



# HMOs Residents' Guide

## What HMOs are and how you can help

[www.spelthorne.gov.uk/hmo](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/hmo)

[eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk)

01784 446251

Environmental Health, Spelthorne Borough Council, Council Offices,  
Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames, TW18 1XB



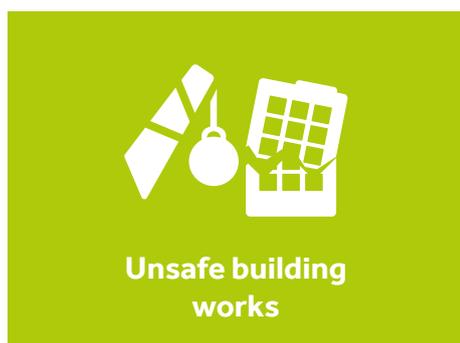
## What is an HMO?

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a property where:

- Three or more unrelated people live together,
- They share facilities such as a kitchen or bathroom, and
- Each person or household has their own room or tenancy.

Some HMOs require a Council licence—especially if five or more people who are not related to each other live there.

HMOs provide valuable housing for people who may not have other options, but when they are poorly managed or illegally converted, they can cause issues such as:



Public reports help the Council act quickly.

## How You Can Help

Residents often notice issues before anyone else. You can report:

- Suspected illegal HMOs
- Too many occupants
- Properties in poor, unsafe or unsanitary condition
- Building work that looks unsafe or may not have planning/building approval
- Noise, waste and antisocial behaviour
- Unsafe construction sites

You do not need to be sure something is wrong—if it feels wrong, report it.

The Council will check and take action where appropriate.

# Details of how to report

## 1. Report Concerns to Planning Enforcement

Use this if you believe:

- A normal home has been converted into an HMO without planning permission
- Too many people are living in the property
- Building changes (extensions, loft conversions, etc.) seem unauthorised

### Report to Planning Enforcement:

What to include: the address of the property, what you've seen, photos if possible.

 [planningenf@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:planningenf@spelthorne.gov.uk)

 01784 451499

## 2. Report Concerns about breaches of HMO Licensing Conditions or unlicensed HMOs

Use this if:

- You think five or more people live at the address and they are not part of a family or otherwise related to each other.
- You believe the property is overcrowded
- Fire safety measures seem inadequate
- Management looks poor (blocked exits, piles of waste, faulty alarms)

### Report to the Environmental Health Team:

 [eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk)

 01784 451499

## 3. If you are a resident of a HMO Report Poor Housing Conditions

Environmental Health can investigate problems such as:

- Damp, mould or poor heating
- Electrical or fire safety concerns
- Overcrowding
- Hygiene issues or infestations
- Unsafe internal layout or blocked escape routes

 [eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:eh.residential@spelthorne.gov.uk)

 01784 451499

# Building Safety, Concerns & Neighbour Issues

## 4. Report Unsafe or Unapproved Building Work

Use this if you see:

- Structural work (lofts, extensions) done without control
- Builders removing walls or roofs unsafely
- Work that seems dangerous to people nearby

This may fall under:

### Council Building Control

If you suspect work has no building control approval or looks unsafe.

Email: [building.control@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@spelthorne.gov.uk)

Please note that in some cases building control work is undertaken by private sector companies who are Registered Building Control Approvers (RBCAs) and in such cases the concerns may need to be directed to the relevant company.

### Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

If you believe that building workers or members of the public are at immediate risk (e.g. due to unsafe scaffolding, falling hazards, unsafe electrics) you should report your concerns online to HSE, or in extreme cases contact the Emergency Services by dialling 999.

Report online: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/tell-us-about-a-health-and-safety-issue.htm>

**HSE Advisory Team: 0300 003 1747**

## 5. Report Noise, Waste or Antisocial Behaviour

If an HMO is causing neighbourhood problems:

- Persistent noise
- Rubbish overflowing
- Poor waste storage
- Antisocial behaviour

**Environmental Health or Community Safety can help.**

 [community.safety@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@spelthorne.gov.uk)

 01784 451499

In emergencies or criminal behaviour: call 999 or 101.

## How the Council Uses Reports

Once a concern is reported, the Council may:

- Inspect the property
- Check HMO licensing status
- Investigate planning or building breaches
- Work with Surrey Fire & Rescue
- Take enforcement action (notices, fines, prosecutions)
- Require safety improvements
- Support residents affected by nuisance

Your reports help keep homes safe, protect neighbourhoods, and prevent exploitation of tenants.