

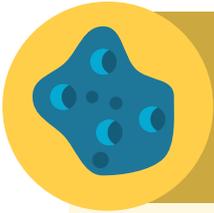


HHSRS Checklist: A Key Part of the Fitness for Human Habitation Bill

Lettings agents, property managers and landlords should all be aware of the Fitness for Human Habitation Bill, which is likely to become law before the end of the year. The Bill is using the 29 hazards listed in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to help define the categories that determine whether a house is “fit for human habitation”. The list had originally been created in 2006 to help local authorities enforce conditions in the private rented sector, but is now a list that lettings agents, property managers and landlords also need to be aware of as far as the safety and fitness for human habitation of their properties are concerned.

Each hazard is assessed separately and can be classed as either Category 1 or Category 2. A hazard is classed as Category 1 if it is deemed a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety. If a hazard is deemed less serious or less urgent, it is classed as Category 2.

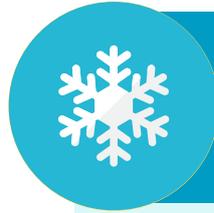
An HHSRS hazard checklist is below for landlords and agents to use when they need to ensure a property is fit for human habitation.



1. Damp and mould growth

Dust mites and the presence of mould or fungus can lead to a range of health threats commonly associated with damp, humid and mouldy conditions.

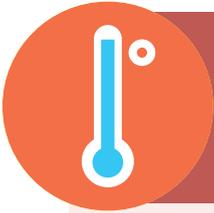
Issues include the triggering of various allergies, asthma and the various effects of mould and fungal infection toxins.



2. Excess cold

Cold temperatures indoors can be just as damaging as cold temperatures outdoors. A healthy indoor temperature is 18-21°C.

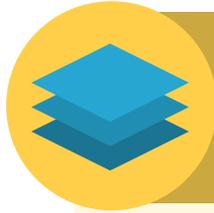
Respiratory conditions such as flu, pneumonia and bronchitis can be caused or aggravated by cold temperatures, and they can also increase the risk of cardiovascular conditions like strokes and heart attacks.



3. Excess heat

High indoor temperatures with no regulation measures can be highly damaging.

They can lead to dehydration, heatstroke, cardiovascular and respiratory issues.



4. Asbestos and MMF

Asbestos and Manufactured Mineral Fibres, which were formerly used to insulate buildings, are notorious factors in the development of respiratory problems.

Asbestos can cause significant damage to lungs, including lung cancer, while MMF can cause damage to skin, eyes and lungs.



5. Biocides

Some chemicals which are used to treat timber and mould growth can cause significant issues to building occupants' health.

There is a risk from breathing the chemicals in, any contact they might have with bare skin and swallowing of the chemical.



6. Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products

Faulty boilers, among other things, can lead to excess levels of carbon monoxide in a property along with nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and smoke.

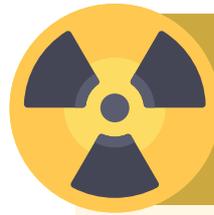
Excess amounts of the above gases can cause dizziness, nausea, headaches, disorientation, unconsciousness, breathing problems and death.



7. Lead

Lead ingestion from paint, water pipes, soil and fumes from leaded petrol can cause lead poisoning.

Lead poisoning can cause nervous disorders, mental health issues, infertility, blood production issues and death.



8. Radiation

Radon gas, which comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, can enter a home through a basement or cellar floor in an airborne state, but also dissolved in water.

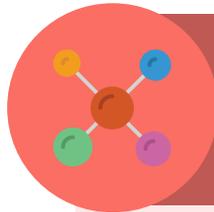
Exposure to radon daughters has been linked to the development of lung cancer.



9. Uncombusted fuel gas

Fuel gas escaping into the atmosphere within a property displaces the oxygen in the air and makes it difficult to breathe.

It can lead to suffocation, unconsciousness, brain damage and death.



10. Volatile organic compounds

A diverse group of organic chemicals, including formaldehyde, that are gaseous at room temperature and can be found in a wide variety of materials in the home, can present a health threat.

Health issues they cause include aggravation of allergies, irritation to the eyes, nose and skin, headaches, nausea, dizziness and drowsiness.



11. Crowding and space

There are many hazards associated with the lack of space needed for normal living, sleeping and general household life.

A lack of space can cause psychological distress and mental disorders in addition to increased risk of hygiene issues, accidents and personal space and compromised privacy.



12. Entry by intruders

A property must be kept secure against unauthorised entry in terms of entry and exit points.

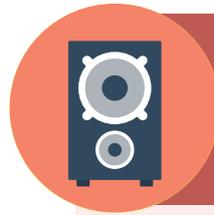
Associated hazards here include fear of burglary occurring, stress and anguish caused by burglary and any injuries caused by an intruder.



13. Lighting

Inadequate natural or artificial light can cause physical and psychological harm.

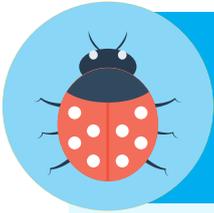
Physical issues include eyestrain; mental problems can include depression due to a lack of natural light.



14. Noise

Exposure to noise within the property can cause physical and psychological damage.

Issues include problems resulting from a lack of sleep, poor concentration, headaches and general anxiety.



15. Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse

Health hazards here relate to poor design and layout which make it hard to keep a property clean and hygienic, therefore attracting pests, and inadequate and unhygienic provision for storing household waste.

Potential health issues include stomach and intestinal disease, infection, asthma, allergies, disease from rats and physical hazards.



16. Food safety

Poor facilities provided for the storing, preparation and cooking of food can cause significant hygiene issues.

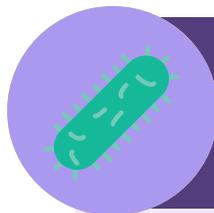
Health problems stemming from inadequate food safety include stomach and intestinal disease, diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach upset and dehydration.



17. Sanitation and drainage problems

Poor facilities to promote personal hygiene, including personal and clothes-washing facilities, sanitation and drainage, can mean increased threat of infections and threat to mental health.

Specific problems can include stomach and intestinal disease, skin infections and depression.



18. Water supply

Water contamination by bacteria, parasites, viruses and chemical pollutants causes a significant risk to health when the water is used for drinking, cooking, washing and sanitation.

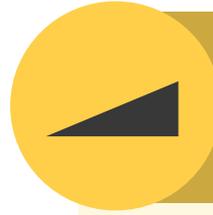
Threats posed include dehydration, fatigue, headaches, dry skin, bladder infections, cholera and Legionnaires' Disease.



19. Falls associated with baths

Falls associated with a bath, shower or similar facility can cause a range of physical injuries.

Some injuries include cuts, lacerations, swellings and bruising.



20. Falls on level surfaces

Falls on any level surface denote falls indoors, in gardens and on paths, including falls associated with trip steps, thresholds or ramps where the change in level is less than 300mm.

Some injuries include bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries.



21. Falls associated with stairs and ramps

Falls associated with stairs and ramps denote falls where the change in level is greater than 300mm. They include internal stairs or ramps within a property, external steps or ramps associated with the property, access to the property and to shared facilities or means of escape from fire, and falls over stairs, ramp or step guarding.

Some injuries include bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries.



22. Falls between levels

Falls between levels denote falls from one level to another, inside or outside a dwelling where the difference is more than 300mm. They include falls from balconies, landings or out of windows.

Some injuries include bruising, fractures, head, brain injuries, spinal injuries and death.



23. Electrical hazards

There are many electrical hazards associated with faulty equipment or exposed wiring.

Injuries include electric shocks, burns and potentially death in the case of strong currents or prolonged exposure.



24. Fire

Uncontrolled fire and associated smoke present various threats to health, including injuries from clothing or hair catching fire.

Some injuries include smoke inhalation, burns and death.



25. Flames, hot surfaces and materials

Injuries caused by contact with a hot flame or fire, hot objects and non-water based liquids are common. Scalds are caused by contact with hot liquids and vapours.

Injuries include burns, scalds, permanent scarring and death.



26. Collision and entrapment

There is a risk of physical injury from trapping body parts in architectural features, e.g. trapping fingers in doors and windows and colliding with objects such as windows, doors and low ceilings.

This can result in physical injuries such as cuts and bruising to the body.



27. Explosions

There is a physical injury risk from the blast of an explosion, from debris generated by the blast and from partial or total collapse of a building as a result of the explosion.

Health hazards include physical injuries, crushing, bruising, puncture, fractures, brain injuries, spinal injuries and death.



28. Ergonomics

There is a risk of physical strain associated with functional space and other features at the dwelling.

Injuries include strains and sprains.



29. Structural collapse and falling elements

Inadequate fixing, disrepair or adverse weather conditions can lead to the threat of the dwelling collapsing or part of the fabric being displaced or falling.

Health threats include various physical injuries and death.

HHSRS Compliance Checklist



PASS

FAIL

1. Damp and mould growth
2. Excess cold
3. Excess heat
4. Asbestos and MMF
5. Presence of biocides
6. Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products
7. Presence of lead
8. Presence of radiation
9. Uncombusted fuel gas
10. Volatile organic compounds
11. Crowding and space
12. Entry by intruders
13. Inadequate natural lighting
14. Excessive exposure to noise
15. Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse
16. Food safety
17. Sanitation and drainage problems
18. Water supply
19. Falls associated with baths
20. Falls on level surfaces
21. Falls associated with stairs and ramps
22. Falls between levels
23. Electrical hazards
24. Uncontrolled fire
25. Flames, hot surfaces and materials
26. Collision and entrapment
27. Explosions
28. Poor ergonomics
29. Structural collapse and falling elements

If you have ticked Fail on one or more of the above, the property may be falling foul of government legislation, and the appropriate steps should be taken to resolve existing issues as quickly as possible.

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Fixflo is a market leading repair reporting software which is guaranteed to streamline your Maintenance workflow. With over 40 languages to choose from, tenants can use their mobile device to report repairs through Fixflo's picture based system. Inbuilt guided advice educates tenants of their responsibilities, allowing them to fix small issues themselves.

A clear, concise repair report is then sent to the right property manager in seconds, saving time and money for everyone involved! Including all the benefits of Fixflo, Fixflo Plus features a centralised dashboard which provides you with a detailed overview of your entire portfolio. Fixflo Plus also automates reminders to contractors, ensuring swift issue resolution.

Fixflo Plus also provides agents with clear, concise repair reports which contain all the information needed to manage a repair to resolution. Because Fixflo repair reports contain all the detail needed, contractors can prepare for the specific issue at hand, meaning that most issues can be resolved in first contractor visit. A complete audit trail of all communication and documentation is safely stored in the system, ensuring that no issue slips through the cracks.

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