

## Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

## Case Studies

Group D  
Psychological  
Requirements

Hazard D18  
Crowding and  
Space

Example D18.2  
Pre-1920  
Mid-terrace House  
(Non-HMO)

Vulnerable Group  
Persons of all ages

Multiple Locations  
No

Related Hazard A6  
Collisions, Entrapment  
and Ergonomics

Related Hazard B11  
Damp and  
Mould Growth

Related Hazard C16  
Domestic Hygiene

# Dwelling

## Description

This is a late-19th-century mid-terrace house.

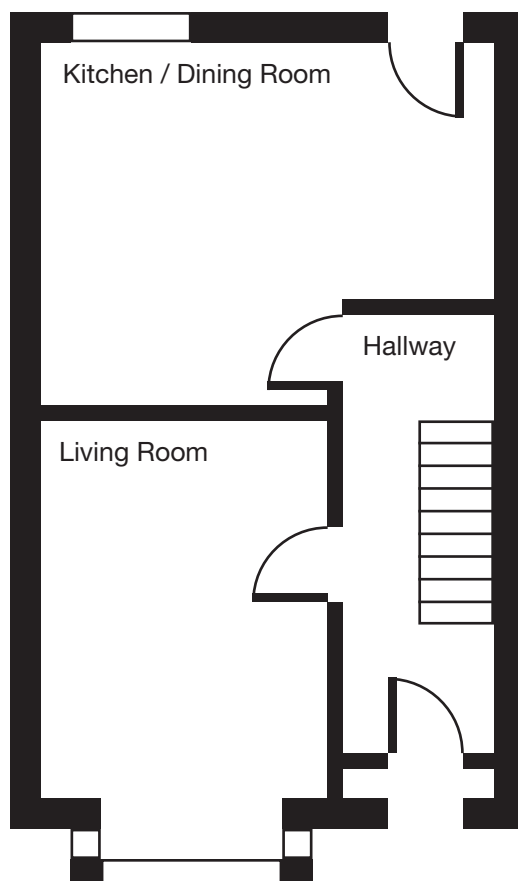
On the ground floor there is a front living room measuring 14.0m<sup>2</sup>, a rear dining/kitchen measuring 18.17m<sup>2</sup> and a through hall. Upstairs there is a front bedroom measuring 15.6m<sup>2</sup> and a smaller bedroom at the rear measuring 8.35m<sup>2</sup>. There is also a bathroom at the rear.

There is a small rear yard (3.5m × 4m). It is just large enough to accommodate a clothesline and the storage of the wheeled refuse bins and recycling boxes, whilst still providing access to the gate into the back alley.

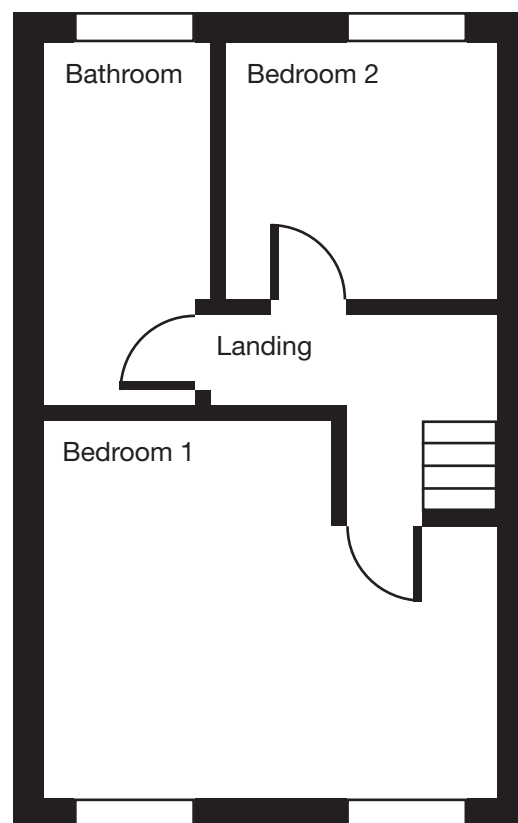
The house is heated by electric storage heaters. The electrical installation condition report (EICR) is satisfactory. The energy performance certificate (EPC) is E.



1  
front elevation of dwelling  
Photo credit: Ron Ellis /  
Shutterstock.com



2  
Ground floor



3  
First floor

# Deficiencies

## Description of Deficiencies

There is insufficient space in the rear kitchen/dining area for a table where the whole family can sit down to eat.

The only toilet is in the bathroom, which has no shower. The door has a bolt.

The current household comprises a couple and their four children: a 12-year-old girl, twin boys aged 9 and a boy aged 5 years.

The rear bedroom has two sets of bunk beds in it (for all four children) and no space for furniture to store clothes. The parents sleep in the front bedroom.



4  
Small rear bedroom  
shared by all four children



5  
Small rear yard and access  
to the rear alleyway

# Relevant Baseline Indicators

0

Satisfactory  
or N/A

1

Not  
Satisfactory

2

Defective

3

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 6.51m <sup>2</sup> . The floor area of any room in the dwelling used as sleeping accommodation by two persons must not be less than 10.22m <sup>2</sup> . 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 4.64m <sup>2</sup> . Any room in the dwelling with a floor area of less than 4.64m <sup>2</sup> 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 2100 mm. If any part of a habitable room has a ceiling height lower than 1500 mm, 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

<b>Scale Points</b> 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
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
A1 + National Average	1 in 5,000
<b>Score</b> 1 in 50	

**Justification of Scoring**  
Likelihood of Harm

A1

**Assessment of unoccupied dwelling**

This assessment score is based on the dwelling being occupied with sleeping accommodation as one double bedroom and one single bedroom. The minimum room sizes as set out in Baseline Indicator 7.3 and occupancy arrangements suggest this property is suitable for a maximum of three persons. No change from the national average required at this stage.

A2

**Assessment of current occupation**

This assessment score is based on the actual occupancy. There are two adults in the double room and four children (three boys under 10, one girl over 10) sharing the single room. This family requires a four-bedroom property, so there are insufficient sleeping rooms available for the number of people in this dwelling. Either four children must share one small bedroom or the front living room could be converted to a bedroom. Whilst this would ease (not remove) bedroom overcrowding, it would significantly reduce shared living space. There is further pressure within the dwelling due to the lack of a separate WC and space for eating.

Four children sharing a bedroom makes studying at home difficult, which will impact on learning. Sharing will also cause sleep disruption and infringe on suitable privacy for the affected occupants. Six people sharing one bathroom, which includes the only toilet, makes washing and toilet facilities difficult to access, particularly in the mornings when getting ready for school. The back yard is too small for recreational space, so the children must play indoors, in the street or a nearby park, if available.

When combined, these conditions could increase stress, anxiety and depression and reduce educational attainment, and the close proximity and ages of occupants is far more likely to cause an increase in the likelihood of accidents and disease.

## 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 + A255.0		
	30.0		30.0		A1 + A2 + National Average30.0			
	20.0		20.0			20.0		
A1 + A2 + National Average	10.0	Likely	10.0	Likely	10.0	National Average55.0		
	5.0		A1 + A2 + National Average5.0		5.0	These scores are simply calculated as the sum of the other three harm outcomes subtracted from 100%		
	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		Score		Score			Score	
10.0%		5.0%		30.0%			55.0%	

### Justification of Scoring

#### Harm Outcomes

There is no reason to believe the potential spread of harm outcomes will be any different to that of 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
	A2	2,291
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000
	Low	100
	A1+ National Average	23

Score

2,291

A1    Assessment of unoccupied dwelling  
A2    Assessment of current occupation



Scenario 2

After works meeting baseline indicators

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 5,000			
Extreme 10.0%	Severe 5.0%	Serious 30.0%	Moderate 55.0%
Category	Band	Score	
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
	Low	100	
	Example Dwelling +	23	
Score 23	National Average		

Justification of Scoring

After works meeting baseline indicators

There are two rooms being used as sleeping accommodation. One is 15.6m<sup>2</sup> and the other is 8.35m<sup>2</sup>. The baseline indicators would allow the larger room to be occupied by a maximum of two persons and the smaller room, one person. Complying with the BIs would therefore mean occupation is reduced to three people. No other changes are required to the layout of the dwelling. This would return the risk to the national average but would require the existing occupants to vacate the property.

Scenario 3

After alternative improvements

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 5,000			
Extreme 10.0%	Severe 5.0%	Serious 30.0%	Moderate 55.0%
Category	Band	Score	
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
	Low	100	
	Example Dwelling +	23	
Score 23	National Average		

Justification of Scoring

After alternative improvements

The national average could also be achieved by an appropriate extension to the property to accommodate the size of the current household. However, the small footprint and limited outside space make it impractical to increase bedroom space by constructing a rear extension; and a loft conversion, if viable, would be costly.

# Other Relevant Legislation and Guidance

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## Crowding and Space Enforcement

Local authorities have a statutory duty to take enforcement action to tackle a 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 to reflect those households living in conditions with 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, as 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.

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## 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.