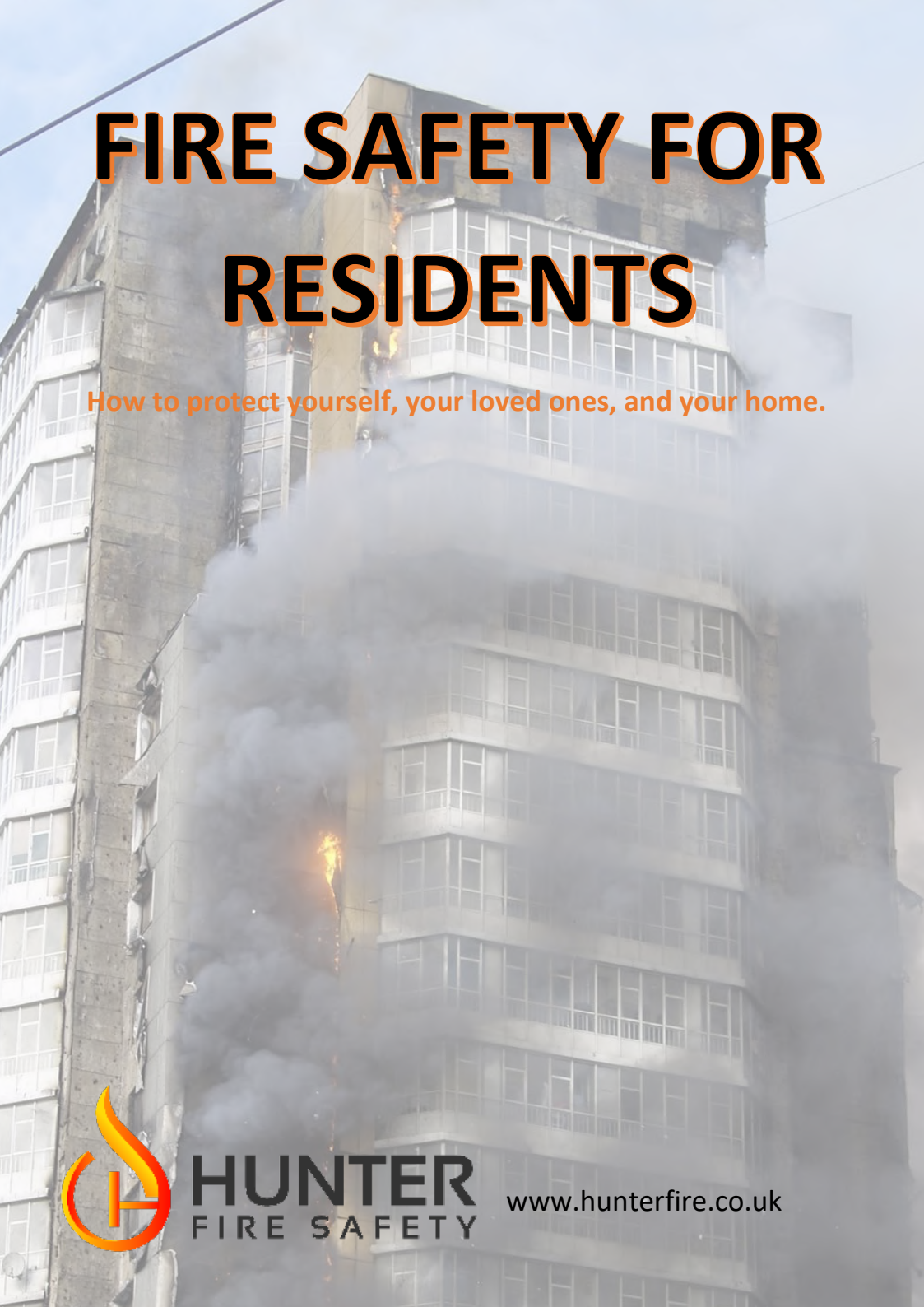


FIRE SAFETY FOR RESIDENTS

How to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.

HUNTER FIRE SAFETY

www.hunterfire.co.uk

Fire Safety in Flat Living

You live in a block of flats and have a responsibility to keep you and those living in your building as safe as you can.

As part of the community within your block, not only do you need to ensure the safety of your apartment, but you also share a responsibility to ensure that the communal areas and protected escapes are kept safe under the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Fire Safety Executive Regulations.

In this leaflet you will find advice on Fire Safety within your flat and in the communal areas. Statistically, you are seven times more likely to have a fire if you live in rented or shared accommodation so it's important you read and understand this information – it could save your life!

Key Points:

Communal Fire Safety

- The "Stay Put" strategy (Appropriate for purpose-built blocks of residential apartments and premises converted to residential apartments post 1991 building regulations)
- Fire Alarms
- Fire Extinguishers
- Other Fire Safety Systems
- Escape Routes.
- The Importance of Fire Doors (Regulation 10)
- Electric Bikes & Scooters
- External Wall Systems

Fire Safety in Your Home

- Common causes of household fires
- Electrical Safety
- Kitchen Dangers
- Balcony Care
- Smoke Alarms
- Make a Plan

Information for Residents - Regulation 9
(Purpose Built Blocks of Flats & conversions Post 1991 Building Regulations)

The government released the fact sheet below to provide information about the regulations to residents:

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 will make it a legal requirement from 23 January 2023 for responsible persons of all multi-occupied residential buildings in England with two or more sets of domestic premises (and which have common parts), to provide residents with fire safety instructions. Responsible persons should make sure that these instructions are shared with their residents in a form that residents can reasonably be expected to understand.

Responsible persons will need to provide residents with instructions on:

- how to report a fire
- a reminder of what the evacuation strategy is for that building, and:
- any other instruction that tells residents what they must do once a fire has occurred, based on the building's evacuation strategy.

Responsible persons should display these instructions clearly in their building's communal areas (such as the building's lobby or any conspicuous part of the building) and share directly with residents when they move into the building. This information will need to be re-provided in both the communal area and to residents when a document is updated. This information must also be re-provided to residents on an annual basis.

As is set out in the fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats guidance a multi-occupied residential building is likely to have either a stay put or a simultaneous evacuation strategy.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommended in the Phase 1 report (Recommendation 33.28) that 'the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings (whether or not it is a high-rise building) be required by law to provide fire safety instructions (including instructions for evacuation) in a form that the occupants of the building can reasonably be expected to understand, taking into account the nature of the building and their knowledge of the occupants.'[footnote 1]

This requirement will provide residents in all multi-occupied residential buildings with fire safety instructions on an annual basis. The intention of this requirement is to make residents safer, as well as to feel safer, by providing them with relevant information on what they should do once a fire has occurred.

These instructions will be provided to residents upon a change and on an annual basis to ensure that residents always have up to date information and an annual refresher when there is no change. The intention is to keep this information in residents' minds. By also providing these instructions in a communal or conspicuous area, visitors and other relevant persons will also have access to this information. Ensuring that instructions are understood by all residents.

Responsible persons should consider how best to provide these instructions in a way that their residents can understand. This consideration could be made alongside any existing or future resident engagement strategy, but the regulations do require responsible persons to provide fire safety instructions to their residents on, at least, an annual basis.

The regulations do not require these instructions to be translated into multiple languages, but a responsible person is welcome to use their own discretion should they wish to do so. Relevant fire safety information is already available in alternative languages from some fire and rescue services and can be downloaded from their websites.

Responsible persons should take steps to make sure instructions can be understood by all their residents and make reasonable steps to ensure this happens. Pictorial information could be used and face to face engagement undertaken to assist residents in understanding these instructions.

Information and Guidance for Purpose Built blocks of Flats and Conversions Post 1991 Building Regulations

The Stay Put Evacuation Strategy

For purpose-built blocks of flats and post 1991 conversions, your building should be built to support a STAY PUT fire evacuation strategy. This means that the design and construction of the building is built to give some protection from fire spreading from one flat to another. This means it will usually be safe to stay in your flat if the fire is not directly affecting you. You could put yourself in greater danger by leaving your flat if you are not affected by smoke or fire.

Simple Example of a Stay Put Evacuation Fire Action Notice:

If there is a fire inside your flat or you are affected by heat or smoke:

- stay calm, follow your escape plan, get everyone out and shut your front door.
- Raise the alarm.
- Leave the building by the nearest escape route and call the Fire and Rescue Service on 999 or 112 and follow the operators' instructions.
- Stay out, do not put yourself at risk.

If your escape route is blocked:

- Leave the room where the fire is and shut the door.
- Get to a window and open it.
- Raise the alarm any way you can.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service on 999 or 112 and follow the operators' instructions.

If you become aware of a fire in another part of the building but are not affected by heat or smoke:

- Remain calm, close your front door and stay in your flat.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service on 999 or 112 and follow the operators' instructions.
- If you are in doubt, get out.
- If you are in a corridor, lift lobby or stairway and you notice a fire in the immediate area, follow the above Fire Action Plan and leave the building immediately.

If your building cannot support the Stay Put Strategy, an Evacuation should be supported by an appropriate alarm system under the guidance.

Make sure you are aware of the evacuation strategy for your building.

Fire Alarms

Typically, due to the design and construction of purpose-built blocks of flats under 18 meters there is no requirement for an alarm system to detect fire within the communal spaces.

The guidance is taken form the Government publication "Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats".

20.4 In 'general needs' blocks designed to support a 'stay put' policy, it is unnecessary and undesirable for a fire alarm system to be provided. A communal fire detection and alarm system will inevitably lead to a proliferation of false alarms. This will impose a burden on fire and rescue services and lead to residents ignoring warnings of genuine fires.

20.5 A fire alarm system ought to be provided only in a building in which some control can be achieved over the occupants to ensure that they respond appropriately. For most blocks of flats, it would be unrealistic to expect this. Nor is it necessarily desirable that evacuation should take place from areas remote from the fire, unless and until these areas themselves become threatened by the fire.

20.6 The ability to manage a fire alarm system is rarely possible in a block of flats unless staffed at all times, e.g., by a concierge or caretaker. Allowing residents to silence and reset a system is inappropriate in these circumstances. Access to use of these facilities also enables major disablement of a fire alarm system. This could expose landlords and others with responsibility for managing fire safety to liability if, through the actions of a resident, the system is left inoperative and fails to perform correctly in the event of a fire.

20.7 In view of the above, only in unusual circumstances will a communal fire detection and alarm system be appropriate for a 'general needs' purpose-built block of flats.

Fire Extinguishers

Once deemed appropriate for the communal areas of flats, Fire Extinguishers in some buildings, are now being removed.

Residents are not expected to tackle a fire in their home or in the communal areas.

A fire extinguisher in the communal area might encourage a resident to re-enter a burning flat to fight a fire when the safest option is to leave and call 999.

Fire extinguishers should only be used by those trained to do so – it is not considered appropriate or practicable for residents to receive such training.

There are different types of fire extinguishers and using the wrong class of fire extinguisher can make the situation worse.

Communal areas are protected escape routes and therefore should be a sterile environment negating the need for extinguishers in case of fire in these areas.

Though residents find it reassuring to see an extinguisher no one is expected or trained to be expected to fight fire and should not be tempted to do so.

Guidance for Converted Properties (Pre 1991)
Section 4 - Houses Converted into Self Contained Flats

This category of property is very important in that it has not been subject to Housing Act regulation or Fire Authority regulation in the past. Legislation specifically identifies this type of property ('Section 257 house in multiple occupation' – if more than a 1/3rd of flats are let on shorthold tenancies) and makes the distinction between houses converted before 1991 or converted without Building Regulations and those converted after 1991. Post 1991 conversions will have additional fire safety measures installed such as mains wired or panel controlled smoke detection systems in the common areas. Typical examples are:

x Large 3+ storey properties converted into self contained flats; x Large 2 storey properties converted into self contained flats; x Mixtures of flats/maisonettes; x Flats converted 'over the shop'; x Some properties will have new build extensions/additions; x Mixture of tenures, long leases and owner occupied, leased and sublet on short tenancies, registered social landlord stock;

x Mixture of fire separation standards depending on the age of conversion.

This is a high risk category because buildings **converted** into self contained flats from traditional construction (brick walls but with timber floors, staircases, internal partitions etc) are more combustible than buildings which are designed to be fire resisting and built from non combustible materials. Where there are mixtures of tenures, including vulnerable individuals, the risks increase due to this type of occupancy and associated lifestyle issues.

This standard is aimed at fitting fire safety protection and detection into buildings which do not meet modern post 1991 Building Regulation standards. When a converted building is inspected there needs to be awareness of the possibility that the structural fire protection may have been altered or repaired ineffectively, or internal layouts may have been changed and fire doors removed. This will nullify or reduce the level of the fire protection measures originally provided in the conversion. The **ideal** is for 60 minutes fire protection between each risk room within the occupancy and the staircase (which is the escape route). This is usually achieved by providing a 30 minute fire resisting flat door which provides protection between the hallway/staircase and a further 30 minute fire door on each internal door to a risk room. This gives the required 60 minute protection between the risk and the escape route which is the internal staircase. There may be external secondary escape stairs which serve the top floor and/or the first floor. These may be useful and worthy of retention. However, if it is in a poor structural state of repair, removal may be the most costs effective option. Within each flat it is not possible to ensure each internal fire door is maintained in a closed position – it is more usual for such doors to be propped open or removed.

Therefore, this standard assumes only that the structural fire resistance between occupancies and the escape staircase is 30 minutes.

Note: LACORS National guidance does apply to this category of property.

If your building is pre 1991 conversion your Fire Risk Assessment should follow this set of guidance for houses converted into self-contained flats and your building should have Simultaneous Evacuation strategy with the appropriate alarm system.

Other Safety Systems

You may have seen or know about other safety systems within your building. Below we give some examples of what they could be, their importance and how they operate.

Dry Riser / Wet Riser

You may see the sign for a Dry Riser or Wet Riser in your building. These are systems designed to assist the Fire and Rescue Service by delivering water quickly across the building. They are similar in design and function, a system of pipes and valves reaching each floor and outlet. The Dry Riser is filled with compressed air and connects to an inlet on the outside of the building. A Wet Riser permanently holds water and will usually be found in high rise buildings.

Smoke Ventilation and Automatic Opening Vent (AOV)

A Smoke Ventilation System or AOV is a system designed to allow ventilation in corridors, stairwells, and lobbies to aid evacuation. They may be triggered automatically through smoke detectors or manually via a call point, causing a window, vent, or roof light to open and release smoke out of the building. It should be tested via the manual control point once a month with a full test carried out annually.

Sprinkler System

Sprinkler systems have sensors that react to heat – when the temperature reaches 60-70 degrees the sprinkler will spray water across the room or area to suppress a fire. The sensors are triggered individually where the temperature rises, they do not all go off together. Sprinklers can reduce the risk of death and injury as well as the risk to firefighters. It is now compulsory in England for any new buildings over 11 meters to be fitted with a sprinkler, though not usually required for pre-existing buildings.

Keep the Escape Routes Clear!

Leaving and storing of personal items in the protected escape routes presents hazard to you, your family, and the rest of the residents in your building and has the potential to block safe escape from the building in an emergency.

Your building will be regularly inspected, and it is now the policy that any items left in the escape routes may be removed without prior notification, and additional fees will be incurred.

This includes bicycles, pushchairs, children's toys, and any other item which is seen to present hazard in the event of an emergency escape. These items must be stored in appropriate, designated areas, or be taken into the demised premises.

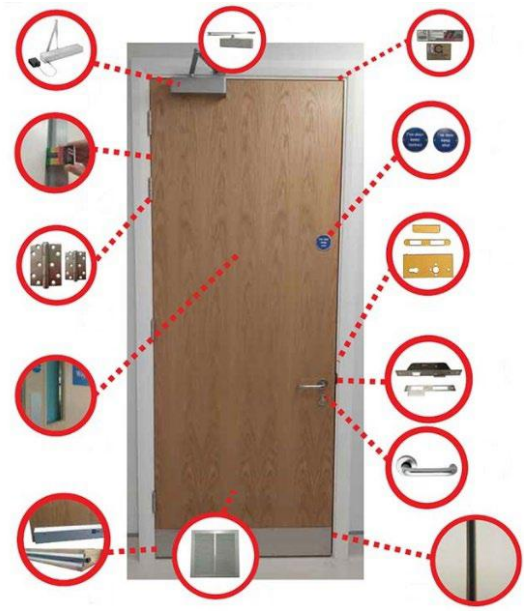
The escape routes form part of the fire management strategy for the building and its occupants, and it is imperative that these areas remain to be sterile environments, without hazard.

Your building may not have any adaptations for disabled persons, but it should be assumed that there will be persons who are less typically able than others, so as trivial as any items may be, they may present obstruction to safe escape to someone else.

Fire doors – what you need to know.

Fire Doors are an essential part of passive fire protection and play a vital role in preserving effective compartmentation in a building as well as preventing or inhibiting the spread of toxic smoke and gas.

The Fire Safety Act 2021 has confirmed that flat entrance doors are part of the communal area and as such are within the scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.



There are multiple parts that make a fire door effective.

Responsible persons have a duty to put in place general fire precautions which includes that all fire doors (including flat entrance doors) provide adequate protection in the event of a fire.

A Fire Door isn't just a door.

The front door to your flat/apartment should be able to hold back smoke and fire for 30 minutes. Fire doors play a very important role in compartmentation, preventing fire and smoke from spreading between rooms and along corridors, protecting escape routes. Therefore, there are restrictions, rules and regulations on what you can and cannot do to a fire door.

Fire Doors – the Do's and Don'ts:

DON'T:

- Wedge the door open (or any of the communal doors outside your property).
- Remove the self-closing device,
- Drill holes, add letter boxes or change the door in any way.

DO:

- Maintain it, check the seals, hinges, and self-closing device.
- Adhere to safety signs and keep fire door shuts where signed to do so.
- Consult a specialist if you are unsure if your door meets current standards.
- Use a certified contractor to carry out any works required on the door.
- Keep the escape route clear, this not only applies to the route to your front door but also the communal areas outside your property that provide an escape route to exit the building.

Fire doors (Regulation 10)

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 will make it a legal requirement from 23 January 2023 for responsible persons for all multi-occupied residential buildings in England with storeys over 11 metres in height to:

- undertake quarterly checks of all fire doors (including self-closing devices) in the common parts.
- undertake – on a best endeavour basis – annual checks of all flat entrance doors (including self-closing devices) that lead onto a building's common parts.

The regulations will also require responsible persons to provide to residents of all multi-occupied residential buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises (that have common parts) information on the importance of fire doors to a building's fire safety.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry in the Phase 1 report noted that "Fire doors play an essential role in preventing or inhibiting the spread of smoke and toxic gases and in preserving the effective compartmentation of buildings."

The Inquiry noted that the fire doors in Grenfell Tower did not, through damage and/or disrepair, act in the way that they should so that they prevent smoke and gases from spreading.

The Inquiry recommended (Recommendations 33.29 (a) and (b)) that the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings carry out an urgent inspection of all fire doors to ensure compliance with current legislative standards and that regular (no less than every three months) checks be carried out to ensure all fire doors are fitted with an effective self-closing device which is in working order.

In addition, the Inquiry recommended (Recommendation 33.30) that all those who have responsibility for the condition of the entrance doors to individual flats in high-rise residential buildings (with unsafe cladding) be required by law to ensure these doors comply with current standards.

Prior to the Fire Safety Act 2021, flat entrance doors in multi-occupied residential buildings may not have been routinely considered as part of the fire risk assessment process. The Fire Safety Act 2021 has removed the legal ambiguity and confirms that flat entrance doors are in scope of the Fire Safety Order.

The regulations will require responsible persons to undertake best endeavour annual checks of flat entrance doors and quarterly checks of communal doors in multi-occupied residential buildings above 11m.

Information on the importance of fire doors to a building's fire safety will help to deepen residents' understanding of their role in keeping their building safe and encourage them to allow responsible persons access to check their flat entrance doors.

Current situation

The checks required under the regulations do not replace the existing duty under the Fire Safety Order for the responsible person to put in place general fire precautions and their duties under Article 17 of the Fire Safety Order in all buildings which are in scope of the Fire Safety Order, regardless of height (see below).

What does "best endeavours" mean?

It will be for responsible persons to determine the best approach to engage with residents in order to get access to undertake the annual checks of flat entrance doors. This could include the responsible person agreeing with residents a date, so access can be granted.

Problems with access

Residents should be encouraged to allow responsible persons access to check their flat entrance doors. Use can be made of the information to residents required by these regulations, or other resident engagement strategies.

If access cannot be achieved, the responsible person should gather evidence of the steps they have taken to discharge this duty. This could include correspondence between the responsible person and resident seeking permission to gain access.

Minimum requirements for inspections of fire doors

The minimum requirement is for the responsible person to undertake an inspection of the doors to identify any obvious damage or issues. It should not be necessary to engage a specialist for these checks as the responsible person should be able to carry out these checks themselves. There are several useful guides available online which can support a responsible person in undertaking checks.

A responsible person should consider:

- if there has been any alterations or damage to a door's glazing apertures or air transfer grille
- if there are any gaps around the door frame and that seals and hinges are fitted correctly
- that the door closer shuts the door
- that the door closes correctly around the whole frame
- that there is no visible damage (either deliberate or from wear and tear) to the door or door closer

If any issues are identified from these checks, it might be appropriate to undertake more detailed checks of doors (or the self-closing device) if any damage is identified from the initial inspection. This could include engaging a specialist.

Checks of fire doors in buildings below 11 metres

The regulations do not replace the existing duty for a responsible person to put in place general fire precautions in any premises covered by the Fire Safety Order, regardless of the building's height.

The Fire Safety Act 2021 has clarified that in any residential building which contains two or more sets of domestic premises are within the scope of the Fire Safety Order.

Responsible persons for residential buildings below 11 metres in height have a duty to put in place general fire precautions in these buildings, this duty includes making sure that all fire doors – including flat entrance doors – are capable of providing adequate protection.

Responsible persons will also be required to provide residents in all residential buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises with information on fire doors.

Further specific advice is available from the MHCLG - Advice Note 16
Government Building Safety Programme – advice for building owners on assurance and replacing of flat entrance fire doors.

Electric Scooters, Mobility Scooters & Bikes

Using electricity to get you from A to B is now a part of daily life and whether it is a mobility scooter, E-scooter, or E-bike they all come with guides and instructions to use and charge safely.

Lithium-ion batteries are a popular choice for electric vehicles because they have a very high energy density and retain their charge better than other batteries. However, these batteries can fail, they can "explode", and they can cause a catastrophic fire.

If these items are stored and charged in the communal area of your building, there is an additional risk to all residents not only in terms of fire safety but also means of escape. The list below gives an idea of what you need to do to enable you are keeping yourself and others safe:

1. Always follow manufacturer's instructions when charging
2. Always buy from a reputable company, not just the vehicle but the battery pack and the charger as well.
3. Do not charge or store your item in the communal area of your building.
4. Do not leave your item on charge for longer than the manufacturer states.
5. Do not leave it unsupervised while charging and specifically do not charge overnight.
6. Do not leave your item in very cold or very hot conditions.
7. Regularly check the charger and battery for signs of damage – if you have any doubt do not use it!

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) E-Bikes and E-Scooter Fire Safety Guidance

E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming increasingly popular. Most are powered by lithium-ion batteries which can be charged in the home. The use of these batteries in a wide range of household products is becoming increasing common.
It is important when charging e-bikes and e-scooters, you do so safely to avoid a risk of a fire starting and putting your families and homes at risk.
With an increased use of e-bikes and e-scooters, comes a corresponding fire safety concern associated with their charging and storage. The use of these products is expected to continue to rise. Some fire services and fire investigators have seen a rise in e-bike and e-scooter battery fires.
Currently there is limited data relating to the number of fires, but London Fire Brigade reported 8 fires caused by e-bikes and e-scooters in 2019. This rose to twenty-four in 2020 and fifty-nine by December 2021.
On occasions batteries can fail catastrophically, they can 'explode' and/or lead to a rapidly developing fire.
The incorrect disposal of lithium-ion batteries in general household and recycling waste can lead to significant waste fires.
Prevention messaging is therefore important in supporting both FRS protection and operational staff.

Key messages
The following messages can be useful in communicating the risk and minimising the risk of fire to the public:

Charging

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when charging and always unplug your charger when it's finished charging.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms. If you charge or store your e-bike or e-scooter in a garage or kitchen ensure you install detection, we recommend heat alarms rather smoke detectors for these areas.
- Charge batteries whilst you are awake and alert so if a fire should occur you can respond quickly. Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.

• Always use the manufacturer approved charger for the product, and if you spot any signs of wear and tear or damage buy an official replacement charger for your product from a reputable seller.

• Do not cover chargers or battery packs when charging as this could lead to overheating or even a fire.

• Do not charge batteries or store your e-bike or e-scooter near combustible or flammable materials.

• Do not overcharge your battery – check the manufacturer's instructions for charge times.

• Do not overload socket outlets or use inappropriate extension leads (use un-coiled extensions and ensure the lead is suitably rated for what you are plugging in to it).

• In the event of an e-bike, e-scooter or lithium-ion battery fire – do not attempt to extinguish the fire. Get out, stay out, call 999.

Storage

• Avoid storing or charging e-bikes and e-scooters on escape routes or in communal areas of a multi occupied building. If there's a fire, it can affect people's ability to escape.

• Responsible Persons should consider the risks posed by e-bikes and e-scooters where they are charged or left in common areas such as means of escape, bike stores and mobility scooter charging rooms. They may wish to offer advice to residents on the safe use, storage and charging of these products.

• Store e-bikes and e-scooters and their batteries in a cool place. Avoid storing them in excessively hot or cold areas.

• Follow manufacturer's instructions for the storage and maintenance of lithium -ion batteries if they are not going to be used for extended periods of time.

Buying

• Buy e-bikes, e-scooters and chargers and batteries from reputable retailers.

• Many fires involve counterfeit electrical goods. Items which don't meet British or European standards pose a huge fire risk and while genuine chargers (or battery packs) may cost more, it's not worth putting your life at risk and potentially destroying your home by buying a fake charger to save a few pounds.

• If buying an e-bike conversion kit, purchase from a reputable seller and check that it complies with British or European standards. Take particular care if buying from online auction or fulfilment platforms. Also be aware that if buying separate components, you should check that they are compatible.

• Register your product with the manufacturer to validate any warranties – batteries are usually included in warranties. Registering makes it easier for manufacturers to contact you in the event of safety or recall information.

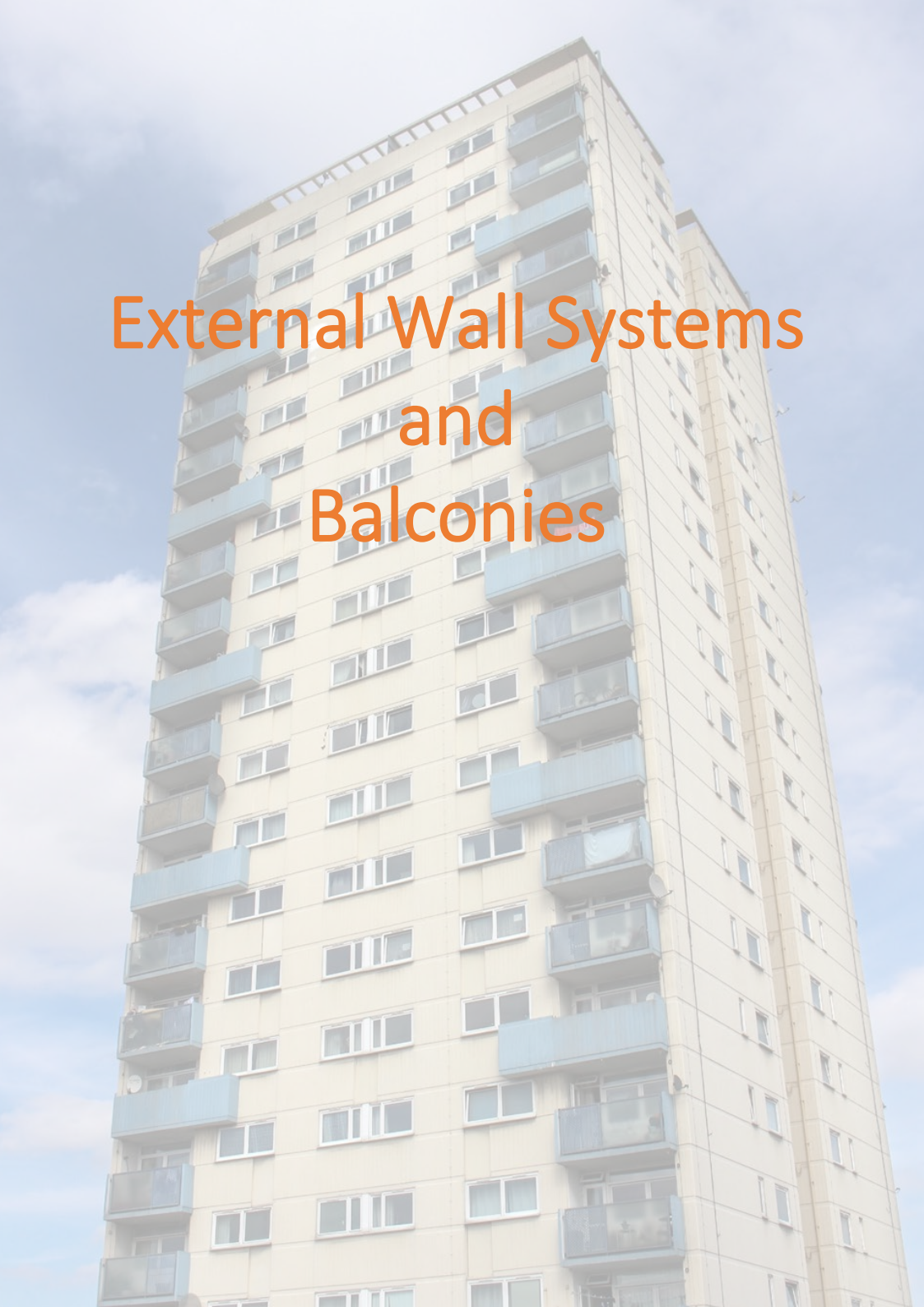
• Check any products you have bought are not subject to a product recall. You can do this but checking Electrical Safety First's website or the government website.

Damage and disposal

• Batteries can be damaged by dropping them or crashing e-bikes or e-scooters. Where the battery is damaged, it can overheat and catch fire without warning. Check your battery regularly for any signs of damage and if you suspect it is damaged it should be replaced and should not be used or charged.

• If you need to dispose of a damaged or end of life battery, don't dispose of it in your household waste or normal recycling. These batteries, when punctured or crushed can cause fires in bin lorries, recycling and waste centres. Your e- bike or e-scooter manufacturer may offer a recycling service. Alternatively check with your local authority for suitable battery recycling arrangements in your area.

Enjoy and ride your e-bike or e-scooter safely and ensure you are using these products within the law. Further information can be found here https://www.gov.uk/electric-bike-rules and for e-scooters
Further information around lithium-ion batteries is available from NFCC via FRS Learn



External Wall Systems and Balconies

Regulation 5
External Wall Systems and Balconies

Design and materials of external walls (regulation 5)

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 will make it a legal requirement from 23 January 2023 for responsible persons of existing high-rise [As defined in The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 as a building at least 18 metres in height or at least seven storeys] residential buildings in England to provide their local fire and rescue service with information about the design and materials of the building's external walls and to inform their local fire and rescue service of any material changes made to them. Supporting guidance will specify the type of information required by fire and rescue service to support their operational response and how this should be shared.

Responsible persons will also be required to provide additional information to their local fire and rescue service in relation to the level of risk of spread of fire that the external wall structure (its design and materials) pose and the steps they (responsible person) have taken to mitigate these risks.

The above information should be shared in a standard format and a template for responsible persons will be provided in supporting guidance.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry noted in the Phase 1 report (Recommendation 33.10(d)) that "A sound understanding of the materials used in the construction of any high-rise building is essential if the fire and rescue service is to be properly prepared to carry out its function in relation to that building" (Pg. 773 HC 49-IV – The Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 Report - Volume 4 of 4).

The details about the design and materials of the external walls will help forewarn the fire and rescue service and enable them to plan for incidents accordingly.

The regulations go further than the inquiry by asking the responsible person to provide information on the level of risk associated with their external wall structure. This will be useful for both operational firefighting and fire safety inspection purposes.

Meeting the requirement to provide information about a building's external walls.

Responsible persons who do not currently have all the information specified in guidance regarding their external walls should provide the information they do hold whilst they update their fire risk assessment to include an appropriate assessment of the external walls. Once their fire risk assessment is updated, they should provide this updated information to their local fire and rescue service as soon as possible.

Determining the level of risk that the external wall structure poses

The Fire Safety Act 2021 has clarified that where a building contains two or more sets of domestic premises the fire risk assessment should include an assessment of that building's external wall system.

For most high-rise residential buildings, we expect that responsible persons will already know what their external wall systems are comprised of, and what steps (informed by their building's fire risk assessment) they have already taken to mitigate this risk. For example, where the material of a building's external walls is masonry and there is no risk of external fire spread, a simple statement to that effect is all that is required.

Where this is not the case, or where a more in-depth external wall system assessment is required, the responsible person should arrange to have an assessment which is relevant to their building's circumstances undertaken. Once completed they should and share the relevant details of that assessment with the fire and rescue service, alongside the mitigating steps they have taken as a result of this assessment.

Guidance to support these regulations will include a suggested template to assist the responsible person in sharing the right information with the fire and rescue service.

If the information is in the fire risk assessment, can the responsible person send that?

The regulations require a responsible person to produce "a record" of the design of the external wall of the building which includes details of the materials from which they are constructed. This record should also include the detail of the level of

risk identified and recorded in the fire risk assessment and the mitigating steps that the responsible person has implemented to mitigate this risk.

The information that is to be shared with the fire and rescue service is intended to be useful to them in planning their operational response should a fire breakout in their building.

A template will be included in guidance to assist responsible persons in providing this information to fire and rescue services in a way that is practical to be used by the fire service and is a proportionate burden on the responsible person.

What are mitigating steps?

These will be informed by the fire risk assessment for the building but could include whether a waking watch has been established, or a sprinkler system installed.

Further specific advice is available from the MHCLG - Advice Note on Balconies on residential Buildings.

Information and Guidance for Fire Safety in Your Home

Common Causes of House Fires

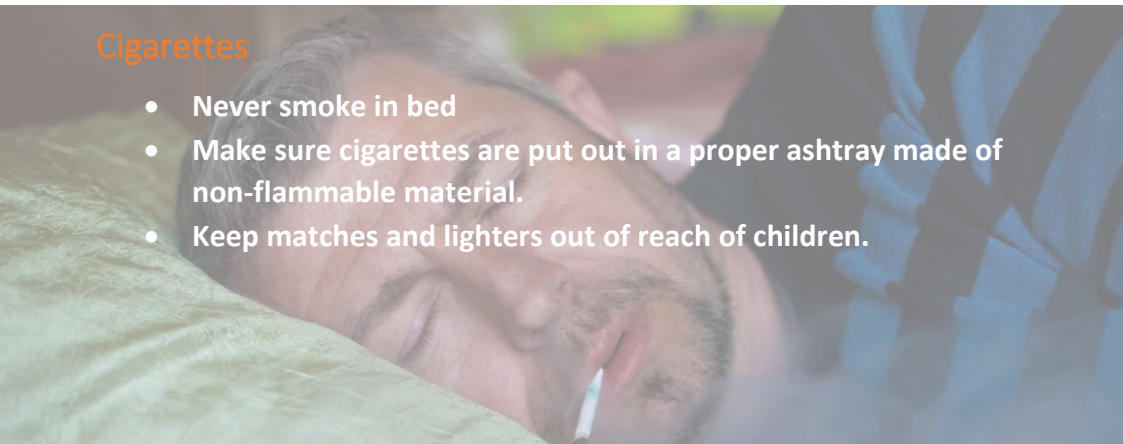
So, what do you need to be aware of in your home to promote fire safety and prevent the most common of household fires? What else do you need to consider as a resident in a block of flats?

Candles, Incense, Oil Burners

- Never leave candles lit when you leave the room.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Ensure candles are in suitable and stable holders.
- Keep candles away from flammable materials.

Hair Care

- Never leave hair straighteners or heating irons plugged in and always place on the safety mat provided by manufacturers to cool down.
- When finished using the hairdryer put it somewhere safe to cool down, do not leave on or near flammable material such as on the bed or piles of clothes.



Cigarettes

- **Never smoke in bed**
- **Make sure cigarettes are put out in a proper ashtray made of non-flammable material.**
- **Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.**

Electrics Everywhere

It is easy to take for granted how powerful electricity is and how dangerous it can be.

Electrical Installations should be checked by a registered electrician at least every 10 years (check your fuse box and there should be label on it stating the last date it was done and when it is due).

As well as checking this it is also worth ensuring you do your own visual checks and have an awareness of where an electrical fire can occur.

- Check sockets for scorch marks and/or heat.
- Check the condition of leads and cables.
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances when not in use.
- Do not cover electrical heaters or place them near curtains or clothes airers.
- When purchasing electrical items look out for the British or European Safety mark.
- Do not store items on top of the microwave.
- Do not overload sockets and adaptors.
- Do not leave washing machines, dishwashers, and tumble dryers on overnight or when you are out.

Are you overloading your sockets?

Find out by using the Socket Calculator provided by Electrical Safety First www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk You will also find more useful information about electrical safety in your home.

Plug in Air Fresheners

Most of these types of air freshener use electricity to heat up a gel or liquid to spread the scent around the room. The hazard occurs when manufacturer's instructions are not followed and once plugged in, these devices become forgotten about, boil dry and could catch fire/cause a hazard.

Do not use these items in the communal areas of your building.
If you choose to use these inside your home always follow manufacturer's instructions which will generally include but not be limited to the following:

- Switch off and unplug overnight.
- Check the device regularly for overheating or scorch marks and unplug immediately if heats excessively.
- Do not use if damaged.
- Do not touch with wet hands or metal objects.
- Do not use in direct sunlight.
- Do not use in confined spaces.
- Remove from socket when empty.
- Leave at least 50cm clear above the air freshener.
- Do not use in extension leads or multi plug adaptor.

The Kitchen

The kitchen is the room in your home where fires are more likely to start and having an awareness and being prepared could make all the difference to your safety.

Know the Basics

Don't put metal in the microwave. Don't use the toaster under the cabinets or near curtains.

Think Fabric Awareness!

From tea towels to your own clothing, you should be aware of fabrics around the kitchen and where they are. Ensure they are kept away from heat and do not lean over the hob if wearing loose fitting clothing.

Keep it Clean!

Built up grease and fat can ignite and cause a fire - ensure you keep the hob, the grill, the extractor fan, and cooker hood clean.

Who else is around?

Don't leave children or pets unsupervised in the kitchen, ensure all pan handles are safe and not hanging over the edge of the counter or cooker.

Be alert for Pan fires.

Hot oil in pans and deep fat fryers need to be handled with care. Oil will set alight easily, if it starts to smoke this is a sign it's too hot so immediately turn the heat off and leave to cool. If a pan catches fire - do not use water, do not tackle it yourself – get out and call 999.

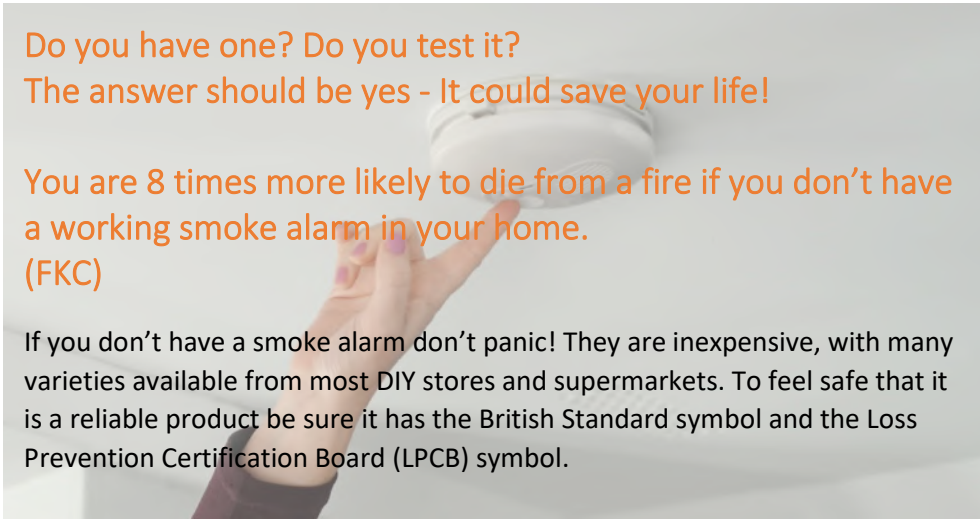
Stay Present! Physically and mentally!

Try not to leave items cooking on the hob or under the grill – stay in the room or turn them off. Do not cook under the influence of alcohol or medication that makes you drowsy.

And Finally - Check Again!

Before you leave the kitchen double check the items used are off and safe.

Smoke Alarms



Do you have one? Do you test it?
The answer should be yes - It could save your life!

You are 8 times more likely to die from a fire if you don't have a working smoke alarm in your home.
(FKC)

If you don't have a smoke alarm don't panic! They are inexpensive, with many varieties available from most DIY stores and supermarkets. To feel safe that it is a reliable product be sure it has the British Standard symbol and the Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB) symbol.

Remember:

- Know the battery life of your smoke alarm(s) and replace as needed.
- Have one fitted on each floor of your home and in each bedroom. **Do not** install in the Kitchen or bathroom **but do** put one in the hallway outside the kitchen.
- TEST! It is important to test and maintain your smoke alarms once installed. Test them once a month and replace the batteries when required following manufacturer's instructions.
- Whether your alarms are battery operated or connected to the main power supply they still need to be tested.
- Finally – have a plan in place should your alarm sound and make sure you and your family/guests all know what to do!

SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE
LIVES

CHECK YOUR SMOKE ALARM PLACEMENT

44% of failure in battery-powered smoke alarms is because they're misplaced.

FIRE KILLS
YOU CAN PREVENT IT

Balcony Care

Whilst there are multiple benefits of having a balcony, enlarging your living space, providing you with access to outdoor seating, giving you a place to grow your plants, to name but a few, there is also a responsibility to treat it with respect to keep you and your neighbours safe from fire hazard.

Never BBQ on a balcony!
Never use fire pits or patio heaters on a balcony!
Never use candles on a balcony!
Never use or store flammable materials on a balcony!
Never store or use white goods on a balcony!

Balcony fires can spread a lot quicker and easier than fires inside the home, the wind can carry the flames higher as well as vertically, spreading to other balconies, and embers can be blown and ignite other sources.

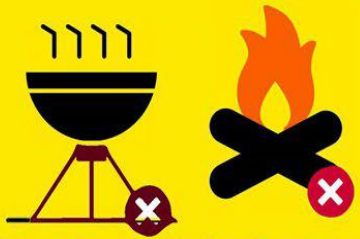
It is strongly advised not to smoke on a balcony but if you do then an ashtray fit for purpose is to be used and ensure items are fully extinguished.

Remember – Your balcony is another potential escape route so keep it safe and clutter free!

Keeping you safe from fire...

BALCONY SAFETY ADVICE

NEVER use BBQs, including disposable ones, indoors or on your balcony. *They pose a fire and carbon monoxide risk.*



Fire pits, patio heaters and chimineas should also NOT be used on balconies.

Avoid smoking on your balcony.

If you do smoke on a balcony, **DO NOT** *discard cigarettes or smoking materials on or over the balcony.*

Use a sturdy ashtray with a small amount of water in it to ensure material is extinguished.

NEVER store flammable or hazardous materials on balconies.

ie. gas cylinders.

Enjoy your balcony safely.

Keep balconies clutter free. They should NOT be used for storage. Balconies can be an important escape route for residents or access point for firefighters.

DO NOT use or set off fireworks or sky lanterns from a balcony.

White goods should NOT be stored or used on balconies.

DO NOT modify your balcony or install combustible screening.

NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

FIRE KILLS
LET'S PREVENT IT

Make a Plan!

Everyone needs to know the plan to escape in an emergency. Be prepared!

- **Keep all escape routes clear, do not store items by your front door or fire exit that will prevent escape or cause trip hazards.**
- **Keep keys to doors and windows in a sensible place and make sure everyone knows where to find them.**
- **Generally, the best route will be the normal route in and out of your home but, if possible, have a second route planned should this become impassable.**
- **End of day checks – Get in the habit! Before you go to bed do a final check that everything is off and shut all doors**

If a fire breaks out in your home

- **Stay calm, act quickly, and follow your escape plan.**
- **Get everyone out and shut the front door.**
- **Raise the alarm using a Manual Call Point (if there is one).**
- **Leave the building by the nearest escape route.**
- **Stay out. Do not put yourself at risk.**
- **Get to a place of safety away from the building.**
- **Call the Fire and Rescue Service 999 or 112.**
- **Take instructions from the Fire and Rescue Service operator.**

If your escape route is blocked:

- **Leave the room where the fire is and close the door.**
- **Get to a window and open it.**
- **Raise the Alarm any way you can.**
- **Call the Fire and Rescue Service 999 or 112 and follow the operators' instructions and guidance.**

Ensure you know the buildings evacuation strategy.

Get in the habit!

Fires can start at any time, a lot start at night. Get in the habit of doing a quick check before bed.

- Close all doors.
- Unplug items that do not need to be plugged in
- Ensure appliances are off (washing machine, tumble dryer, dishwasher)
- Check all candles and cigarettes are extinguished.
- Turn heaters are off.
- Check the cooker is off.
- Check the fire guard is around the fireplace.
- Place keys in a place that everyone knows.
- Have access to a phone in your bedroom.

Information for Landlords

Landlords who let their apartments are also subject to additional commitments under the appropriate legislation: Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

Landlords should ensure they are managing their apartments appropriately and that tenants are “vetted” and routinely inspected to ensure any safety systems are maintained without defect.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

The Regulations apply to new tenancies from the 1st of July 2020 and for any existing tenancies from 1st April 2021 and require private landlords to ensure their properties are subject to electrical inspection and testing, resulting in a satisfactory report, by a qualified, competent person at intervals not exceeding 5 years.

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

Landlord must ensure that each appliance and flue to which their duty to maintain fittings in a safe condition extends is checked for safety within 12 months of being installed and at intervals of not more than 12 months since it was last checked for safety. No person shall carry out any work in relation to a gas fitting or gas storage vessel unless he is competent to do so.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015

Landlords must, when their premises are occupied ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room of the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance; and ensure that checks are made by or on behalf of the landlord to ensure that each prescribed alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins if it is a new tenancy (granted on or after 1st October 2015). Following this the tenant is responsible for maintaining these alarms.

Your responsibilities as a tenant

If a problem occurs during your tenancy, it's important to know who's responsible for what. With that in mind, we've created a helpful guide which outlines your key responsibilities as a tenant.

Care

Take good care of the property to avoid any preventable issues. For example, turn off the water if you'll be away from the property during the colder months.

Cleanliness

It's your responsibility to keep the property clean and tidy. If it is untidy at the end of the tenancy, your landlord or property manager (in the case of a fully managed property) may deduct from your deposit to make good.

Pests

You must deal with a pest infestation in cases where it is caused through your own actions, e.g. by not taking out the bins.

Repairs

If damage does occur and is caused by you, a friend or family member, it must be repaired or paid for by yourself.

Rent

Even if you've run into a dispute with the landlord or property manager (in the case of a fully managed property) rent payments must be made on time and be the agreed amount, as laid out in your tenancy agreement.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Refrain from acting in an anti-social way towards your neighbours, landlord or agency. You can be held accountable for the anti-social behaviour of anyone who lives with or visits you.

Subletting

Do not sublet a property if your tenancy agreement, landlord or property manager has not agreed to it.

Additional Charges

Make sure other additional charges, laid out in your tenancy agreement, such as utilities and Council Tax are paid in on time.

The Property Ombudsman

Useful Websites

https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/safety/home-safe-home/

https://www.dwfire.org.uk/

https://firekills.campaign.gov.uk/

https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/home-fire-safety-checker-hfsc/

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/problems-where-you-live/fire-safety-in-flats/what-you-can-do/make-sure-your-flat-is-fire-safe/

https://www.lease-advice.org/

https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government