

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Case Studies

Group D
Psychological
Requirements

Hazard D18
Crowding and
Space

Example D18.3
Pre-1920
Mid-terraced
House
(Non-HMO)

Vulnerable Group
Persons of all ages

Multiple Locations
Yes

Related Hazard C16
Domestic Hygiene

Dwelling

Description

This is a late-19th century mid-terrace house, with a two-storey back addition. The dwelling comprises two bedrooms and a bathroom with toilet and wash-hand basin to the first floor, and one 'knocked through' living room and a kitchen to the ground floor.

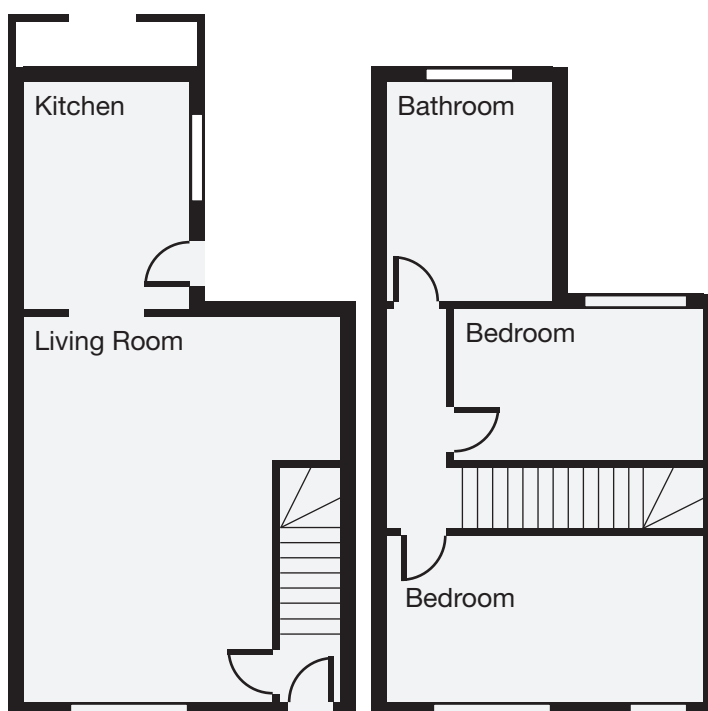
The living room is $10.9 \times 3.69\text{m}$, the front bedroom $3.33 \times 3.69\text{m}$, and the rear bedroom $3.73 \times 2.69\text{m}$.

The original outside toilet still works but has no wash-hand basin and the electric light does not work. There is an enclosed, small rear yard, with rear access via a gate that leads to a rear alleyway.

There is a gas boiler providing central heating and hot water. Gas and electrical safety certificates are available.



1
Front exterior
Photo credit: McCormick
French /Shutterstock.com



2
Ground Floor

3
First Floor

Deficiencies

Description

Occupation: The current tenants are a household that comprises the mother, father and their three children (two girls aged 13 and 11 and a boy aged 9 years). The parents sleep in the front bedroom and the three children sleep in the rear bedroom, with the two girls sharing a small double bottom bunk bed.



4

Crowded rear bedroom

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 ² . The floor area of any room in the dwelling used as sleeping accommodation by two persons must not be less than 10.22m ² . 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 ² . Any room in the dwelling with a floor area of less than 4.64m ² 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	Provision of amenities
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	Provision of amenities
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
		1 in 50
Unlikely	A2	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

Score

1 in 100

Justification of Scoring

Likelihood of Harm

A1

Assessment of unoccupied dwelling

Disregarding the current occupation, the assessment score is based on a property with one double room and one single room suitable for a maximum of three persons. No change from national average required at this stage.

A2

Assessment of current occupation

Assessment based on actual occupancy. Two parents sleeping in the double room is satisfactory, but three children (two girls over 10 and one boy under 10) sharing a single bedroom gives rise to both gender-based overcrowding and spatial overcrowding. There is further pressure within the dwelling due to the lack of a separate toilet as the external toilet is not a viable amenity due to having to go outside to access it, the lack of wash-hand basin or working light.

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			
	20.0		20.0		20.0			
A1 + A2 + National Average	10.0	Likely	10.0	Likely	10.0	National Average	55.0	
	5.0		A1 + A2 + National Average		5.0			
	2.0		2.0		2.0			
Unlikely	1.0	Unlikely	1.0	Unlikely	1.0	These scores are simply calculated as the sum of the other three harm outcomes subtracted from 100%		
	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

Assessment 1: There is no evidence to suggest there would be any change to the harm outcomes in this scenario.

Assessment 2: There is no evidence to suggest there would be any change to the harm outcomes in this scenario.

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 100			
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		1,146	
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000	
		100	
	Low	100	
	A1 + National Average	23	
Score			
1,146			

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 + National Average	23	
Score	23		

Justification of Scoring

After works meeting baseline indicators

Reducing the occupancy of the property to a household of no more than three people would reduce the likelihood of harm to the national average.

Scenario 3

After further 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 + National Average	23	
Score 23			

Justification of Scoring

After further improvements

Alternatively, works could be carried out to accommodate the existing household of two parents and three children. For example, it may be possible to rearrange the first-floor space to allow stairs to be provided to the loft space which could then be converted to provide a double bedroom with ensuite toilet and shower. This could involve a large dormer window to the rear elevation.

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.