



# Fire Safety Guidance

**Private Sector Housing**

Including

**HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

## HOW THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT IS TO BE USED

This document is intended to give guidance on relevant fire safety provisions that the Local Authority, in consultation with the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, feel would be necessary in private housing including houses in multiple occupation. This guidance is not a prescriptive standard and should not be used as such, any design of systems and necessary fire precautions should take into account a suitable fire risk assessment.

**This document is a generalised guide to the minimum fire precautions and means of escape in a range of typical houses in multiple occupation. More detailed guidance is provided in the LACORS document :- HOUSING – Fire Safety guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing. Further guidance should be sought on any issues you are unsure about or situations where the premise has an unusual or more complex layout.**

Owners should also be aware of the relevant sections of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and in particular the guidance document for fire safety risk assessments for sleeping accommodation which requires that all premises are subject to carry out a fire risk assessment and that the person responsible implements its findings. For more information see [www.northyorksfire.gov.uk](http://www.northyorksfire.gov.uk).

The fire risk assessment must be in writing where the premises are licensed or where 5 or more persons are employed to work, however, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority strongly recommends and advises that all fire risk assessments should be recorded or written down. (See attached risk assessment form).

Owners should have regard to the relevant parts of the latest edition of British Standards 5839 (fire alarm), 5266 (emergency lighting) and others as stated in this document. For more information see [www.northyorksfire.gov.uk](http://www.northyorksfire.gov.uk).

**The existing fire safety standards in the property may not be the same as those recommended, but as long as you can demonstrate that they meet an equivalent standard of fire safety, they are likely to be acceptable. If it is found that your existing arrangements are not satisfactory there may be other ways to comply with the requirements.**

To help landlords understand the technical aspects of the guide each section is accompanied by a diagram showing typical layouts.

In relation to enforcement of fire safety the local authority will assess the risk under the Housing Act 2004, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and take the most appropriate action, that being to serve a Hazard Awareness Notice, Improvement Notice or Prohibition Notice. However without prejudice to individual circumstances, it is unlikely that enforcement action would normally be taken against a property that complied with the recommendations of this guidance.

Please note that in respect of Houses in Multiple Occupation a 'Shared House' would normally be a dwelling occupied by a group of employees, students, friends or other related groups whilst a 'Bedsit' would normally constitute a number of separate tenancies who are relatively independent of each other.

For all new build properties or listed buildings, please consult your local authority building control department.

**THIS DOCUMENT WAS PRODUCED BY THE NORTH YORKSHIRE DISTRICT AUTHORITIES, THE CITY OF YORK COUNCIL AND NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY – the recommendations below should be considered in conjunction with Part C of the LACORS Guidance on Fire Safety Provisions for certain types of existing housing**

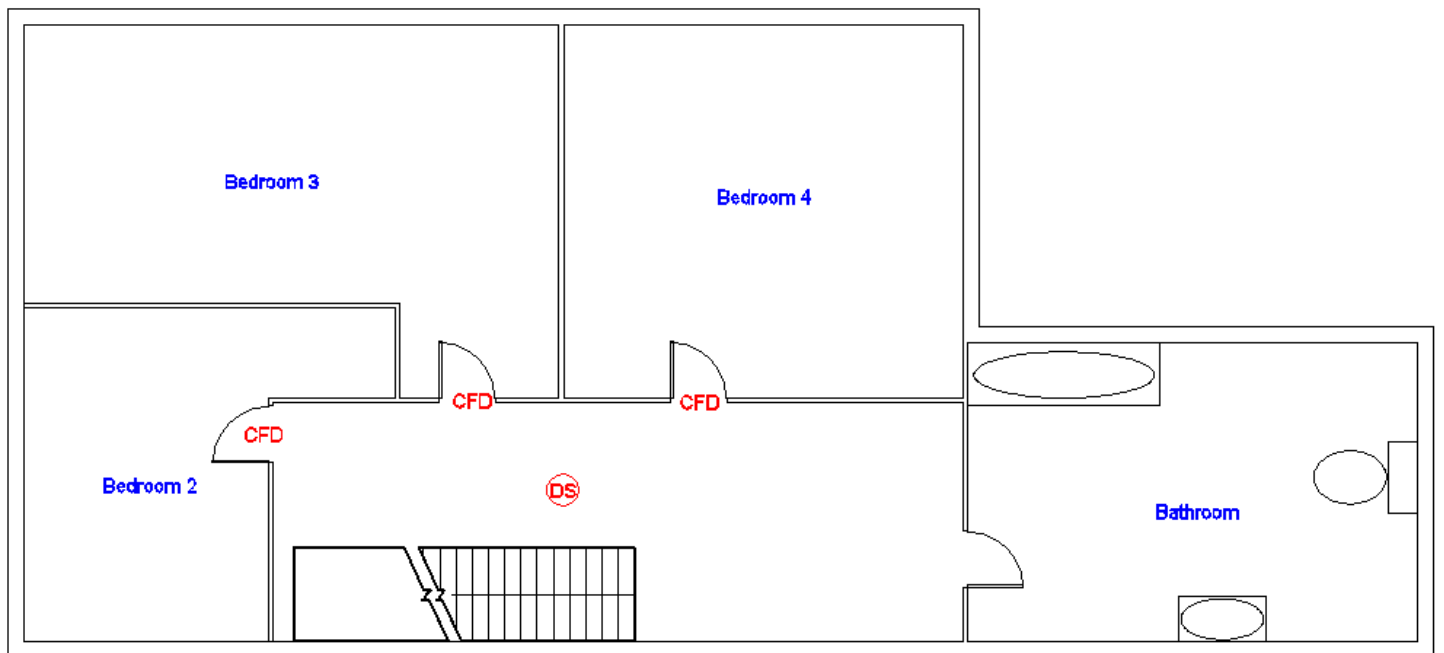
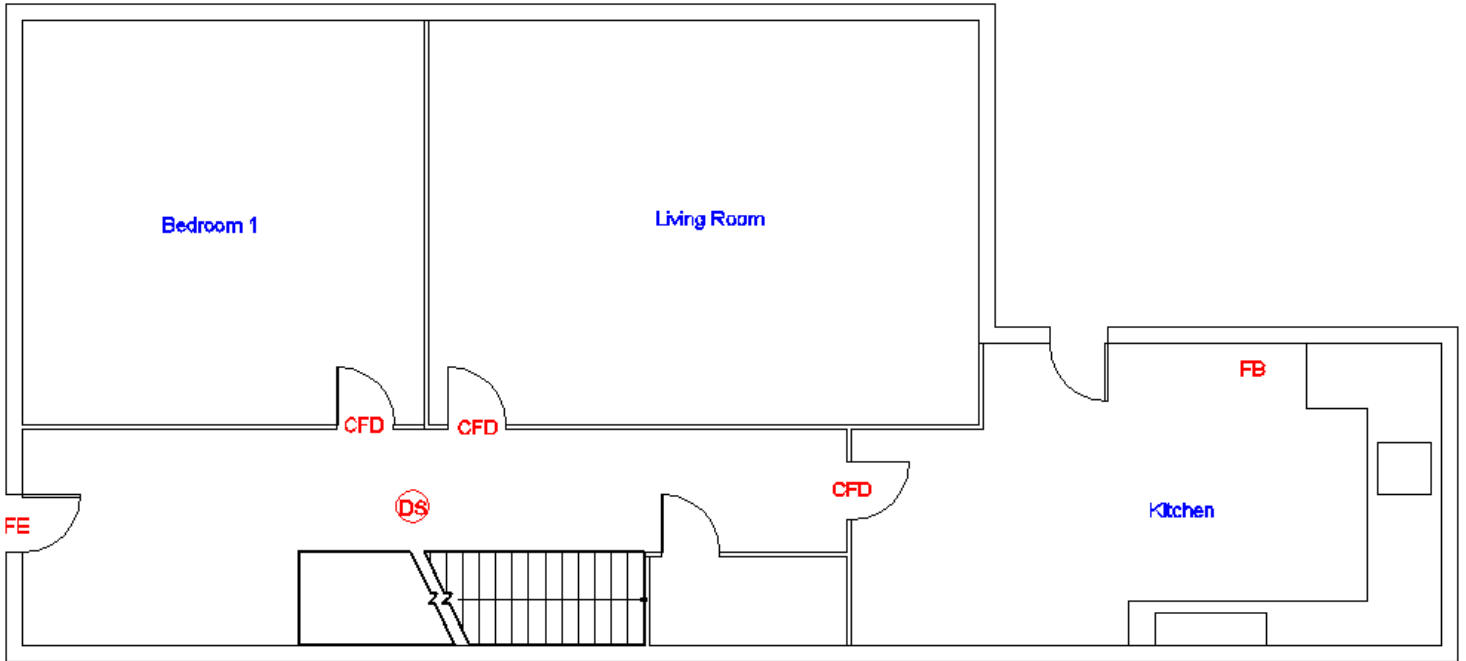
**1. TWO AND THREE STOREY HOUSES**

**Single Family Houses, .i.e. Not a House in Multiple Occupation.**

Two individuals or a resident owner plus up to two lodgers would also fall into this category.

1. Mains interlinked smoke detectors with integral battery back up on each level, in accordance with British Standard 5839, Part 6, Grade D system.
2. Sound well constructed and close fitting doors to all rooms off the hall and landings.
3. Sound conventional construction to the escape route.
4. In three storey houses or where the layout is poor - for example, a bedroom constituting an inner room or a staircase descending into the kitchen, then consideration should be given to alternative or additional protection against fire such as:
  - The provision of one or more escape windows at first floor level accessible to all occupants.
  - A requirement to install a Grade D detection system, British Standard 5839 Part 6, incorporating mains interlinked smoke detectors on each level and possibly a heat detector in the kitchen.
  - The provision of a fire doorset to the kitchen to achieve 1/2 hour fire resistance. (for example where a staircase descends to a small lobby between kitchen and living room in a three storey property).

# EXAMPLE: 2 STOREY FAMILY HOUSE



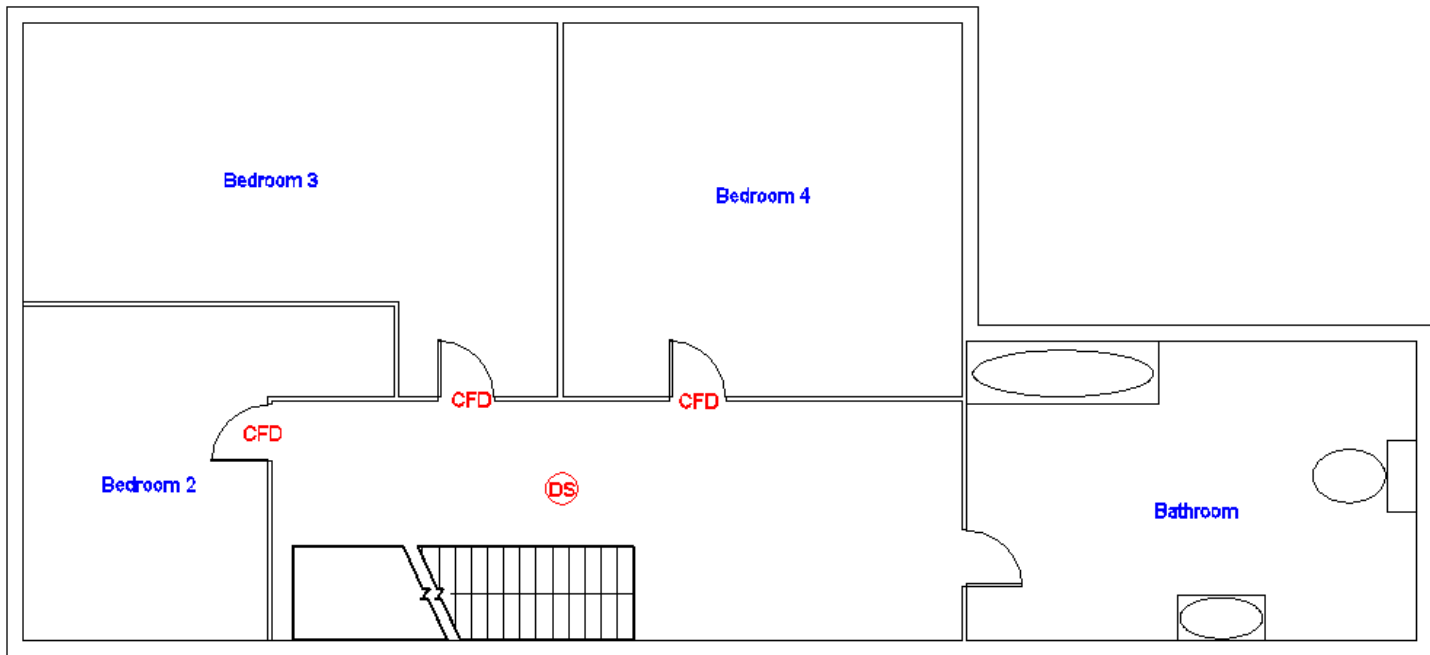
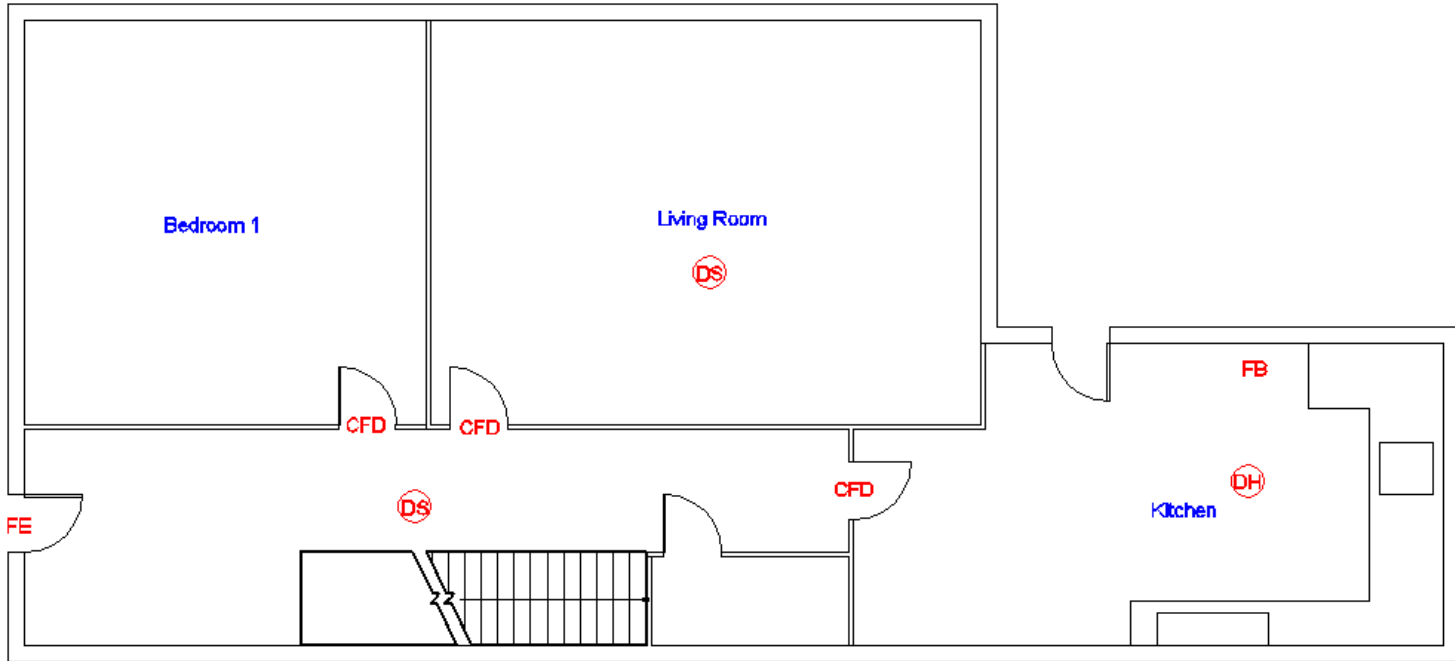
## **2. TWO STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

## **Shared House for up to 6 occupiers**

This type of accommodation is generally thought to represent less risk than bedsit and hostel type accommodation and therefore if the owner can provide suitable evidence via a risk assessment that the management and subsequent risks have been reduced the following standards should be acceptable.

1. Automatic Fire Detection – Interlinked hard-wired smoke detectors with integral battery back up located at each level within the staircase enclosure linked to a smoke detector in the living room and to a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839: Part 6) Cellars to have detection if present.
2. Sound, well constructed and close fitting doors to all rooms off the escape route. It is recommended that fire doors should be fitted to kitchens and/or communal living rooms exiting on to the means of escape.
3. Sound, conventional construction to the escape route.
4. Where construction standards are poor, travel distances are long or other high risk factors are present, a 30 minute protected route may be required.
5. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times (for example. A Yale type lock or thumb turn lock on the final exit door).
6. Fire fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to the shared kitchen to comply with BS EN 1869.
  - Recommendation for 1 x 13A fire extinguisher to the ground floor entrance area and first floor landing (not dry powder).
7. A satisfactory layout and means of escape should be provided for the building. Ideally the means of escape should be directly to a final exit door and not pass through a room. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example staircase leading down into a kitchen) then an escape window at first floor level accessible to all occupants should be provided and where practical a fire door fitted to the bottom of the stair to separate the kitchen from the stair. The provision of a fire door at the base of the stair is not necessary if all first floor rooms have access to an escape window without having to go across the top of an open stairway.

# EXAMPLE: 2 STOREY SHARED HOUSE UP TO 6 OCCUPIERS



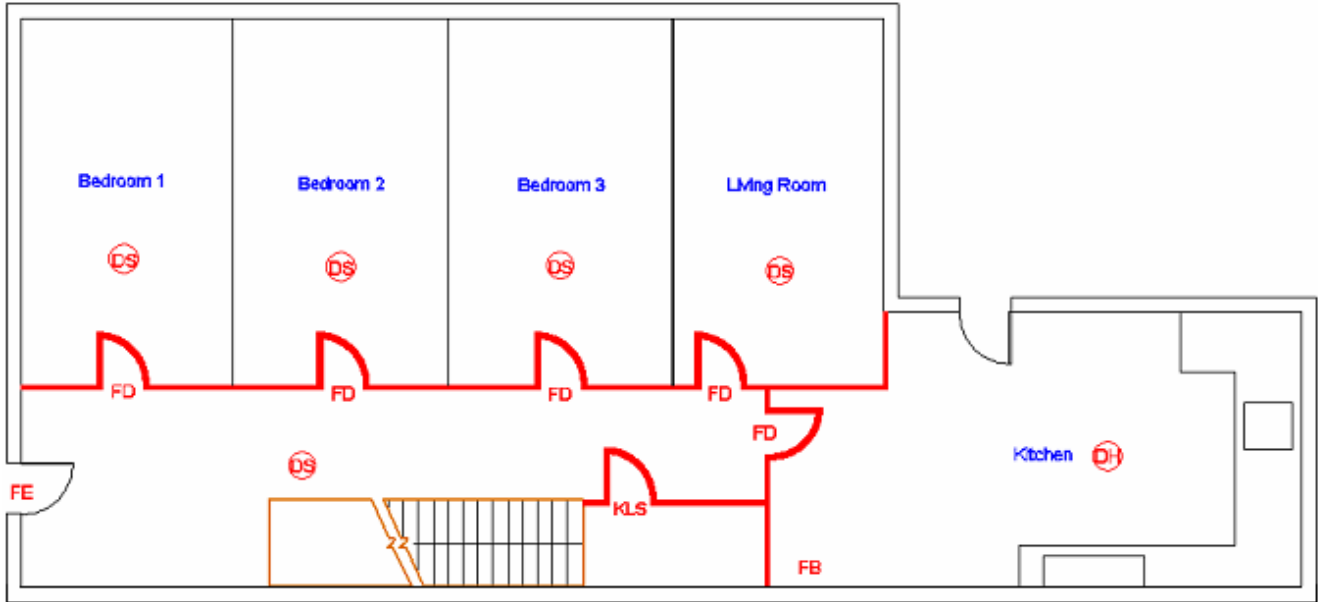
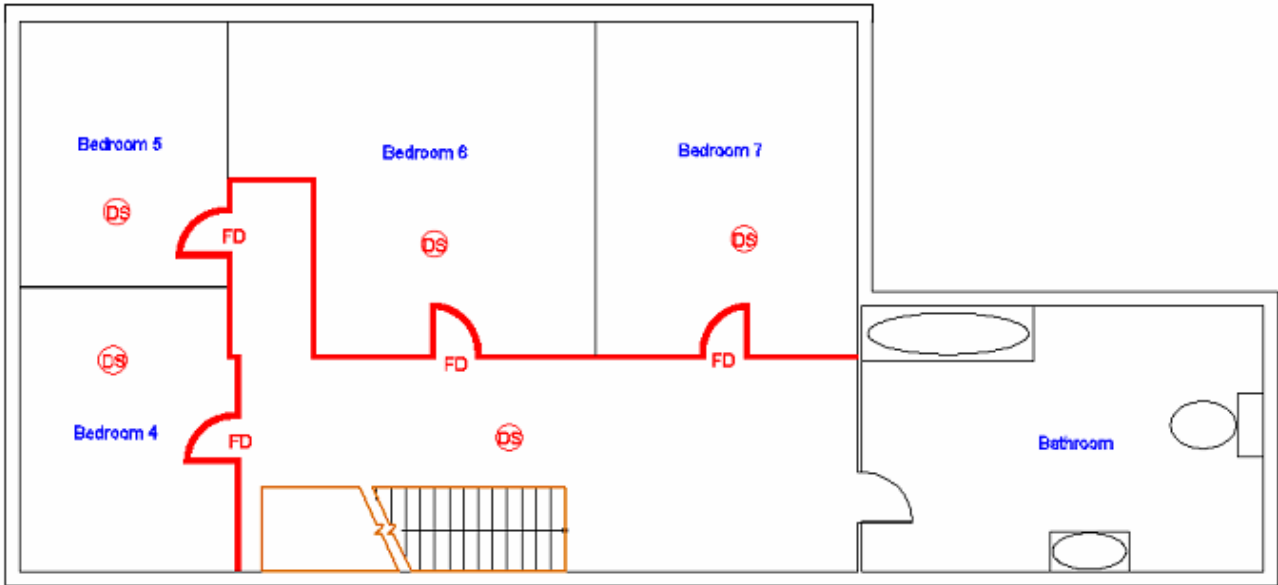
### 3. TWO STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

### Shared House of 7 or more occupiers

This type of accommodation is generally thought to represent less of a risk than bedsit or hostel accommodation but an increase in the number of occupants is likely to increase the risks above those in a small shared house. Therefore if the owner can provide suitable evidence via a risk assessment that the management and subsequent risks have been reduced the following standards should be acceptable.

1. Automatic Fire Detection (AFD) – interlinked hard-wired smoke detectors (heat detector to kitchen) with integral battery back up within the staircase enclosure, rooms accessed from the staircase enclosure (with the exception of the bathroom/WC) (Include all bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms and cellar (if present) and any corridors used as the escape route. (BS: 5839 Part 1 and BS: 5839 Part 6).
2. Fire doors to all rooms leading onto a means of escape (with the exception of bathrooms/wc)
3. Walls to the ground floor kitchen and to the staircase enclosure to be ½ hour fire resistant. Ground floor ceilings to the kitchen and staircase enclosure to be ½ hour fire resistant.
4. Stairs to be underdrawn to provide ½ hour fire resistance and understairs cupboards to have ½ hour fire resistant doors and lining or the cupboard to be taken out of permanent use. Where a smoke detector (linked to the system) is fitted in the cupboard a fire door to the cupboard is not required.
5. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times ( for example, a Yale type lock/thumb turn on the final exit).
6. Fire fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to the shared kitchen.
  - Recommended - 1 x 13A fire extinguisher to the ground floor entrance area and first floor landing (not dry powder).
7. A satisfactory layout and means of escape should be provided for the building. Ideally the means of escape should be directly to a final exit door and not pass through a room. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example staircase leading down into a kitchen) then an escape window at first floor level accessible to all occupants should be provided and a ½ hour fire door fitted to the bottom of the stair (where practical) to separate the kitchen from the stair. The provision of a fire door at the base of the stair is not necessary if all first floor rooms have access to an escape window without having to go across the top of an open stairway. In addition where the escape route is not ideal and exit route is complex consideration will be given to the provision of emergency lighting.

# EXAMPLE: 2 STOREY SHARED HOUSE 7 OR MORE OCCUPIERS

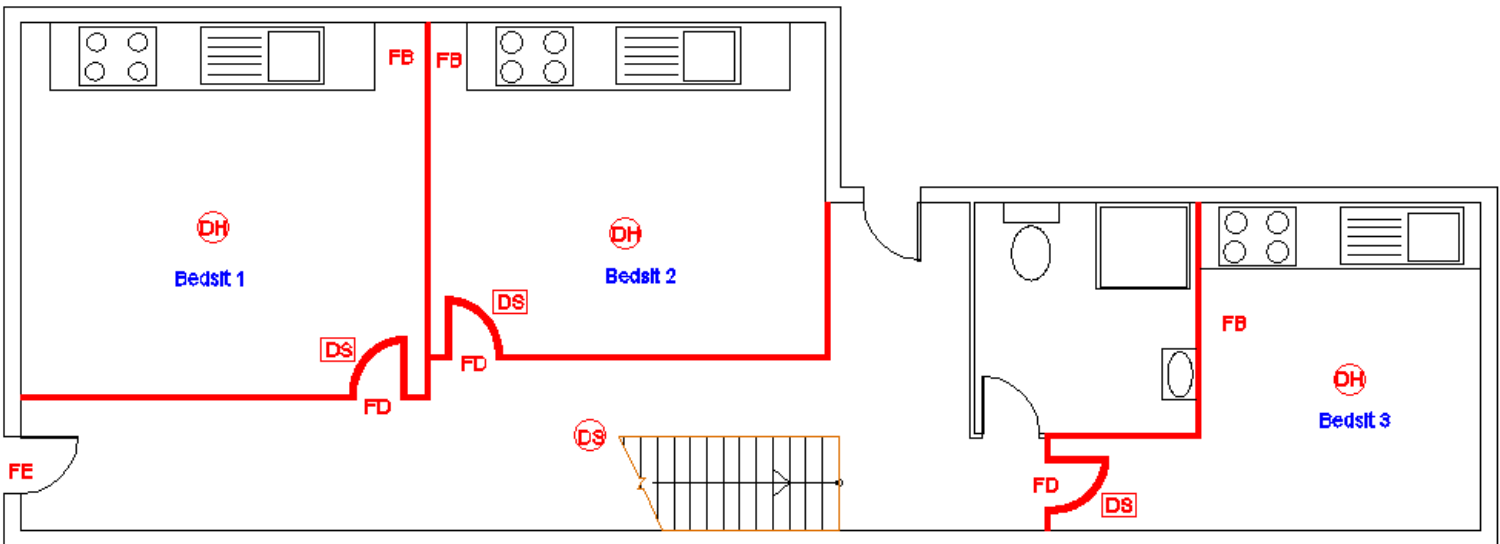
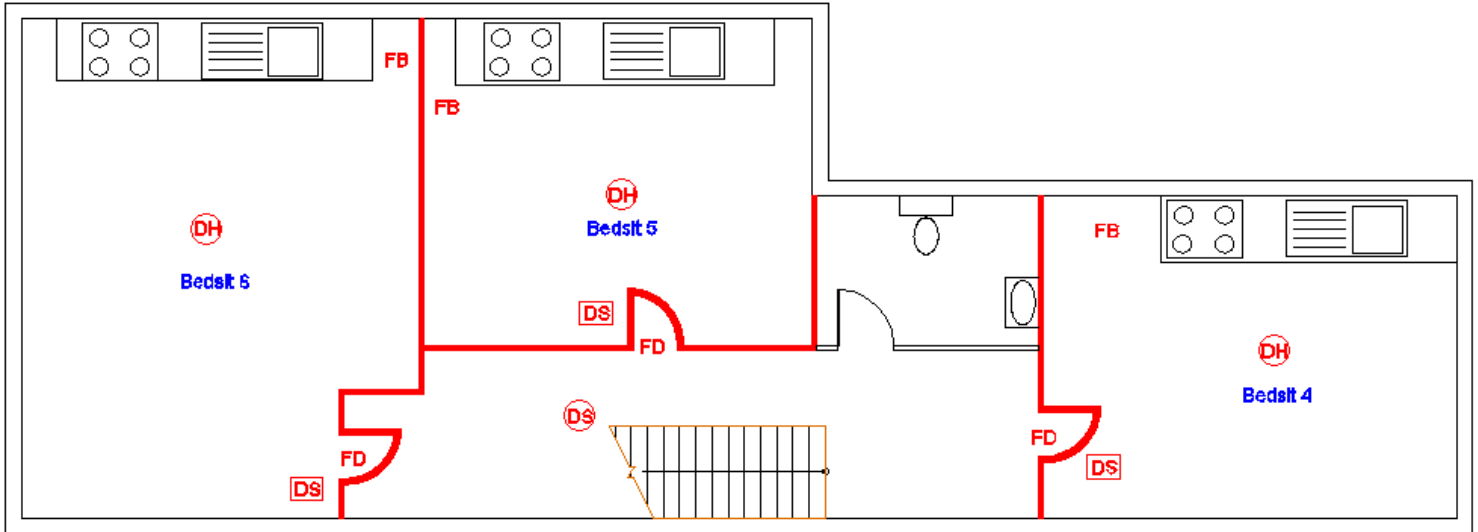




<b>4. TWO STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION</b>	<b>Bedsits</b>
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1. Fire Detection – Mixed system Grade D system, BS 5839 Part 6. Interlinked mains wired smoke alarms with integral battery back up located throughout the escape route. Where cooking facilities are sited within bedsits and additional smoke alarm with integral battery back up located in each bedsit. Where cooking facilities are sited in shared kitchen, not within bedsits, interlinked smoke alarms with integral battery back up located in each communal kitchen and interlinked smoke alarms with integral battery back up located in any cellar.
2. Fire doors to all rooms that can be accessed from the staircase, (with the exception of the bathroom/WC).
3. Fire door to the kitchen in all layouts.
4. 30 minute protected route including wall and ceiling constructions to risk rooms.
5. Stairs to be underdrawn to provide 1/2 hour fire resistance and understairs cupboards to have 1/2 hour fire resistant doors and lining or the cupboard to be taken out of permanent use. Where a smoke detector (linked to the system) is fitted in the cupboard a fire door to the cupboard is not required.
6. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times.( for example, a Yale type/thumb turn lock on the final exit door).
7. Emergency lighting to the escape routes may be necessary when escape route is long or complex or lacking effective borrowed light.(British Standard 5266: Part 1).
8. Fire fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to each room where cooking takes place.
  - Recommended 1 x 13A fire extinguisher to the ground floor entrance area and first floor landing (not dry powder).
9. A satisfactory means of escape from the building should be provided. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example, the staircase leads down into the kitchen), then an alternative means of escape should be provided (for example construction of a corridor or lobby at ground floor level to ensure a protected route to the final exit, or the provision of escape windows to first floor rooms).

# EXAMPLE: 2 STOREY BEDSITS

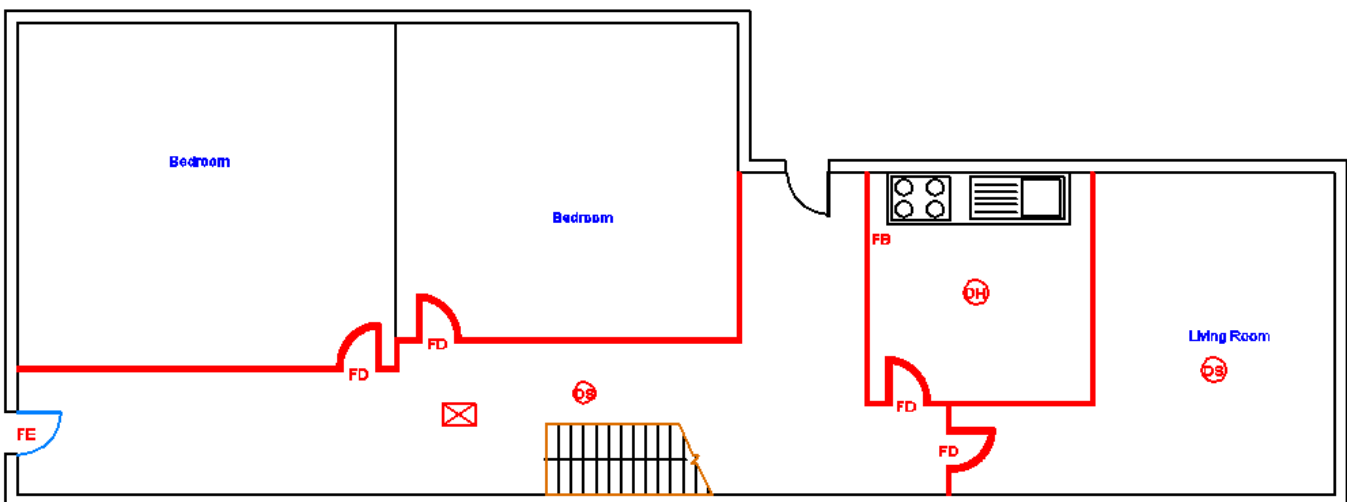
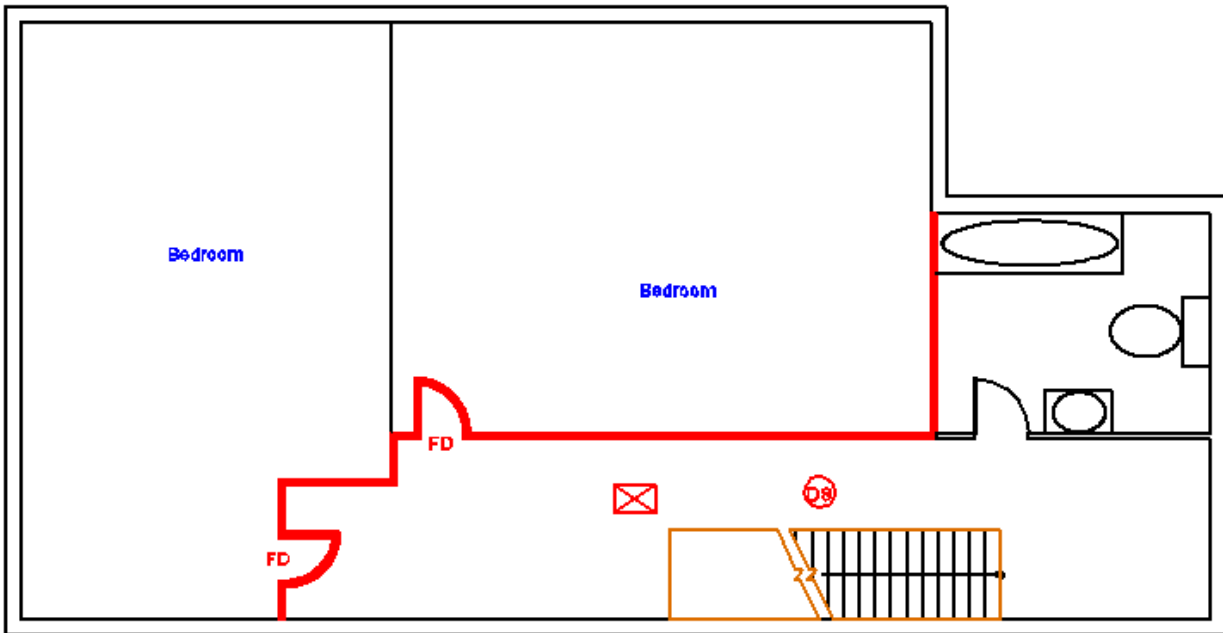
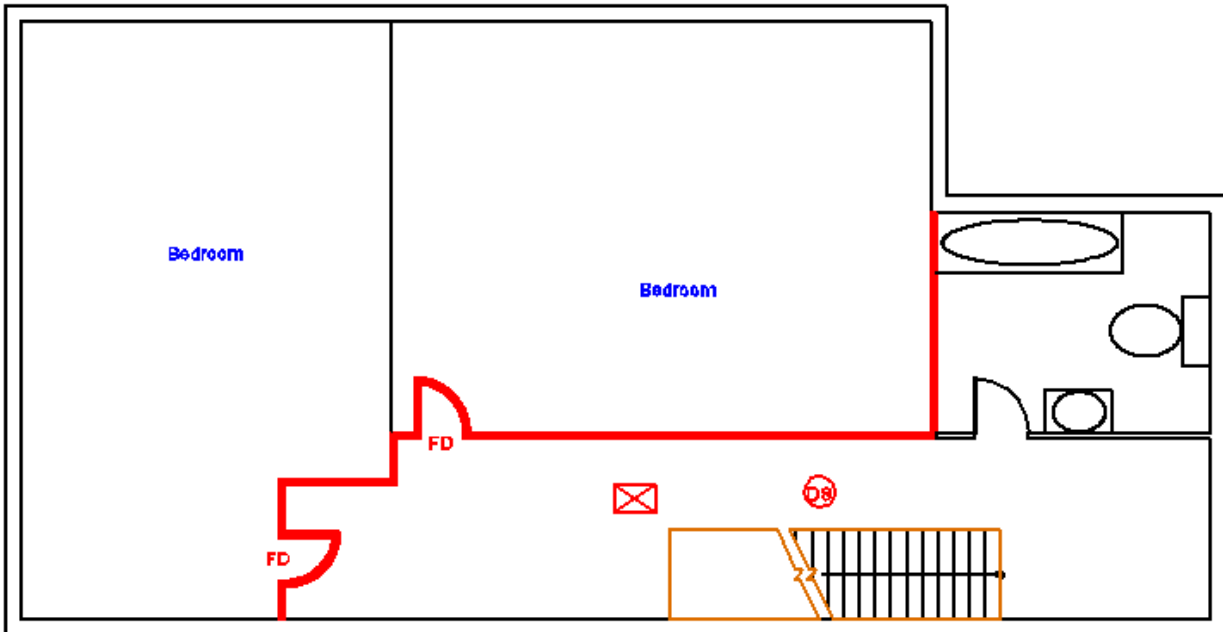


**5. THREE OR FOUR STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

**Shared House of up to 6 occupiers**

1. Provision of mains interlinked smoke detectors to the escape route at each level and to the living room interlinked with heat detector to the kitchen with integral battery back up. Interlinked detector to cellar if present. (Grade D BS 5839 : Part 6). Ensure a minimum sound level of 75 decibels in all bedrooms.
2. **In three storey properties it may be acceptable to have a protected route and close fitting doors capable of achieving 20 minutes fire resistance, however when carrying out a full refurbishment or upgrade of the property the following standard should be considered.** A protected escape route should be provided i.e. 1/2 hour fire resistant doors to all rooms leading onto a means of escape (with the exception of bathrooms/wc), including fire doorsets to British Standard 8214 (where detection is not within bedrooms, smoke seals should not be fitted to fire doors). Higher risk sources shall also be protected by 30 minutes protection (for example electric meters in the escape route, understairs cupboards.)
3. Stairs to be underdrawn to provide 1/2 hour fire resistance and understairs cupboards to have 1/2 hour fire resistant doors and lining or the cupboard to be taken out of permanent use. Where a smoke detector (linked to the system) is fitted in the cupboard a fire door to the cupboard is not required.
4. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times (for example, a Yale type lock/thumb turn on the fire exit door).
5. An emergency lighting system should be provided to the protected escape route to comply with BS 5266 Part 1 where the route is long, complex or lacking effective borrowed light. (this is not considered necessary where there are no communal stairways or other shared facilities above the first floor level ).
6. Fire fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to each room where cooking takes place.
  - Recommended - 1 x 13A fire extinguisher to the ground floor entrance area, first floor landing and second floor landing (not dry powder).
7. A satisfactory layout and satisfactory means of escape from the building should be provided. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example, the staircase leads down into a kitchen), then an alternative means of escape should be considered (for example construction of a lobby/corridor at ground floor to ensure a protected route to the final exit, provision of an escape window at first floor level which is accessible to all occupants of the building).

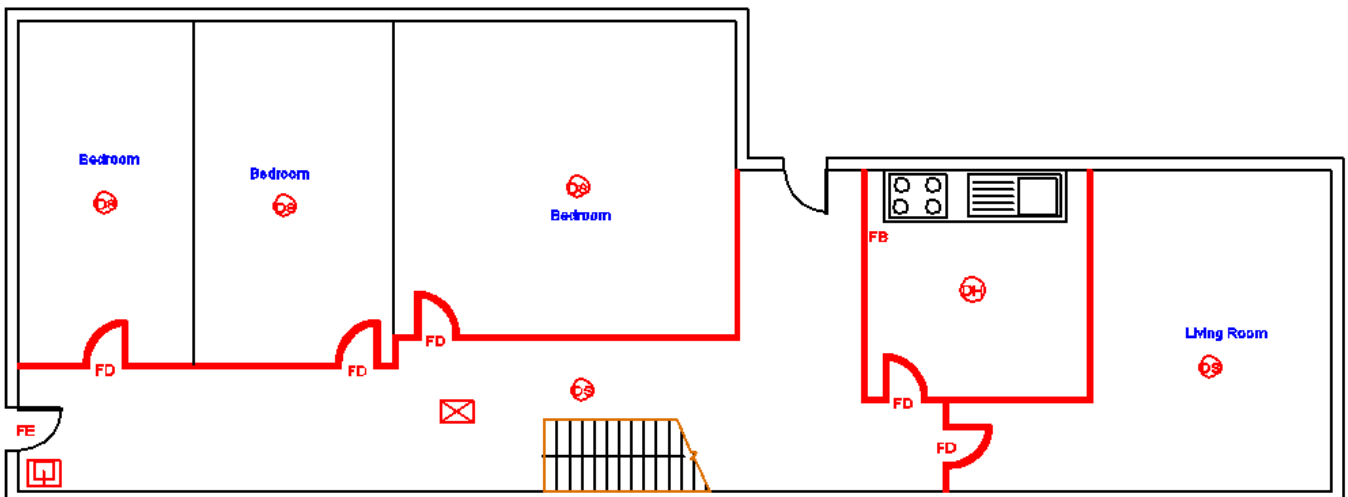
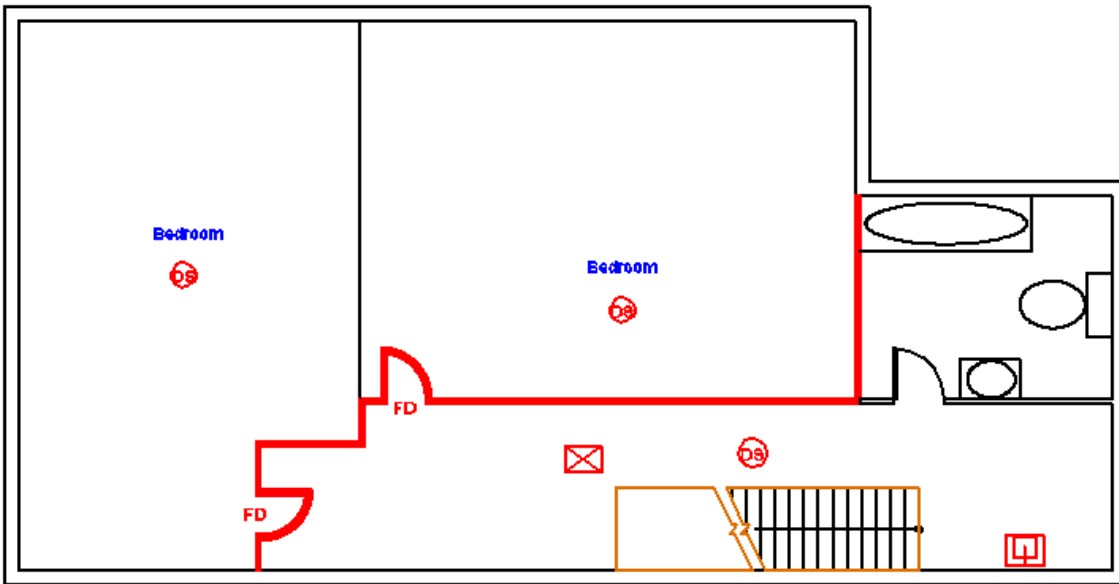
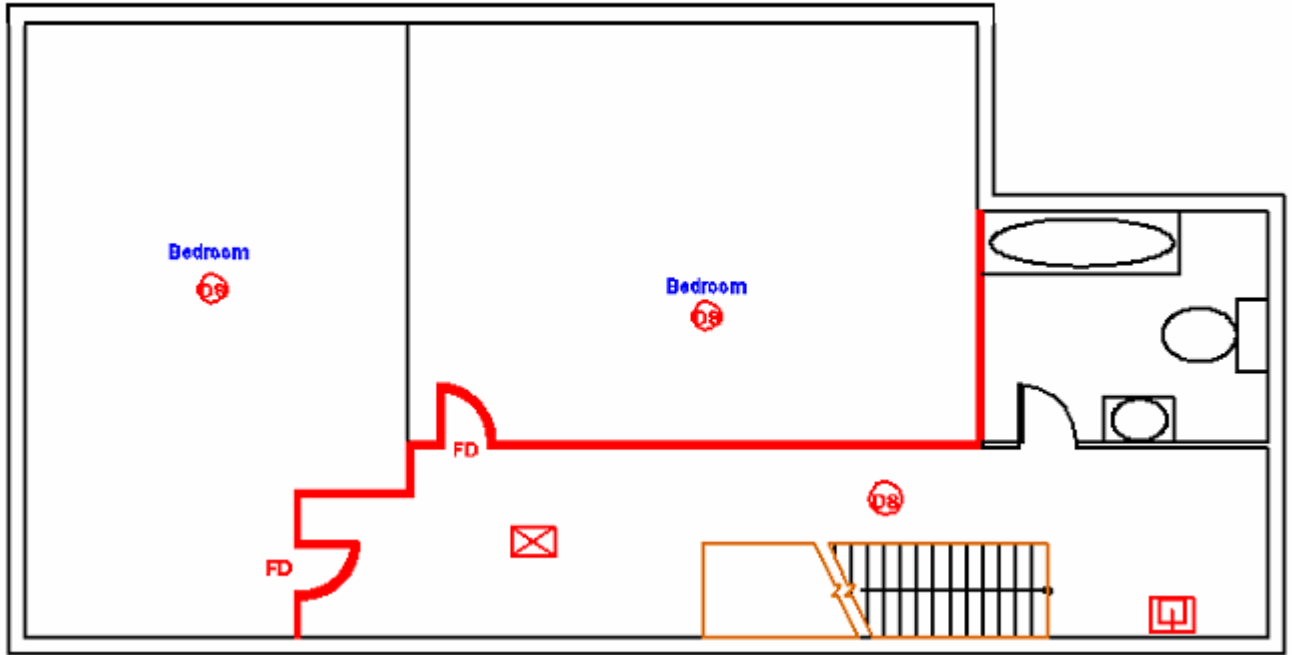
# EXAMPLE: 3 OR 4 STOREY SHARED HOUSE UP TO 6 OCCUPIERS



**6. THREE OR FOUR STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION****Shared Houses of 7 or more occupiers**

1. Automatic Fire Detection and alarm system throughout the building (staircase enclosure and lobbies and rooms leading off the staircase enclosure) (heat detectors as opposed to smoke detectors in all rooms with cooking facilities) (Grade A system in accordance with British Standard 5839: Part 1). Ensure a sound level of 75 decibels in all bedrooms.
2. Break glass call points to each floor.
3. A protected escape route should be provided i.e. 1/2 hour fire resistant doors to all rooms leading onto a means of escape (with the exception of bathrooms/wc), including fire doorsets to British Standard 8214. Higher risk sources shall also be protected by 30 minutes protection (for example electric meters in the escape route, understairs cupboards.)
4. Stairs to be underdrawn to provide 1/2 hour fire resistance and understairs cupboards to have 1/2 hour fire resistant doors and lining or the cupboard to be taken out of permanent use. Where a smoke detector (linked to the system) is fitted in the cupboard a fire door to the cupboard is not required.
5. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times ( for example, a Yale type lock on the fire exit door
6. Emergency lighting to all escape routes which are long, complex or lacking effective borrowed light. (British Standard 5266: Part 1).
7. Fire Fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to each room where cooking takes place.
  - Recommended - 1 x 13A fire extinguisher located at ground floor entrance area, first floor landing, second floor landing and third floor landing (not dry powder).
8. A satisfactory layout and satisfactory means of escape from the building should be provided. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example, the staircase leads down into a kitchen), then an alternative means of escape should be considered (for example construction of a lobby/corridor at ground floor to ensure a protected route to the final exit, provision of an escape window at first floor level which is accessible to all occupants of the building).

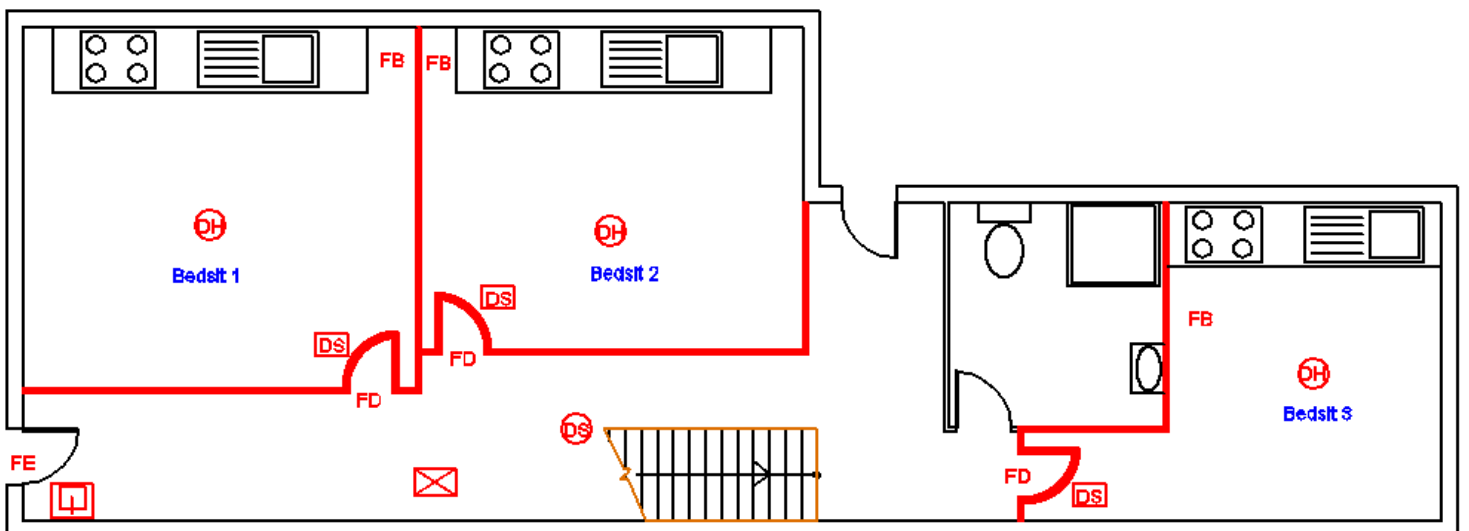
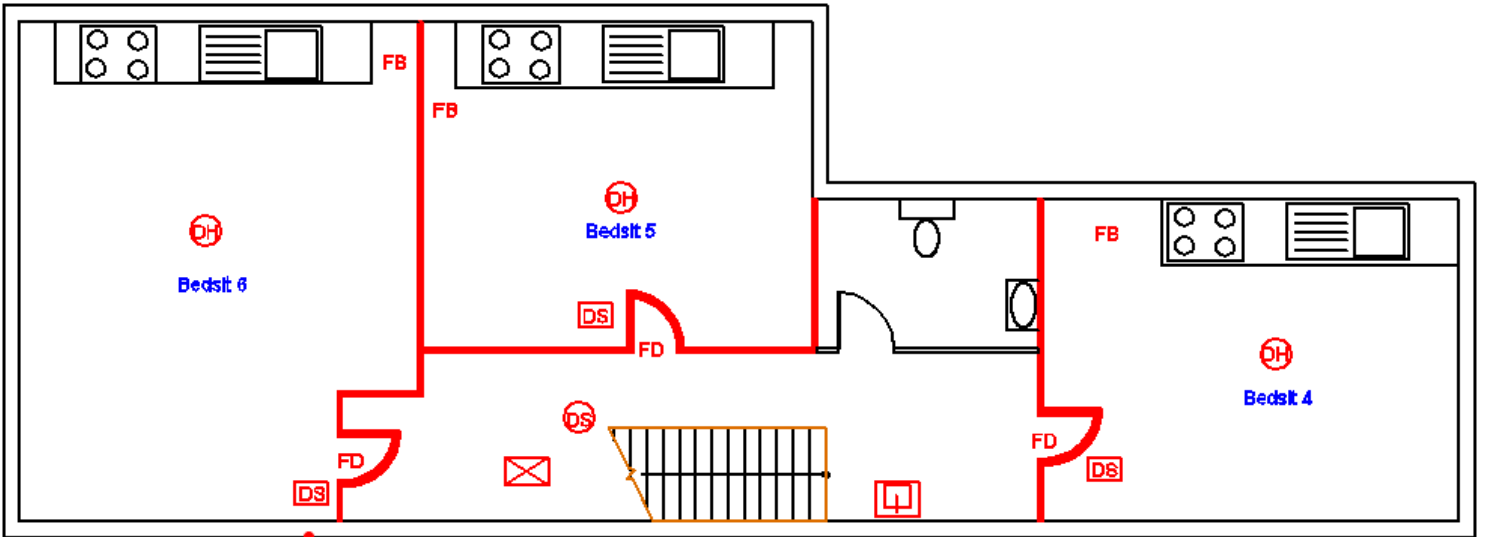
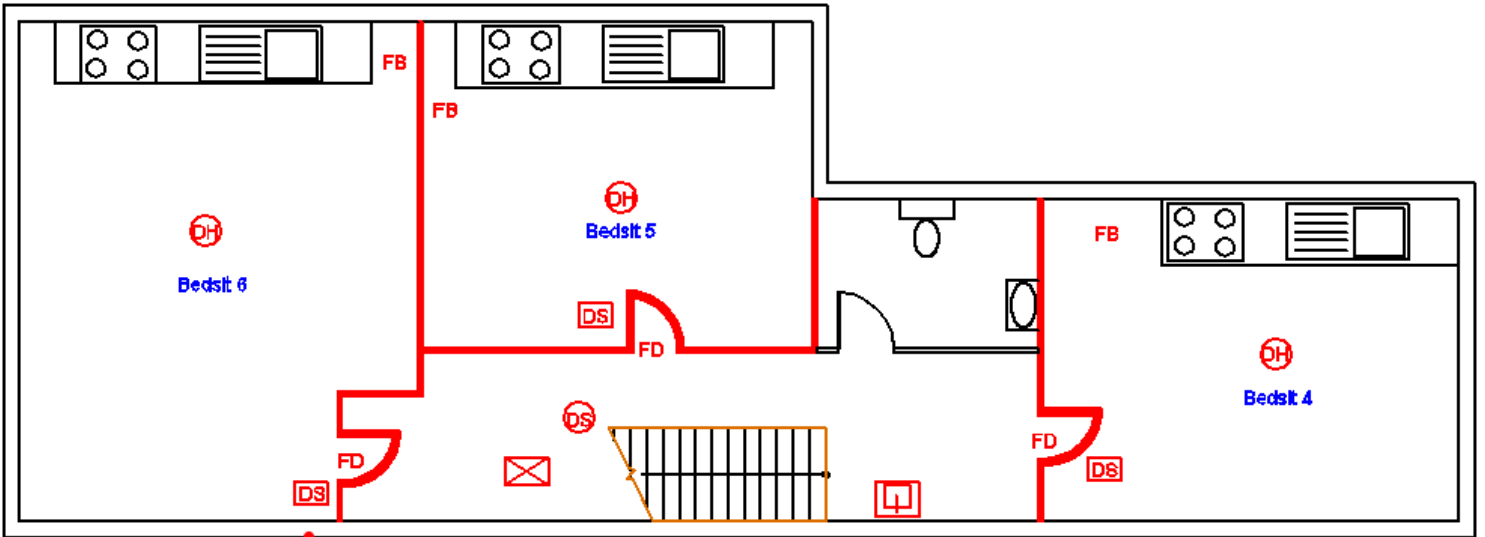
**EXAMPLE: 3 STOREY SHARED HOUSE OF 7 OR MORE OCCUPIERS**



<b>7. THREE OR FOUR STOREY HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION</b>	<b>Bedsits</b>
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1. **Fire Detection – Mixed system, BS 5839 Parts 1 and 6. Grade A system with mains wired interlinked smoke alarms with integral battery back up located throughout the escape route plus heat alarms in bedsits, shared kitchens, cellar and other risk rooms. Where no cooking facilities exist in bedsits then smoke alarms in preference to heat alarms. In addition independent Grade D smoke alarm with integral battery back up to each bedsit.**
2. Break glass call points to each floor.
3. Single door protection to the staircase enclosure, i.e. 1/2 hour fire resistant doors to all rooms that can be accessed from the staircase, (with the exception of the bathroom/WC).
4. Single door protection to all kitchens, i.e. 1/2 hour fire resistant doors.
5. Walls within the staircase enclosure to be 1/2 hour fire resistant. Ceilings to the kitchen and to the staircase enclosures to be 1/2 hour fire resistant, (Where cooking facilities are provided within rooms/or other high risk sources then the ceilings and all walls to these rooms to be 1/2 hour fire resistant).
6. Stairs to be underdrawn to provide 1/2 hour fire resistance and understairs cupboards to have 1/2 hour fire resistant doors and lining or the cupboard to be taken out of permanent use. Where a smoke detector (linked to the system) is fitted in the cupboard a fire door to the cupboard is not required.
7. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times ( for example, a Yale type lock on the fire exit door
8. Emergency lighting to all escape routes which are long, complex or lacking effective borrowed light. (British Standard 5266: Part 1).
9. Fire Fighting equipment:-
  - 1 x Fire blanket to each room where cooking takes place.
  - Recommended - 1 x 13A fire extinguisher located at ground floor entrance area, first floor landing, second floor landing and third floor landing (not dry powder).
10. A satisfactory layout and satisfactory means of escape from the building should be provided. Where the means of escape is not ideal (for example, the staircase leads down into a kitchen), then an alternative means of escape should be considered (for example construction of a lobby/corridor at ground floor to ensure a protected route to the final exit, provision of an escape window at first floor level which is accessible to all occupants of the building).

# EXAMPLE: 3 STOREY BEDSITS

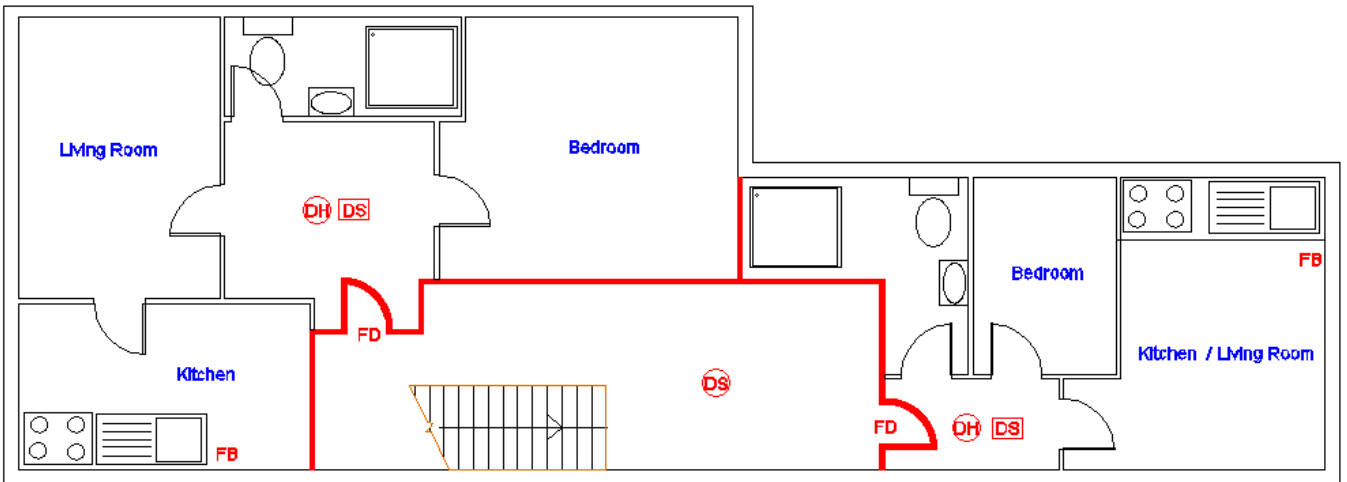
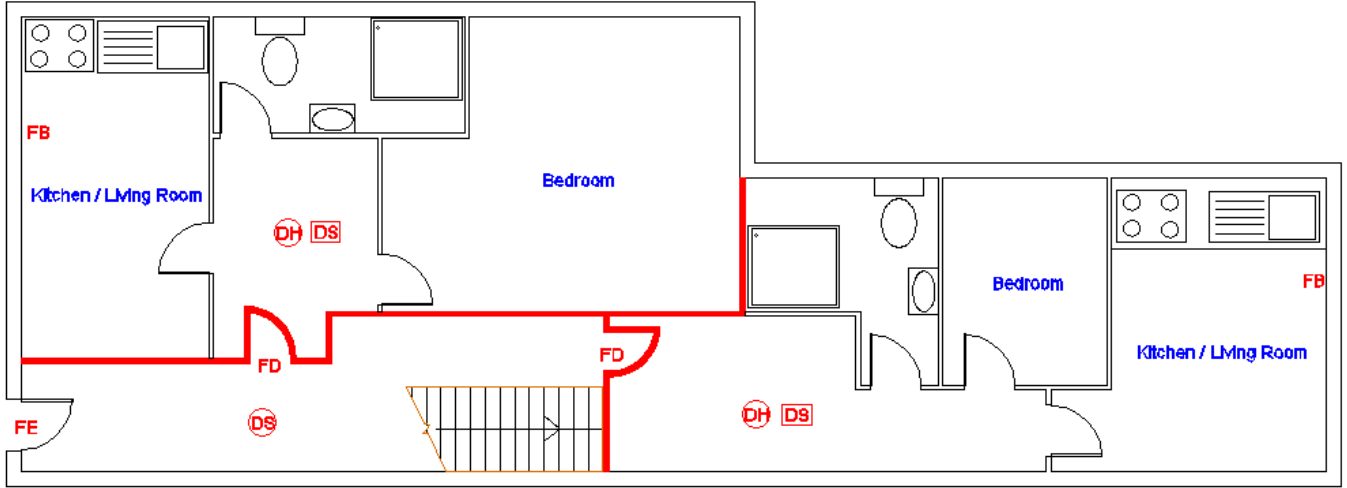




**8. TWO STOREY BUILDINGS****Converted to self contained flats**

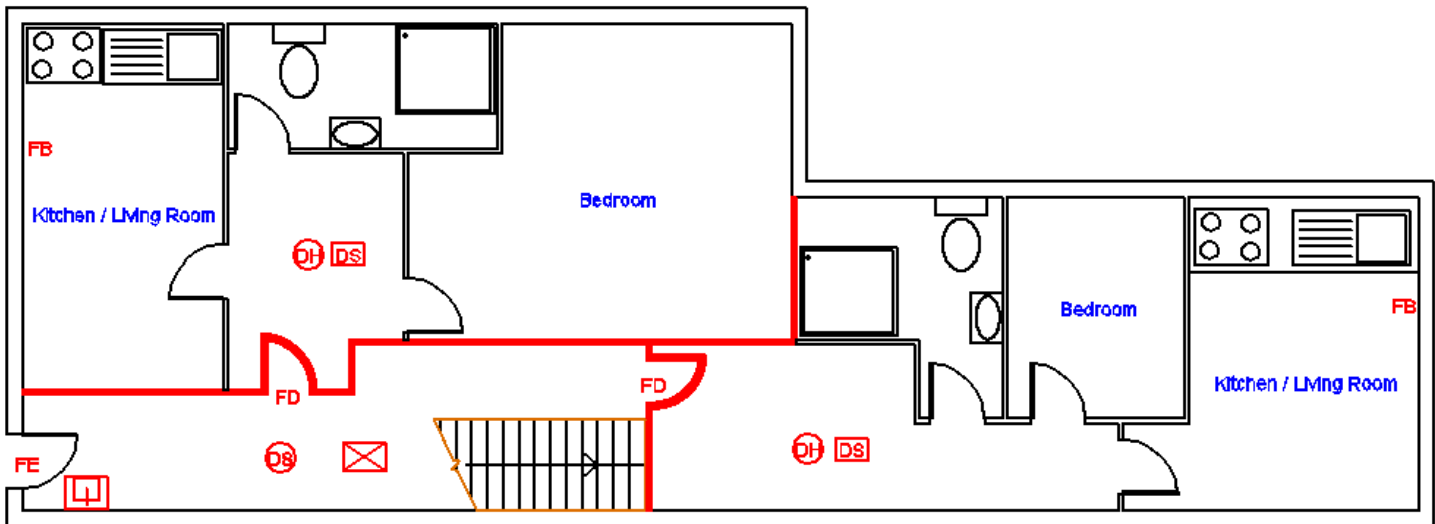
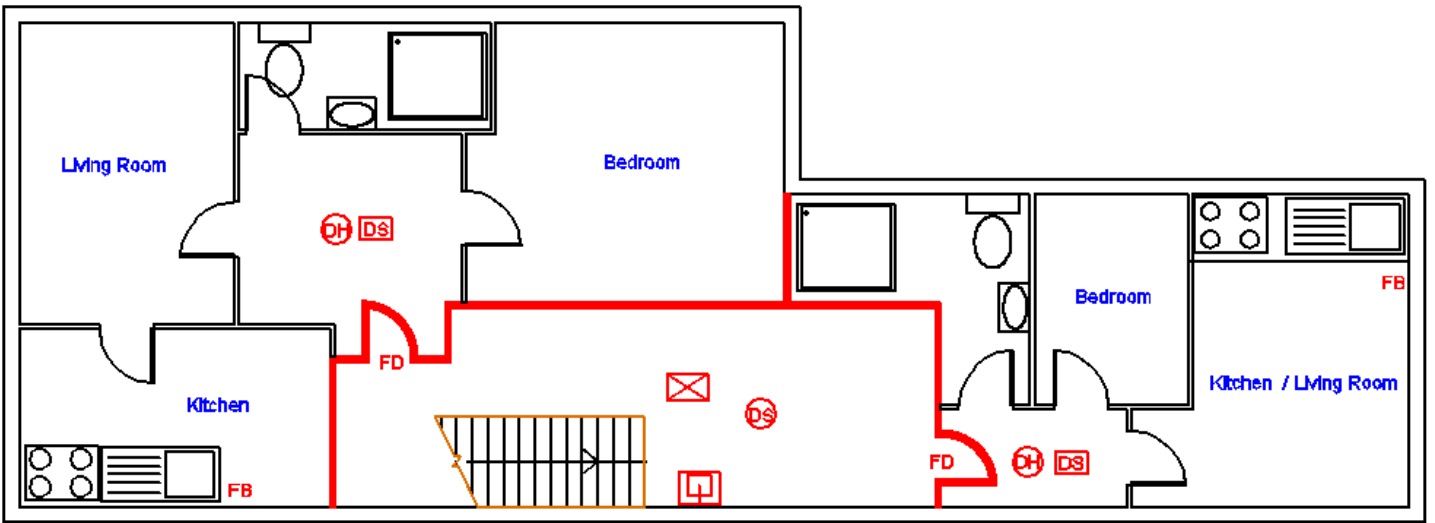
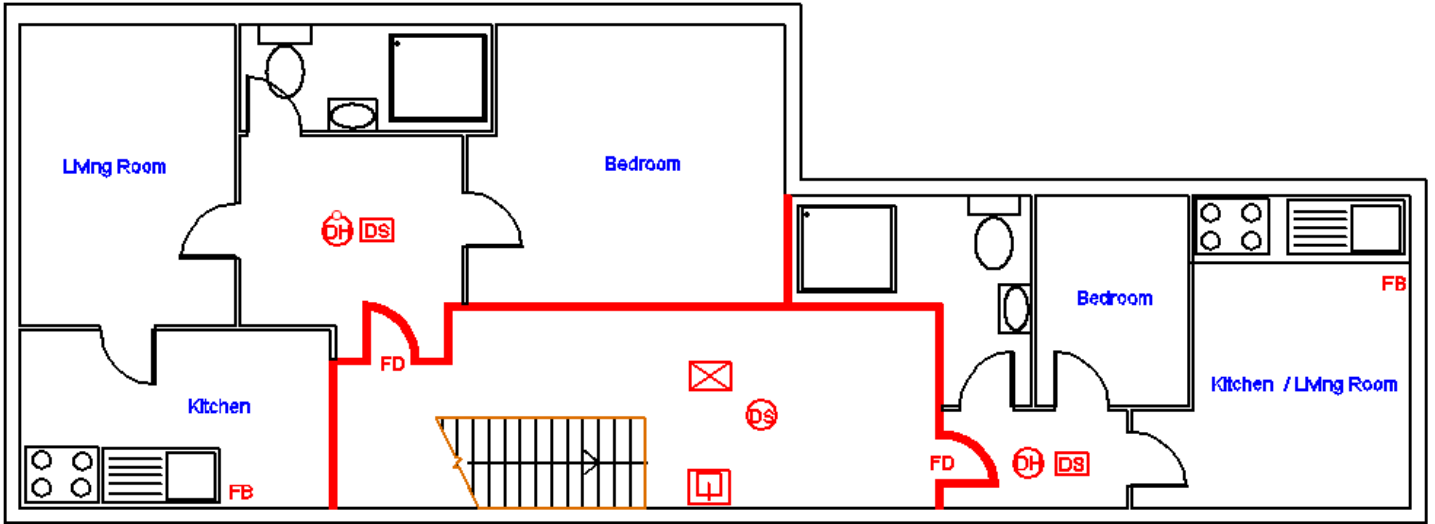
1. A mixed type fire alarm system shall be provided comprising a Grade D system to the common escape route ( ie an interlinked smoke detector with integral battery back up at each level) and interlinked to a heat detector in the lobby/entrance of each flat. Non interlinked mains operated smoke alarms with integral battery back up in the lobby/entrance to each flat. (Grade D System, BS 5839 : Part 6).
2. A protected escape route of a minimum standard of ½ hour fire resistance should be provided from each flat, including fire doorsets to each flat entrance (British Standard 8214). Sound, well constructed and close fitting doors within each flat.
3. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times (for example a Yale type lock on the final exit door).
4. A fire blanket should be provided to the kitchen of each flat in accordance with BS EN 1869. Recommend 1 x 13A fire extinguisher on each floor in the common parts
5. Where the travel distance within a flat is greater than 9 metres, contact the relevant local authority or North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service for further guidance.

# EXAMPLE: 2 STOREY CONVERTED SELF CONTAINED FLATS



1. A mixed-type fire alarm system should be provided in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5839 : Part 6. This would entail a Grade A (Part 1) system to the common escape route ( incorporating control panel, smoke detectors and call points) and to each flat (interlinked to a heat detector). In addition there should be a separate independent Grade D system to each flat which may be a single mains operated smoke detector. ( Parts 1 and 6, BS 5839)
2. A protected escape route of a minimum standard of ½ hour fire resistance should be provided from each flat including fire doorsets to BS 8214 to all flat entrances. Sound, conventional close fitting doors within each flat.
3. Separation between flats should be a minimum standard of ½ hour fire resistance.
4. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times (for example a Yale type lock on the final exit door).
5. An emergency lighting system should be provided to the protected escape route in accordance with BS 5266: Part 1 where the route is long, complex or lacking effective borrowed light.
6. A fire blanket should be provided to the kitchen of each flat in accordance with BS EN 1869. Recommended – 1 x 13A fire extinguisher on each floor in the common parts.
7. Where the travel distance within a flat is greater than 9 metres, contact the relevant local authority or North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service for further guidance.

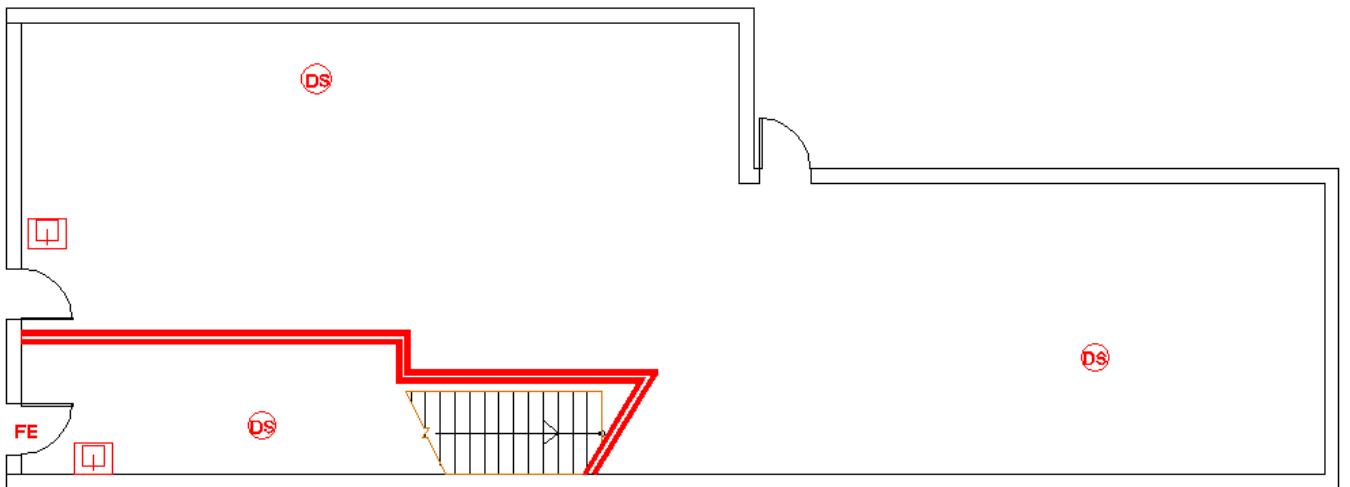
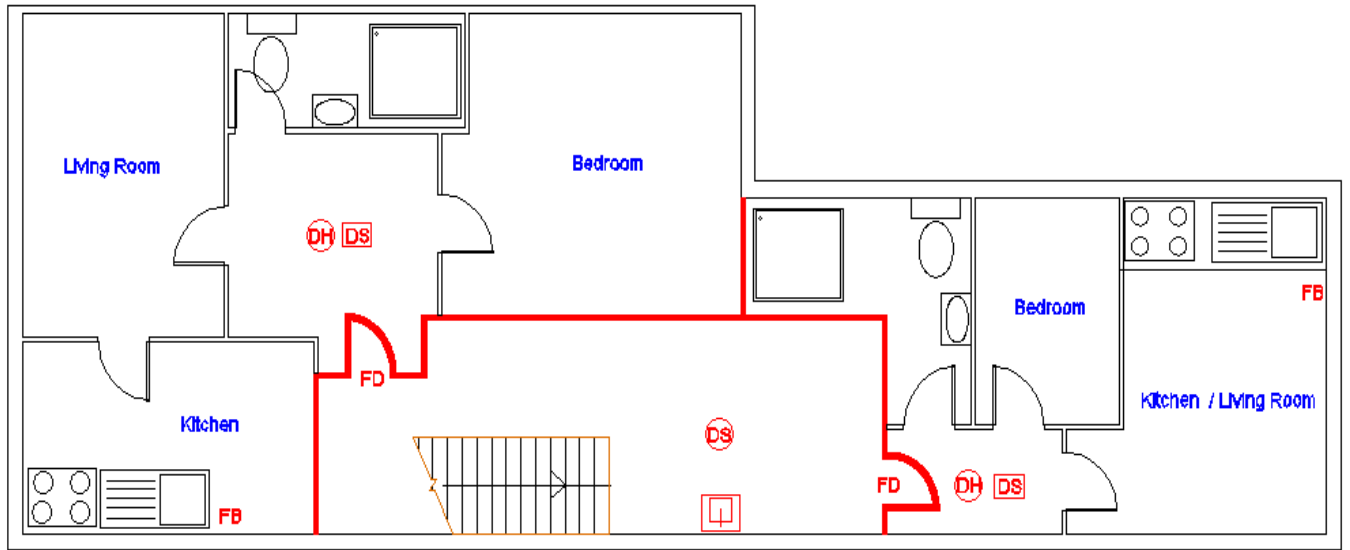
# EXAMPLE: 3 STOREY CONVERTED SELF CONTAINED FLATS



**10. TWO OR MORE STOREYS****Flats above commercial units**

1. A Grade A fire alarm system should be provided to cover the common escape route and the entrance lobby/circulation area of each flat with linkage to commercial units where those units are in the same ownership. BS 5839. Refer to points 7 and 8 for level of detection within flats and common escape routes.
2. A protected escape route of a minimum standard of ½ hour fire resistance should be provided, including fire doorsets to BS 8214.
3. Separation between flats should achieve a minimum standard of ½ hour fire resistance.
4. Separation between flats and commercial parts of the building should be a minimum standard of 1 hour fire resistance.
5. There should be an easy and immediate exit from the building at all times (for example, a Yale type lock/thumb turn on the fire exit door).
6. An emergency lighting system may need to be provided to the protected escape route in accordance with BS 5226 where the route is long, complex or lacking effective borrowed light.
7. A fire blanket should be provided to the kitchen of each flat in accordance with BS EN 1869  
Recommend – 1 x 13A fire extinguisher on each landing of the common parts .
8. In the case of Houses in Multiple Occupation of greater than 3 stories, purpose built blocks and more complex forms of sleeping accommodation, advice should be sought from the Fire Authority and it may be appropriate to conduct joint inspections.

# EXAMPLE: FLATS ABOVE COMMERCIAL UNITS



## **11. 5 STOREYS AND OVER**

### Requirements

1. Due to the complex nature of the individual construction type, further guidance should be sort from the Local Authority and the Local Fire Authority.

## **12. PURPOSE BUILT BUILDINGS**

### **Self contained flats**

1. Further guidance should be sort from the Local Authority and the Local Fire Authority.

## **13. PROPERTIES WITH HABITABLE BASEMENTS**

1. Basements used, as accommodation should be separated from the ground floor by two fire doors which each resist fire for 30 minutes. The first of these should be at the top of the stairs and the second at the bottom. It may be necessary to provide a fire resistant partition at the bottom of the stairs in which to fit a fire door. (For alternatives to this standard consult North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue or your local authority)

## **14. AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEMS**










The provision of an Automatic Sprinkler System in accordance with British Standards 9251, sprinkler systems for residential and domestic occupancies may allow a relaxation of some of the above requirements, providing the premises are no more than 20 metres in height.

Sprinkler systems are well recognised as the most effective way of saving life should a fire occur within an HMO. When installed as part of the initial construction or on a retro-fit, 'trade-offs' against the traditional methods of fire safety that have been mentioned above can be made, i.e. the need to provide fire extinguishers or the need for high level of structural fire resistance. If you would like to discuss these alternative measures please contact your Local Authority or the Local Fire Authority.

**CONTACT DETAILS**



## SYMBOLS SHOWN ON PLANS

SYMBOLS	
	Fire resisting door
	Non fire resisting door
<b>CFD</b>	Close fitting door
	30 minute fire separation
	60 minute fire separation
	Emergency Lighting
<b>FB</b>	Fire Blanket
	Break Glass Point
	Heat Detector
 	Smoke Detector
<b>FE</b>	Final exit door
<b>KLS</b>	Keep locked shut