

Security Standards in HMOs & Rented Properties



Minimum security specifications from Nottinghamshire Police's Pre Crime Unit in partnership with Nottingham City Council Environmental Health Team

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**Nottingham
City Council**

Introduction

The Security requirements contained within this document specify the minimum security levels required at rented properties and especially Homes of Multiple Occupation, HMO. This document is as a result of working in partnership with Environmental Health Officers who risk assess homes under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Security of doors

Door construction for both HMO & other Rented properties

Wooden doors should be solid wood & a minimum 45mm thickness

If not sure if the door is solid wood, "Check It" – Knock on it – does it sound hollow, Move it does it feel lightweight - if so it is unlikely to be a solid door. See item 4 "Security of Doors" diagram on page 2.

Check the door frame – Does it appear strong enough – does it move or is it damaged. If so recommend repairs or replacement
If the door appears lightweight, ie an internal door used as external - recommend replacement to PAS 24 Standards.

Metal Doors – check that the door and frame are in a good condition, if not consider replacement to PAS 24 Standards.

PVCu & Composite Doors – frame & modern multipoint hook and shoot bolt locks fairly strong. Check the door frame – Does it appear strong enough – does it move or is it damaged. Check the bottom panel to the door, does it appear flimsy, or has it been damaged in the past? If damaged recommend a replacement to PAS 24 Standards.

All Doors

Check that the door hinges are sturdy and secured with strong, long screws. For added security, fit hinge bolts. These are cheap and help to reinforce the hinge side of a door against force. Hinge bolts or security hinges are especially important if your door opens outwards. See item 2 "Security of Doors" diagram on page 2.

Glass panels in or surrounding the exit/entry doors are especially vulnerable consider increasing security to these by the fitting of security film, polycarbonate secondary glazing or replace with laminated glass to a minimum thickness of 6.4mm.

Letterbox - Fit a letterbox cage or restrictor which prevents burglars from putting their hands or gadgets through and trying the thumb turn from the inside. See item 3 "Security of Doors" diagram on page 2.

Spy hole or door viewer should be fitted if there is no window near the door which allows residents to see who is at the doorstep. See item 1 "Security of Doors" diagram on page 2.

Door chains should be fitted to the door. These allow the door to be opened a short distance to allow checking of identification, but these must be securely fixed to avoid screws being pulled out. See item 6 "Security of Doors" diagram on page 2.

If looking to replace an old or damaged door install a new door to Secured by Design or to PAS 24 Standards, "Doors of Enhanced Security" further details can be found at www.securedbydesign.com

Door locking

Exit/Entry Doors for HMO's

Wooden or metal doors

All exit doors recommend a 5 lever mortise lock key to BS 8621 Standards operated from outside by a key but thumb turn operated from inside the house.

Recommend a second lock to the exit doors at a height of a third from the top of the door – a rim latch lock (Yale lock) this will allow the door to be locked shut when closed to prevent unlawful persons access without the use of a key.

PVCu & Composite Doors – these will usually have a factory fitted multipoint locking system with a Euro profile lock, operated by key entry from outside and thumb turn operation from inside the house. It is difficult to fit additional locks to these doors, recommend the door be fitted with a split spindle so the door can only be opened from the outside with a key.

Entry /Exit Doors for Rented Non HMO Properties

Wooden or metal doors

All exit doors recommend a 5 lever mortise lock key either to BS3621 or BS 8621 Standards operated either by the use of a key from both inside and outside the premises or operated from outside by a key but thumb turn operated from inside the premises.

Recommend a second lock to the exit doors at a height of a third from the top of the door – a rim latch lock (Yale lock) this will allow the door to be locked shut when closed to prevent unlawful persons access without the use of a key. See item 5 on the diagram below.

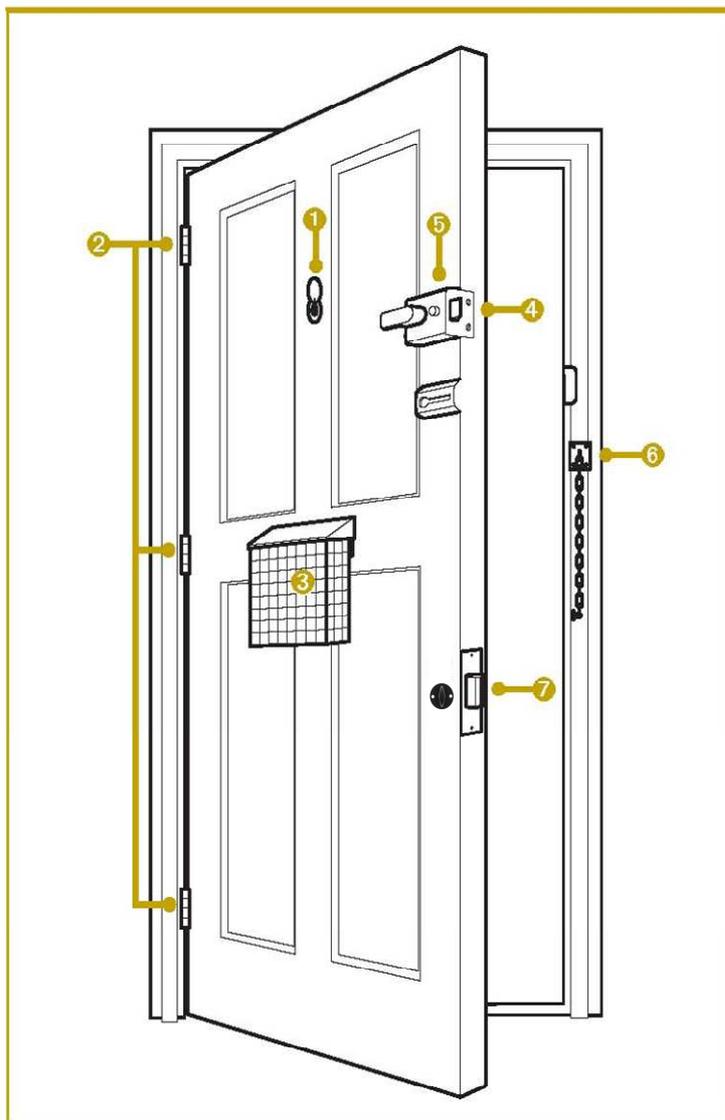
PVCu & Composite Doors – these will usually have a factory fitted multipoint locking system with a Euro profile lock, operated by key entry from outside and thumb turn operation from inside the house. It is difficult to fit additional locks to these doors, recommend the door be fitted with a split spindle so the door can only be opened from the outside with a key.

Apartment or HMO Bedroom doors

Each door to individual residents rooms which lead on to the stair well must have self closing fire doors to all habitable rooms. These to be a minimum of half hour fire resistance,

The Door locking system needs to be key operated from outside but thumb turn operated from inside the room.

Security of doors diagram



Rear Doors

Rear doors, or non fire escape doors should have, as a minimum a central lock fitted with external key operation and an internal thumb turn (BS8621 to wooden doors or Euro profile lock to PVCu or Composite doors), together with two throw bolts (non locking) – it is recommended these are fitted one third from the top and bottom of the door to give a spread of security to the whole door.

Door Lock Detail and British Standards

A mortice lock is a lock that is fitted in to a hole or pocket of a door, the word mortice refers to the hole in the door in which the lock is fitted. These types of locks are most commonly found on wooden doors and are more popular in the UK and Europe.

The British Standard Kite Mark BS3621 or BS8621. The Kite Mark is applied to a lock which has undergone a vigorous testing procedure to make them particularly secure against any person trying to break the lock, these tests include drilling, sawing and applying force to open the lock. They have minimum tolerances to pass but once these locks have passed the test, they are then able to wear the British Standard mark of approval. This mark is often essential with household insurance companies, who do specify that the final exit door locks must be to the BS3621 standard before they can offer any kind of cover.

BS3621 Lock is operated by a key from both sides

BS8621 Lock is operated by a key to the outside but a thumb turn to the inside of the premises

Typical BS3621 Mortise Lock

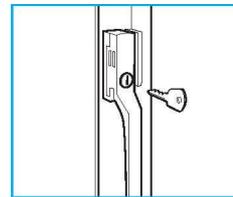


Windows

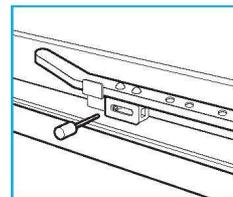
All ground floor and other easily accessible windows, i.e. close to a flat roof or balcony should be fitted with at least one suitable window lock unless these are designated as a Fire Escape. Many windows will have factory fitted locks these should not require additional locks unless they are damaged. The residents must be supplied with keys to ensure these can be kept securely locked

The type of retrofit window lock depends on the window and its construction, a choice of locks is as below but advice should be sought from a Locksmith on the correct choice of lock for a particular window.

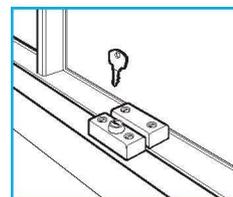
If looking to replace an old or damaged windows recommend installation a new windows to Secured by Design, BS7950 or PAS 24:2012 Standards, "Windows of Enhanced Security" and install laminated glazing to glass in all ground floor or easily accessible windows: further details can be found at www.securedbydesign.com



Casement locks make it harder to open windows without the correct key.



Fanlight locks have a metal bolt to secure the metal arm, which is used to open and close the window. Ideally though, you should not rely on these locks – fit a casement lock too.



The lock shown here fastens the two windows together. A more discreet version is embedded into the wooden frame. Or there are devices to stop the window opening beyond a certain limit.

Gardens, Gates & Fencing

To prevent intruders getting to the back and sides of the premises install strong fencing to a minimum height of 1.8m and fit a robust lockable gate to the same height across the pathway. If the premises shares a pathway or alley with a neighbour, gain their permission and for help with the costs. Any gaps or holes in the fencing should be repaired or renewed as appropriate.

Fencing or planting to the front of the premises should be kept no higher than 1m to allow for good natural surveillance.

Do not use barbed or razor wire, or broken glass – you could be held legally responsible for any injuries caused. You can get safer alternatives that are designed not to cut or injure.

Any garden tools should be secured away to ensure these can not be used to effect an entry. Any ladders should be secured by chain and padlock to a secure anchor point again to ensure these can not be used unlawfully.

External Lighting

Good outdoor lighting can deter or draw attention to a burglar.

The most appropriate form of lighting to use is high-efficiency low-energy lighting, controlled by a dusk-to-dawn sensor so that it comes on only when it's dark. This provides a constant and uniform level of light. It costs very little to run and helps to create a more reassuring environment

Lights that are automatically turned on when a person passes by a motion sensor, regularly referred to as PIR lights, can be annoying to neighbours and dangerous to passing traffic. If you have these, make sure that they are positioned at a height of at least 2.5 metres (8 feet), to prevent tampering and the light source angled down so as not to illuminate neighbouring properties.

Burglar Alarms

Burglar Alarms can act as a deterrent – telling the burglar that preventative measures have been taken to secure the premises, and to act as an alarm warning in case the security is breached.

Intruder alarms should be considered for all properties, however with HMO's the issue of practicality and false activation is of a concern. In a house that has multiple occupancy. The issue of which areas are to be alarmed and who has the authority to arm and disarm the alarm system can be complicated.

If an alarm is fitted then it should be to BS: EN50131 Standards with the design of the system applicable to the layout and use of the premises. If an intruder alarm is fitted to the premises then it should be maintained with an annual maintenance contract.

If the alarm system installed is an audible only intruder alarm that only sounds a bell or siren, if it is triggered, an external sounder on your premises activates for up to 20 minutes; ensure the alarm system is well maintained so the activation time is not exceeded, this will ensure the alarm is not ignored or becomes a nuisance to neighbours.



Nottinghamshire Alert

Nottinghamshire Alert is a system which allows Nottinghamshire Police, Neighbourhood Watch in Nottinghamshire and other organisations that work for the public to send community safety messages to you quickly and efficiently.

If you are interested in getting updates on major incidents, advice on crime prevention and community safety and alerts about criminals operating in your area, make sure you are registered with the system.

You can report antisocial behaviour in your area and receive responses from police about the incident you have reported and find out how to join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme or set up your own in your street by registering.

What do I get?

- A totally free service — you can control your message settings and choose to receive alerts via email, text message to your mobile phone or recorded voicemail. You can unsubscribe at any time.
- Information about crime trends, incidents and appeals from authorised police officers and police staff.
- Report suspicious and antisocial behaviour (not crime), receive updates and responses about them.
- Start, manage or request to join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in your area.
- Configure how, when and which messages you'd like to receive.

If you want to know more about Nottinghamshire Alert, contact Nottinghamshire Police's Pre Crime Unit.

Tel: 101, extension 800 3011

Email: nottinghamshirealert@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk

To register for Nottinghamshire Alert, visit www.nottinghamshirealert.co.uk

If you would like a paper copy of the registration form, call **101** or visit your local police station to request one.

For more advice on crime prevention contact
Nottinghamshire Police's Pre Crime Unit
Arrow Centre
Hucknall
Nottinghamshire
NG15 8AY
Tel: **101**

Tell us what priorities you want your local police to focus on with our online survey

www.neighbourhoodprioritysurvey.co.uk

If you have information about criminals operating in your area, call Crimestoppers anonymously on
0800 555 111