

**HMO
frequently
asked questions**



HMO faq's

What is an HMO?

An HMO, (House in Multiple Occupation), is a rental property occupied by three or more unrelated people forming one household. Typically, an HMO property will have shared kitchen, living and bathroom facilities and each bedroom is rented out separately

Can I convert a house into an HMO under Permitted Development rights?

Generally, you don't need planning permission when converting from a dwelling house or flat to an HMO property, which is a small shared house of up to six unrelated individuals. This conversion is available under Permitted Development rights.

We say generally as if your Council decides to remove permitted development rights by enforcing what is known as an Article 4 Direction then planning permission will be required to change the use from a C3 Dwelling House to a C4 HMO.

Can I still create an HMO in an area subject to Article 4 Direction?

Article 4 Directions do not stop development, but under these directions permitted development rights are removed and full planning permission is required. If the Article 4 Direction is to restrict the automatic change of use from a C3 dwelling house to C4 HMO then you need to apply for planning permission for your HMO conversion

What is Permitted Development?

This is permission granted by the government when the alterations you wish to make comply with its regulations. You do not need to apply for Planning Permission to make these alterations. For a single family dwelling of Use Class C3 this includes certain extensions, loft conversions and change-of-use to a small HMO C4, (subject to conditions).



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What other Permission do I require?

An HMO will need to be licensed. This is completely separate legislation from planning permission and is dealt with by a different legal entity. Building Regulation approval is also required in respect of conversion and change of use works to provide new HMOs.

What's Difference Between Use Class C3, Use Class C4 and Sui Generis?

A family home or a home used by a single person is classed as C3 (Dwelling House/Flat)

A small shared house of up to six unrelated individuals is classed as a C4 (HMO)

A house for more than six unrelated individuals is known as a Large HMO (Sui Generis)

Generally, a family home C3 can be converted to a small HMO C4 under Permitted Development, however if you wish to create a Large HMO, maybe from either a C3 dwelling or a C4 HMO, then you will need to obtain planning permission as there is no Permitted Development right to convert.

But it's always been an HMO

If not registered as an HMO under planning but it has an established historic use as one, then an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use can be authorised through the passage of time. The appellant must show that the use has continued for at least 10 years prior to the date of the application.



next steps

next steps

When it comes to your 'next steps', at Tomes Architects, there are two distinct options available to you.

Option 1: You still need more information



'HMO Frequently Asked Questions' is just one piece of the information that you're going to need if you're planning an HMO Design project.

To help provide you with all the information you might need, I've created several 'Toolkits' that you can download from my website. They collate all of the most important information you're going to need.

'HMO Frequently Asked Questions' is one component contained in **The HMO Design Toolkit**, which contains lots of essential information that you need to know, if you're planning an HMO Design project.

You can download it by clicking the image.

The HMO Design Toolkit includes all of the following;

- Part 1:** becoming an HMO landlord – what's the appeal?
- Part 2:** national minimum amenity standards for an HMO
- Part 3:** HMO frequently asked questions
- Part 4:** HMO licensing – what is it?
- Part 5:** HMO planning permission
- Part 6:** common reasons for HMO planning refusal
- Part 7:** planning vs building regulations
- Part 8:** don't ignore the Party Wall Act
- Part 9:** extending your house under permitted development
- Part 10:** permitted development for a loft conversion

Download The HMO Design Toolkit [here](#) or click on the image, above

next steps

Option 2: Free Consultation - No doubt you have a few more questions

Whilst it's my aim to tell you what you really need to know, before you get started on your home extension project. In the written word, I can only provide you with the information in general terms. I can't tell you how all of this relates to your specific home extension project because I don't know all the details.

People find that the information I've provided answers many of their questions and gives them a far greater understanding of what's involved. But it also raises other questions that are specific to their individual needs and those of their project. That's why I offer a totally free, no obligation 30 minute consultation.

It's the natural next step for you to take.

What does the free consultation involve?

I allow a 30 minute initial consultation which can be in person, should you be local, or if distance is an issue or you are respecting social distancing or self-isolation, then by video call or simply by telephone.

Don't worry the 30 minutes is not timed and often it takes longer to discuss the ramifications of your proposals.

The consultation aims to provide you with specific advice on whether your aspirations and dreams can be made into a realistic certainty. So, having a good idea of what you wish to achieve before we talk will assist immensely. Below I have listed some guidelines on how you could prepare.

If it is a face-to-face meeting then I can assess the site and the area of works first hand and would aim to leave you with an appraisal of what can be achieved and what the next steps will be should you wish to employ Tomes Architects to design your project.

If the consultation is remote, then it will vary slightly but the result will be just as informative and valuable.

Again, we will discuss what you wish to achieve, and I will introduce how Tomes Architects can assist you to obtain this result. Whilst on the call I will undertake a desktop analysis of the site using Google Maps, Street View and Nimbus Maps which provide valuable visual information on the impact your proposals could have on your own property and those of your neighbours.

I occasionally find that further research into the acceptability of a development is warranted after the consultation and in these circumstances I am quite prepared to spend some additional time confirming policies and constraints and then reporting these findings back to you.

next steps

What does the free consultation involve? (cont.)

This process of an initial consultation and subsequent investigation, if required, will assist me in providing you with a fee quotation for taking your dream development through to successful completion.

To Make the Most of Your Free Architect's Consultation – Be Prepared

1. **What are you hoping to achieve?** - What are your priorities? Separate these into 'must haves', 'would like to haves' and just as importantly 'don't wants'. You may have firm design ideas or simple practicalities such as how a space must work for you.
2. **Budget** - The budget you have available will determine what it is possible to achieve and I always find it helpful to be made aware at an early stage what are the budgetary constraints in order to be in a position to discuss realistic options and ideas.
3. **Design influences** - What kind of things do you like? Tastes and styles vary enormously, so if you can refer to buildings or images that appeal to you, I will be able to reflect this into your design. The best way to provide this is by creating a mood board on Pinterest or even some images that we can share. An internet search can often provide inspiration and many online architecture and design magazines are brilliant sources of what can be achieved.
4. **Prepare questions** - Think about what you need to know at this stage as well as what you wish to achieve. It is likely that you have never undertaken a project like this before so maybe your understanding the process is sketchy. Feel free to ask as many questions as you want. I will guide you through the procedure step by step.
5. **Be critical, this is your dream, own it** - If you don't like my ideas, then please say so, I will not get offended. Negative feedback is just as important as a positive one. I aim to build up a productive working relationship with you, one that results in your dream becoming a realisation, so yes, I may occasionally get it wrong, but I don't know you yet and with each discussion I will be adjusting the design closer to your aspirations.
6. **Lastly** - Trusting your dream to a building contractor to construct can be stressful. My job is to be there to assist, guide and support as much or as little as required, so you need to feel that you can work with me from the outset. The process of the consultation is not just to assess whether a project is viable, but also if we can work together as a team.

[Click here to request your free consultation.](#)

A man with grey hair, glasses, and a beard stands in front of a house. He is wearing a white patterned shirt, a red vest, and grey trousers. The house has a red-tiled roof and white walls with dark-framed windows. A purple semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'a bit about chris tomes and tomes architects'.

a bit about
chris tomes
and
tomes architects

chris tomes

Our aim is to provide clients with an innovative and informative Architectural service. Whether it is a house extension or a corporate reception area each is treated with the same level of attention and care.

Why Choose Us?

Often the employment of an Architect is a unique experience. For many of our clients it is a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence and can be quite daunting. The consequences of an ill-designed building or interior are something that you may well have to live with, literally, for many years!

The Process to a Successful Build

Here at Tomes Architects we aim to provide a high-quality service for all our clients. By using straight-forward explanations we will guide you through each process so that your aspirations become reality. Our sketches, drawings and 3D images help to ensure we have interpreted your brief correctly.

What Can We Provide?

To many clients, whether private or commercial, the true value of an architect is not appreciated or even understood. Wouldn't it be good to have everything explained fully before you make that commitment? The initial discussions and advice are free and non-obligatory – so what have you to lose?

A Personal Touch

As a small practice the point of contact for most of our clients will be Chris Tomes, the principle. He is an Architects Registration Board registered Chartered Architect with over 30 years' experience. The last three years within Tomes Architects and before that the design and fitout director for a corporate interior design and refurbishment company.

His experience is wide ranging in both commercial and housing. Please look through the gallery of our work to see for yourself.



Chartered Architect. ARB Register no.
054020J

Qualifications. B.Sc(Arch); B.Arch(Hons)
Check out my ARB Registration [here](#).

