

# Minimum Legal Requirements – Laser Cleaning in Homes (UK, 1-Person Business)

This document summarises the minimum legal duties under UK law for a self-employed person or 1-person business using a laser cleaning system to remove paint (of unknown composition) in domestic homes. It combines requirements from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH), the Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations (AOR), and Environmental Protection legislation. There is no single Trading Standards law specific to laser paint cleaning indoors; instead, the following apply:

- **Risk Assessment (Legal Requirement, Reg. 3 AOR & COSHH):** You must carry out and document a suitable and sufficient risk assessment before each type of work. This should cover laser hazards, fumes/vapours, fire risk, and risks to residents.
- **Laser Classification & Safety Controls (BS EN 60825-1 & AOR):** You must identify the laser class (typically Class 4). Provide laser protective eyewear, warning signage, controlled area/exclusion zone, and shielding where necessary.
- **Training (Legal Requirement):** You must be trained in laser safety (for Class 3B/4 use), PPE use, and COSHH awareness. No specific certificate is named in law, but proof of training is required if inspected.
- **Control of Fumes/Vapours (COSHH 2002):** You must assume paint vapours/particles are hazardous until proven otherwise. Provide local exhaust ventilation (LEV) and, if needed, respiratory protective equipment (RPE). Waste residues and filters may be hazardous waste and must be disposed of through licensed services.
- **Public Safety (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, s.3):** You must ensure residents, visitors, and others are not exposed to risks. This means removing them from the controlled area during operation, posting warnings, and ensuring safe re-entry (adequate ventilation, no lingering fumes).
- **Environmental Health / Nuisance (Environmental Protection Act 1990):** You must prevent fumes, odours, or dust from escaping into the wider environment or neighbouring properties. Councils can act on complaints of statutory nuisance.
- **Documentation:** Keep written risk assessments, COSHH assessments, training records, equipment maintenance logs, and waste disposal records. These do not need to be given to residents but must be available if HSE or council officers request them.
- **Customer Communication:** While not legally required to provide the risk assessment, you must inform residents in plain terms that laser cleaning is taking place, they cannot be present in the work area, and when it is safe to re-enter.
- **Re-Entry Period:** UK law does not prescribe a fixed waiting time after laser paint removal. Legally, you must ensure the air is safe before re-entry, as shown in your COSHH assessment. This depends on ventilation, the paint removed, and your extraction controls.

■■ Note: This is a legal summary, not legal advice. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the enforcing body. Local authorities (Somerset Council or equivalent) may also require environmental permits if emissions are significant. Always review and update your risk assessments as conditions, equipment, or materials change.