

Homestay Hosts

Guidance Note – Aug 7th 2019

A few times each year, we come across properties that we are unable to register for Homestay. The primary reason for such properties to ‘fail’ the Homestay Inspection is because the staircase descends into a living space, rather than a hallway and straight to an exit.

This issue is sometimes misunderstood, so we thought we should try and help clear up any confusion for hosts.

Essentially, it is all about fire safety and making sure that in the event of a fire, guests, who may not be familiar with the property have a simple, quick and safe route to exit the property.

Ideally, the staircase will descend into an unobstructed hallway, that leads directly to an exit e.g.



If there are any rooms off the hallway, it is vital that there are doors fitted to these rooms and they can be closed fully, especially at night.

When inspecting properties for Homestay, the inspectors will consider if visitors are able to safely walk away from any fire situation. Evacuation will need to be possible without the having to pass through habitable rooms or escape through windows or need to use ladders.



Where the staircase descends into a living space with furniture etc. there is an increased risk of fire, and no direct route out of the property without passing through the high risk area.

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If your property has more of an open plan layout, this can sometimes present an issue for Homestay registration, especially where a staircase descends into a living space, or to exit from a bedroom, it is necessary to pass through a living space to reach an exit.

The Homestay team can provide guidance over the phone, and if there is any uncertainty, the matter will be referred to the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety team. Photographs that show the area of concern can be helpful to understand the layout and risk.

In some cases, the Fire Safety team can provide advice on how the risk can be mitigated sufficiently to allow registration for Homestay. If the advice is not acted upon or the risk is considered unacceptable, the property will not be registered for Homestay.

The Homestay team will always be guided by the advice provided by the Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety team.

There are other fire safety issues that raise the level of risk, whereby it is considered unacceptable for Homestay registration under the Fire Precautions Act 1975. These include...

- Sleeping more than 6 guests at any one time
- Guests sleeping above the 1st floor
- Guests sleeping below the ground floor

You can find all the relevant Fire Safety details in the [Host Information Pack](#), which is available in the 'For Hosts' section of our website www.iomhomestay.com.

If you are unsure, or have any questions, please contact a member of the Homestay team prior to sending in your registration form and payment (which is non-refundable once inspection has taken place).

All Homestay properties must fulfil any applicable statutory obligations including:

- *Fire Precautions (Houses in Multiple Occupation and Flats) Regulations 2016*
- *Fire Safety - Fire Precautions Act 1975*
- *Tourist Act 1975*
- *Data Protection Act 2002*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 2006 / Equality Act 2017*
- *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018*