tests and containing a Category 1 hazard are likely to present a higher priority for action.

---

### Updates

Matters for consideration listed in this section were correct at the time of publication. For the most up-to-date legislation and guidance in these areas, please visit the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.