

Further information can be found in **Approved Document B Volume 1 – Dwelling Houses** which can be viewed at www.planningportal.gov.uk along with all other Building Regulation Approved Documents.

For more information on Building Regulations please visit our website www.leeds.gov.uk or you can contact us at:

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Fire Safety and Loft Conversions

Changes from 6th April 2007 to the guidance in the
Approved Document Part B – Fire Safety



Designed and produced by:
Communications, Graphics and Mapping, Leeds City Council.

From 6th April 2007 the guidance in the Approved Document Part B – Fire Safety recommends:

- **Provision of fire detection and alarm systems**
- **Escape stairs should be protected by fire resisting construction leading directly to an external exit**
- **Fire Doors (which need not be fitted with self-closing devices)**
- **There is no longer a reliance on suitably positioned escape windows from 2nd floor loft rooms as alternative means of escape**
- **No inner rooms allowed above 4.5 metres**

The following should help you achieve compliance:

- 1** To ensure that the stairway will normally remain available as a route of escape in the event of a fire, the existing stair at ground and first floor level must be enclosed in fire resisting construction (e.g. 12.5mm plasterboard on timber studs at 400 centres (min. 100mm thick overall) or block work). The route must lead to an external door at the foot of the stairs or a choice must be available to pass through one of two separate rooms to an external door. This is required so that if a fire occurred in one of the rooms, escape would always be possible through the other.
- 2** Doors to the protected escape route will need to have 30 minutes fire resistance.
- 3** Any glazing in partitions between a habitable room and the escape route must also be fire resisting. Georgian wired glass is usually acceptable in these situations.
- 4** The basic requirement for fire separation is to surround the new rooms in such a way that if a fire did occur below, the occupants would be protected from its effects for 30 minutes. To achieve this the new stair can continue up in the existing stair enclosure (in which case the fire door and separating structure will be at the top). Alternatively it can be enclosed in a fire protecting structure from first floor level upwards (in which case the fire door will normally open off the first floor landing).

5 The floor to the new rooms must have a 30 minute fire resistance over any part of the escape route directly above. This is often the case when, for example, the floor of the new room extends over a landing in the stairway enclosure below. Where the floor is only over other rooms a 'modified' 30 minute standard of fire resistance is required which is much easier to achieve.

6 Where new habitable rooms are provided above the ground level a fire alarm and detection system must be provided. Smoke alarms should be installed in the circulation spaces between sleeping areas and places where fires are most likely to start (e.g. kitchens and living rooms) to pick up the smoke at an early stages of a fire. There should be at least one smoke alarm on every storey of a dwelling house and where kitchens are not separated from the stairway or circulation space by a door, there should be a compatible interlinked heat detector or heat alarm in the kitchen, in addition to what ever smoke alarms are needed in the circulation space.

7 Where an "open-plan" arrangement exists at ground level it may be necessary to provide a new partition to enclose the escape route. Alternatively, it may be possible to provide sprinkler protection to the open plan area, in conjunction with a fire-resisting partition and door, in order to separate the ground floor from the upper storeys. This door should be arranged to allow the occupants of the loft room to access an escape widow at first floor level in the event of a fire in the open-plan area. Cooking facilities should be separated from the open-plan area with fire-resisting construction.

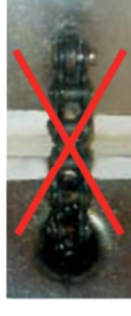
Please remember that this guidance note only relates to Fire Safety issues.



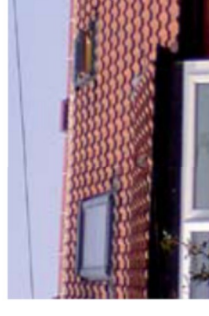
■ Provision of fire detection and alarm systems



■ Escape stairs should be protected by fire resisting construction leading directly to an external exit



■ Fire Doors (which need not be fitted with self-closing devices)



■ There is no longer a reliance on suitably positioned escape windows from 2nd floor loft rooms as alternative means of escape