

Providing a plan of your property.

In order to licence the house, the Council has to obtain certain information from you about the property in order that it can assess the type of property it is, and what amenities and installations there are.

It is very difficult to form a correct impression of an HMO using words alone. For this reason the Council requires you to provide a plan of the property with your application. A plan can very quickly sum up the nature of a property on just one page - sometimes it takes more but one page is often sufficient

Of course you do not have to draw the plan yourself. You should be able to get any architect or plan drawer to do the job for you. This will however cost you money.

You may already have some plans of the property drawn for some other purpose. It is perfectly acceptable to use these so long as they show all the information the Council requires.

If you choose some other person to draw the plans you should show them these sheets so they know the sort of plans the Council needs. Professionals will be used to drawing plans which are more accurate and show far more detail than the Council requires. By showing these guidance notes you might avoid having to pay for work which you do not need. The plans can be re-used in future applications for the same property so long as the information on them remains current.

The aim of the plans is to indicate:

- a) The layout of the house including size & proportions of rooms etc.
- b) If and where fire doors are fitted
- c) Where fire detection & alarm equipment is sited

So long as the plans show these things clearly, they will be acceptable.

So how do I start?

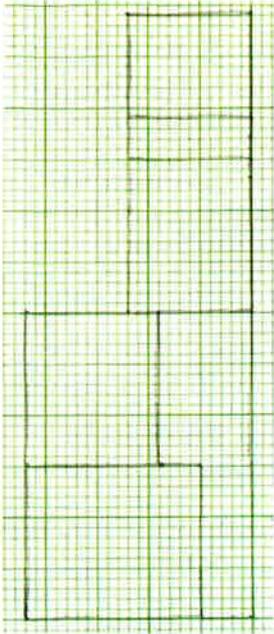
You can use ordinary plain unlined A4 paper but you may find it helpful to use graph or squared paper. All are available from stationery shops.



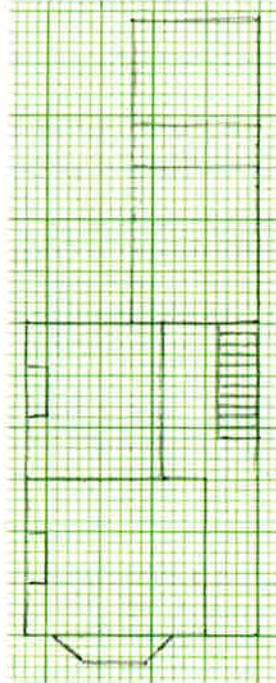
It's helpful to use a scale and you should choose one which will allow you to fit all of your drawing on to one page.

Often a scale of 1cm = 1 metre is about right but you should choose a scale to suit you.

You will probably find it's better to sketch out the plan in rough first. Walk around your property making a note of the layout and jot down the dimensions. Make sure that your chosen scale is one which will allow you to fit all of a floor on one sheet.

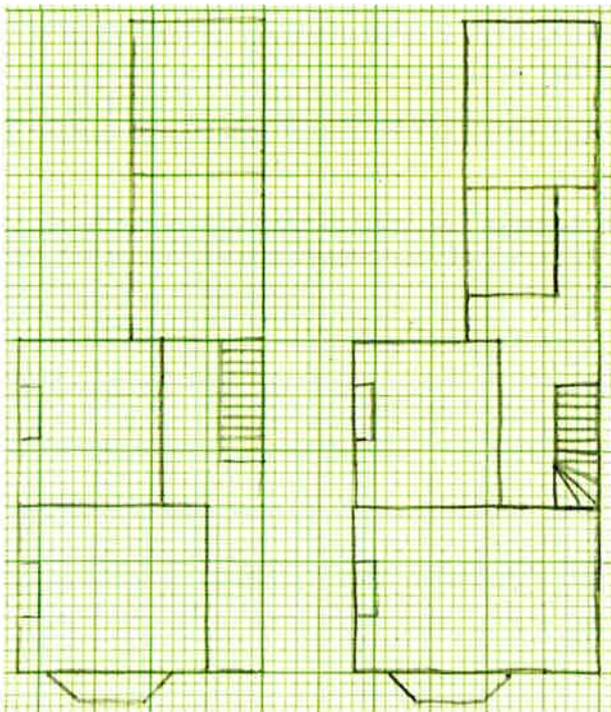
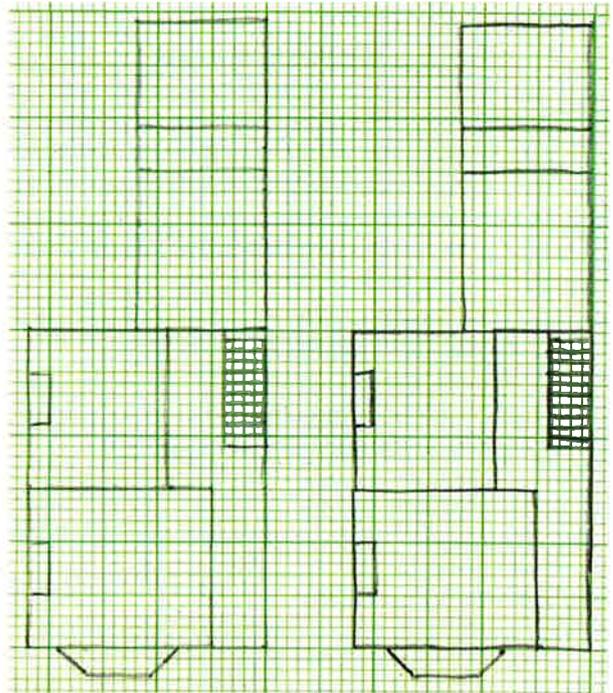


Start on the ground floor and using your chosen scale draw out the basic room shapes **in pencil**. Just use boxes to start with. Draw with light pencil strokes which can be rubbed out easily with an eraser. A single line is sufficient to represent a wall.



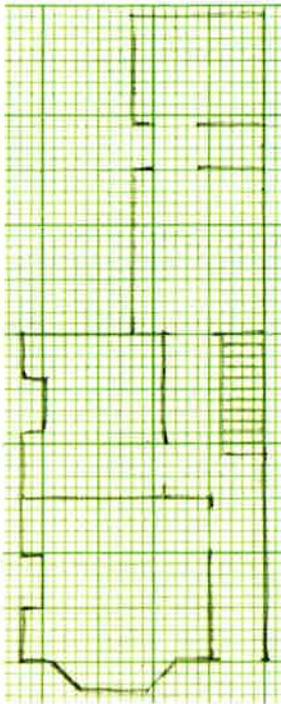
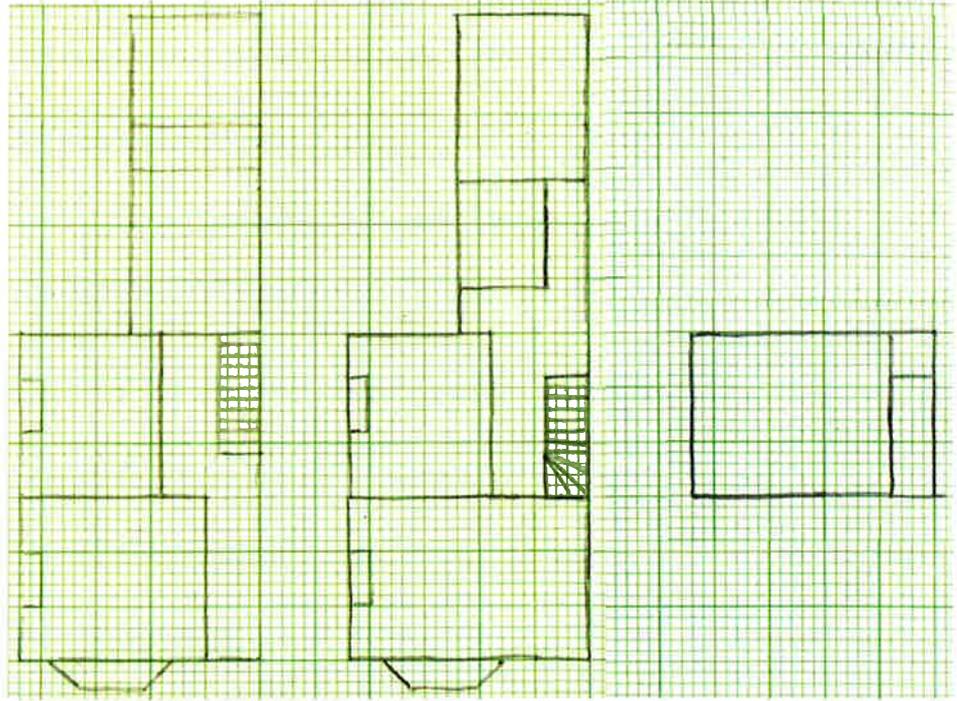
Then pencil in major structural things like chimney breasts, bay windows and stairs.

Presuming that there are other floors it is worth copying your basic plan at this stage as the layout of upper floors is often very similar to the ground floor.

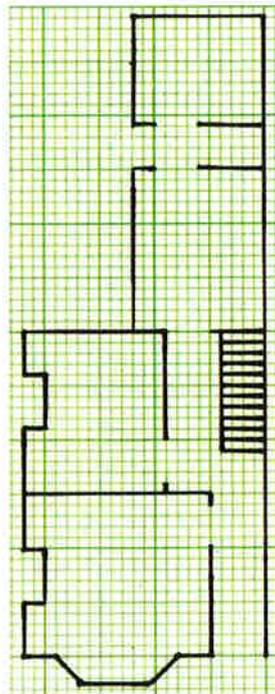


With a few amendments, showing the next floor up is fairly easy. Stairs between the ground and first floor should be shown on the ground floor plan. Stairs between the first and second floor should be shown on the first floor.

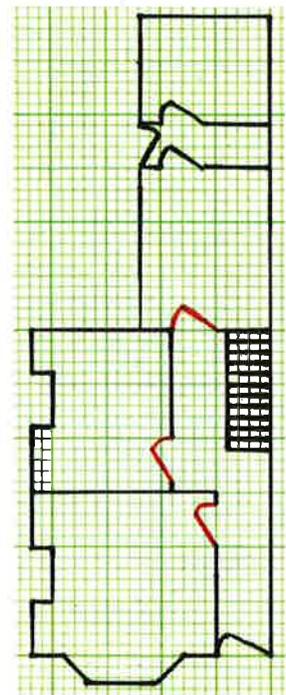
The next floor is even easier.



Now go round with an eraser and rub out all the bits of wall which are not really there such as across the bay and where the doorways are

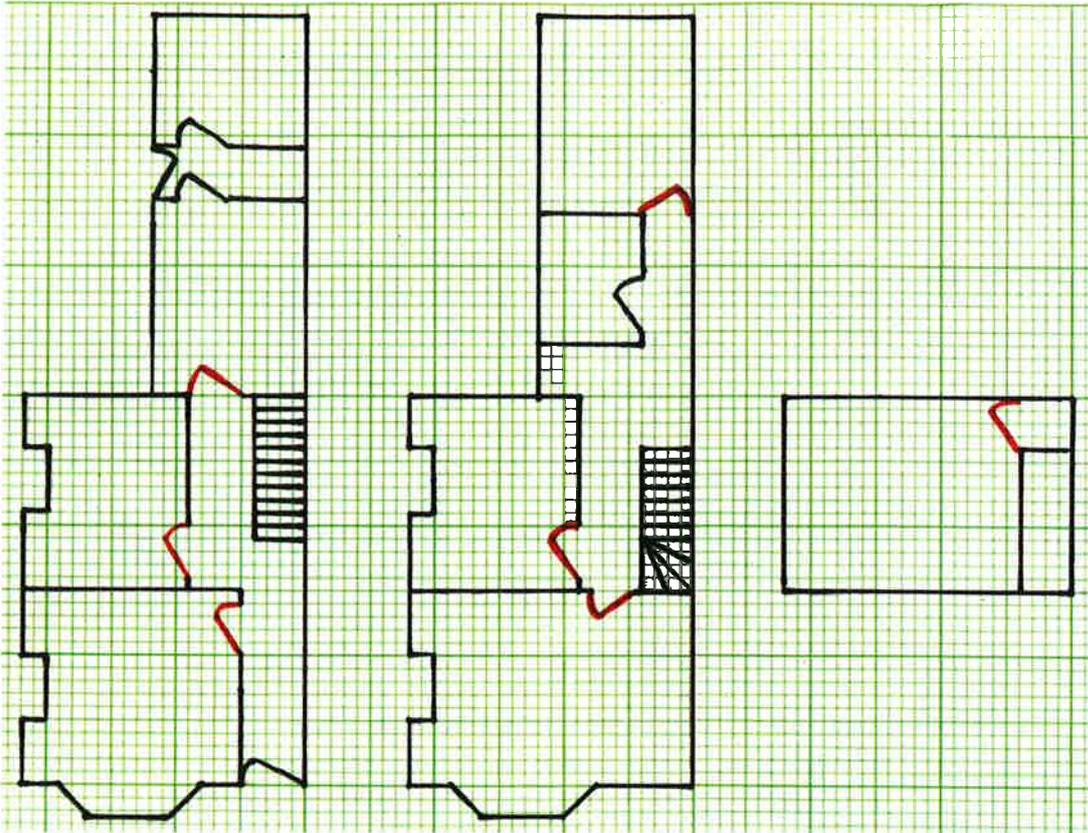


Using a black fine felt tip or similar pen and a ruler go over the lines you have sketched in pencil.

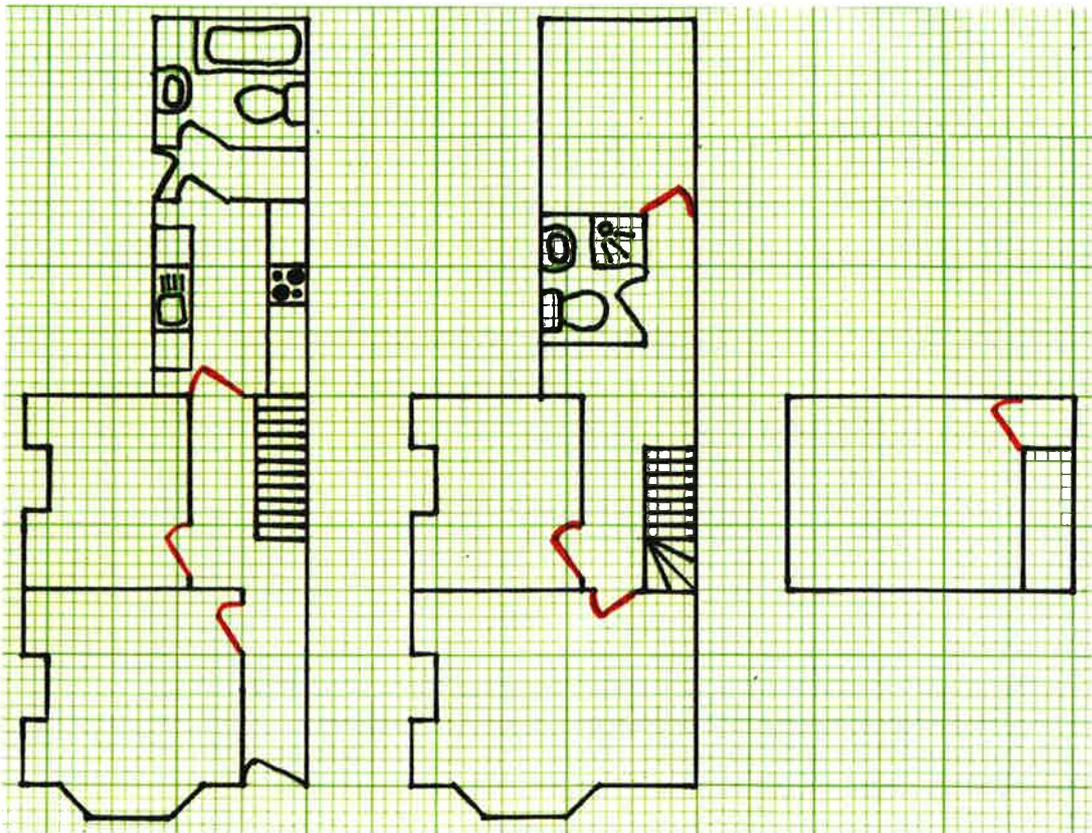


Then draw in the doors - sketch them in pencil first if it helps. Then use a fine felt-tip pen. A straight line to represent the door and a small curved line to show the path the edge of the door takes as it closes. Fire doors should be coloured red and other doors should be drawn in black. Rub out your pencil guide lines.

The result is something like this. It looks quite a reasonable result for a pencil, ruler and a couple of felt tips!



Then you need to add small drawings to show where baths, showers, washbasins, sinks, cookers and work surfaces are. Again sketch them in pencil and go over them with a pen.

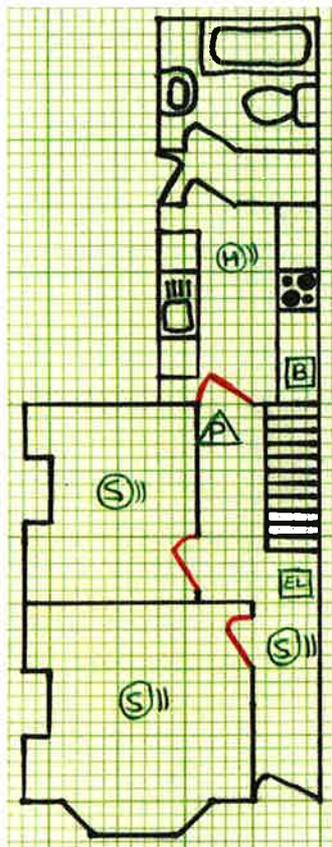


Now you need to indicate on the plan where various items of fire precaution equipment are.

You could use any reasonable set of symbols to represent the various items of equipment so long as it is clearly understood what each symbol represents.

The Council suggests however that the following simple symbols are used. They have been designed to be drawn easily with a ball-point pen.

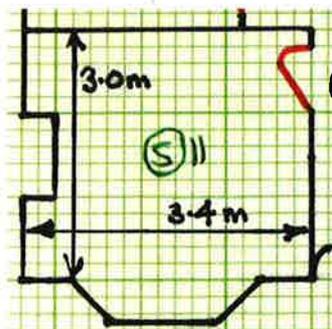
 Smoke Detector	 Fire Blanket
 Combined Smoke Detector & Sounder	 Emergency Lighting Unit
 Heat Detector	 Dry Powder Fire Extinguisher
 Combined Heat Detector & Sounder	 Water Type Fire Extinguisher
	 Other Type of Fire Extinguisher



Don't worry too much about getting them exactly right. As long as the council can tell what they are they should do fine. It's probably best to use a green or red fine felt tip pen or a ball point pen to draw them in.

So that's the complicated part done. you just need to add some additional information to the plan to make it complete.

- 1) Write on the plan the address of the property and the date the plan was drawn.
- 2) Write down the scale you have used e.g. 1cm=1metre
- 3) Add text to make it clear which floor is which. i.e. Ground, First, Second Floors etc.
- 4) State whether the detectors are interlinked; that is, if a fire is detected by one detector, all the sounders in the house are triggered.
- 5) Make a note on the plan, with a symbol of your own to illustrate any features you consider to be important.
- 6) If you do not think your plan or the scale you have used does not really reflect the actual sizes of the rooms then add dimensions.
- 7) The council is not asking you to draw in all the windows on the plan on the assumption that they are satisfactory so far as glazed area and ventilation are concerned. You therefore need to add a statement such as "There are windows in all habitable rooms which have clear glazing equivalent to at least 10% of the floor area of the room and at least and there are openable windows equivalent to at least 5% of the floor area of the room." If this is not the case you must give details.



Finally, if you are useful with computer software graphics packages, it really isn't too difficult to produce reasonably professional looking plans. The one illustrated below was produced using Microsoft Power Point which a lot of people have. There are many other software packages you can use including ones specifically designed to design and illustrate buildings and room layouts.



Ground Floor



First Floor