

GREATER
MANCHESTER
**GOOD LANDLORD
CHARTER**

LANDLORD DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

**MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH
AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM**





HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET.

This booklet is to support you in your learning as you study the Greater Manchester Good Landlord Charter Landlord Development Course.

You can read this booklet, which provides the full content of the module. You can also [watch the presentation online](#).

Once you have watched the presentation and read the booklet, take the end-of-module quiz before you progress to the next module.

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.1 Overview of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

To ensure that homes meet an acceptable standard, and often in response to a tenant's complaint, Local Authorities may inspect rental properties.

Local Authorities use an assessment tool called the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Properties are assessed against 21 hazards, and a score is generated based on the likelihood of a hazard occurring, and the degree of harm likely to be caused.

If a category 1 hazard is identified, this is classed as very serious and both the Local Authority, and you as the owner, have a legal duty to take action.

If a landlord does not take action, the Local Authority can serve an enforcement notice; and if the landlord does not comply, the Local Authority may do the work themselves and claim the cost back, or even prosecute the landlord in court.

However, good landlords proactively maintain their properties to a good standard by carrying out regular inspections.

This module advises you on what to look for when carrying out an inspection, and what paperwork you should have in place to keep your tenants safe and protected.

The HHSRS is based on the principle within the Housing Act 2004 that: "Any Residential Premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor." It assesses 21 hazards within four categories:

- | | |
|--|--|
|  1 Protection against accidents |  3 Protection against infection |
|  2 Physiological requirements |  4 Psychological requirements |

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.1.1 Protection against accidents

1 Falls on the level	2 Falling on stairs etc	3 Falling between levels	4 Fire and explosions
5 Flames, hot surfaces etc	6 Collisions, entrapment and ergonomics	7 Structural collapse & falling elements	8 Electrical hazards

3.1.2 Physiological Requirements

9 Excess cold	10 Radiation	11 Damp and mould growth	12 Lead
13 Indoor air pollutants	14 Excess heat	15 Asbestos and manufactured mineral fibres	

3.1.3 Protection against infection

16 Domestic hygiene	17 Water supply
----------------------------	------------------------

3.1.4 Psychological Requirements

18 Crowding and space	19 Entry by intruders	20 Noise	21 Lighting and obstructed views
------------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------	---

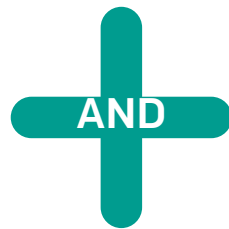
MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.2 Using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System

The government has produced guidance for landlords on the updated HHSRS, which can be found [here](#). In practice, it is very difficult for landlords to acquire the skills necessary to use the HHSRS fully. However, an understanding of the basic principles is vital.

The likelihood of a hazard, over a 12 month period, causing harm sufficient to require medical attention.



The potential seriousness of harm from that hazard, should harm occur.

A risk assessment of a hazard that indicates high likelihood of harm AND high potential seriousness of that harm, means that the hazard may potentially be high risk and therefore in need of remedial action to reduce the risk to a more acceptable level.

**Three steps
to carry out
a risk
assessment:**

- 1 Familiarise yourself with the hazards**
- 2 Ask: Is the likelihood of harm over 12 months high?**
- 3 Ask: Is the potential seriousness of harm high?**



If the answers to 2 and 3 are 'yes' then the hazard is high risk and immediate action is needed.

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.3 Identifying hazards: electrics

Here are some examples of electrical hazards:



To assess the issues and determine the level of risk, consider:

- The potential harm caused by electrical hazards is serious, including death.
- Given the number of problems, the likelihood of someone being electrocuted is extremely high.

Therefore, the HHSRS assessment scores this as a **category 1 hazard**.

What you should do next:

Immediate work is required to rectify these issues. If the local authority were to visit, they could force you, the landlord, to take immediate action.



Providing safe electrics:

The only way to absolutely ensure that your electrical fixed installation is safe is to employ a qualified electrician to carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition check of the whole property. The engineer reviews all electrical cabling, circuits, sockets and fuse boxes to ensure they are fit for purpose and safe for domestic use. They will issue an Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR).

The system will be deemed as safe if it is free from:

- Category 1 (C1) hazards
- Category 2 (C2) hazards

The report will detail a recommended date for the next check which is usually in 5 years' time. However, even if you have obtained an EICR, ensure that in between tenancies and during maintenance visits, you visually check the meter installation, fuse box, electrical sockets, light fittings, visible cables and plugs for:

- Damage
- Overloading/burning (especially the presence of black marks from overheating or electrical sparks)
- Unauthorised alterations

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.4 Identifying hazards: damp and mould

What should you look out for as signs of damp and mould in the homes you rent out?



Peeling wallpaper



Musty smell



Stained walls or ceilings

What might be the cause of this serious hazard?



Disrepair to rain water goods/roof/walls/damp proof course, allowing water penetration.



Defective plumbing.



High levels of condensation.



Inadequate heating and ventilation.



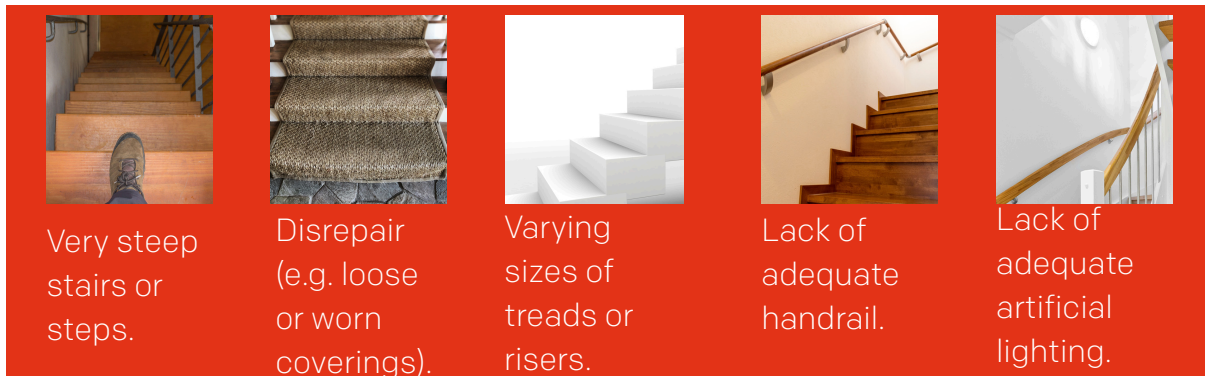
Lack of clothes drying facilities.

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



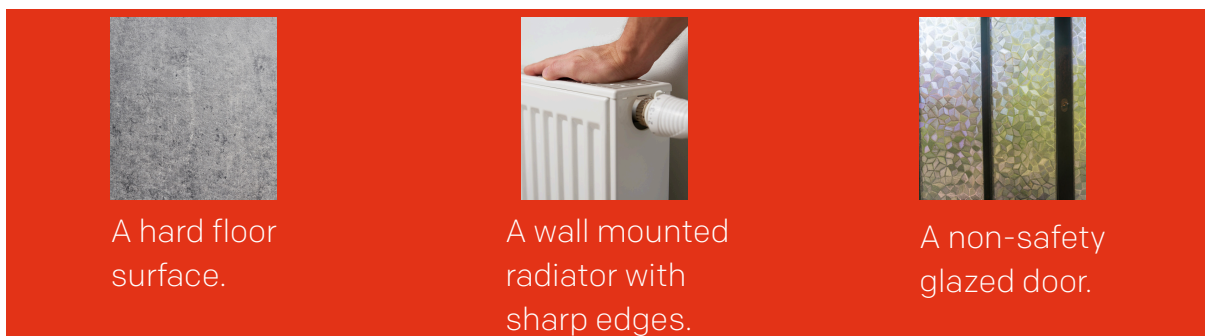
3.5 Identifying hazards: falls associated with stairs and steps

What should you look for when considering the risk of a fall associated with stairs or steps? Here are some suggestions:



If a property has all of these present, then the likelihood of someone falling over a 12 month period would be very high.

In addition, if at the bottom of the stairs there is one or more of the following:



Then the seriousness of any fall is likely to be high too.

The combination of high likelihood of an accident and high potential seriousness of harm means that the risk of the hazard of falling down the stairs is high, and the council would consider it a category 1 hazard. Therefore you should address this hazard immediately.

It is not just stairs and steps inside a property that cause falls. During your routine property visit, consider pathways outside the property and any steps up to entrance doors and/or upper levels of the garden. These need to be kept clear of plants and shrubs and regularly cleaned of moss, slime, leaves and lichen which may make them slippery.

NOTE!

Does your property have a cellar? Are the utility meters located there? Even if this area is not used by the tenant, access will still be required to the meters and therefore the steps will need to be sturdy with even treads, have adequate lighting and a handrail fitted.



MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM

3.6 Fire Safety in rented properties.

Legislation requires landlords to:



Fit a smoke alarm on every habitable floor of the property.



Fit a carbon monoxide detector in every room with a solid fuel burning appliance.



Test alarms at the start of each tenancy to ensure they are working.

The government provides further information and guidance [here](#).

Remember to carry out a fire risk assessment when letting to new tenants!

Fire safety checklist for property visits:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 Are the heat and smoke detectors working? | 2 Are the electrical installations well maintained? | 3 Do I need special fire doors? | 4 Are the internal doors well-fitted and of solid wood construction? |
| 5 Can the property be vacated if a fire occurs? Are there obstructions that could impede evacuation or cause a fall? | 6 Is there disrepair to the fabric of the property, e.g. carpets, flooring or lighting? | 7 Has the tenant added any non-fire-resistant furnishings? | 8 Are the kitchen appliances poorly sited? |
| 9 Does the tenant possess and use supplementary portable heaters? | 10 Is indoor clothes drying an issue? | | |

To be aware:

The Fitness for Human Habitation Act 2018 puts in place measures for tenants to take direct legal action where they can demonstrate that their rental home is not fit to live in during the term of their tenancy.

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.7 Gas Safety

Where properties have gas installations, or mains gas connected, the landlord is responsible for the following:



Ensuring a Gas Safe registered engineer checks installations annually.



Getting any recommended works completed.



Providing a valid Gas Safe Certificate for the property to each tenant before or at the start of the tenancy and within 30 days of any subsequent Gas Safe Certificate renewal.



Under no circumstances should you pass these responsibilities on to your tenants, either verbally or within the tenancy agreement.

NOTE!

A gas safety check will still be required if there is capped gas pipework to the property and no gas appliances in the rental.

If a landlord fails to comply with these regulations, then they can be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who could then prosecute.

Regulations do not apply to gas appliances owned by the tenant and a tenant must report any defect they become aware of and not use an unsafe appliance.

It is strongly advised that a landlord does not give permission for a tenant to install or make use of a non-authorised gas appliance in their property as this may invalidate any insurance in place.

Most insurance policies in particular prohibit the use of portable bottled Liquefied Petroleum Gas heaters in rental properties.

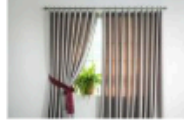
TIPS:

- Gas Safety Inspections can be booked two months in advance of the expiry date and still retain the expiry date! Speak to your gas engineer about this.
- To find a qualified Gas Engineer in your area and for more resources on gas safety, visit <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk>

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



3.8 Safety of furniture

 The regulations apply to:	 The regulations don't apply to:
 Furniture	 Sleeping bags
 Beds, headboards & mattresses	 Bed clothes
 Sofa beds and futons	 Loose mattress covers
 Scatter cushions	 Pillow cases
 Pillows	 Curtains
 Loose furniture covers	 Carpets

Summary of the Regulations:

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (amended 1989 and 1993) are UK law, and are designed to ensure that upholstery components and composites used for furniture supplied in the UK meet specified ignition resistance levels. There are five elements contained within the Regulations that are appropriate to landlords:

1. Filling materials must meet specified ignition requirements
2. Upholstery composites must be cigarette resistant
3. Covers must be match resistant
4. A permanent fire safety label must be fitted to every item of new furniture (with the exception of mattresses and bed-bases)
5. A display label must be fitted to every item of new furniture at the point of sale (with the exception of mattresses, bed-bases, pillows, scatter cushions, seat pads, loose covers sold separately from the furniture and stretch covers)

TIP:

Keep a copy of each invoice for purchases of furniture and furnishings supplied in rental properties, and record photographs of safety labels on each item within inventory and condition reports.

MODULE 3: THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM



You have reached the end of Module 3.

Please now complete the end of module test.



GREATER MANCHESTER **GOOD LANDLORD CHARTER**

