

Fire safety review for purpose-built flats
9th Sept 2011
CR1

Attendance: Tina Mustafa (TM), Paul Weston (PW), Lee Birch (LB), John Murden (JM), John Bakewell (JB), Carly Glover (CG), Lisa Hall (LH), Leanne Allwood (LA), Trevor Wylie (TW)

Corporate Colleagues and Consultees:- Steve Langston, Jason Hodges, Sue Philp

Minutes of meeting

Part A: Fires in flats and their impact	Action by
<p>High rise</p> <p>Discussion on previous communications to tenants (leaflets/booklets/Open House).</p> <p>Existing literature on stay put procedures to be re-distributed</p> <p>Further communications required on fire safety in particular reference to fire doors. LA to reference in Annual Report / Open House</p>	<p>LA</p> <p>LA</p>
<p>Recycling in the high rise</p> <p>Temporary suspension of recycling collection in high rise blocks due to fire risk posed by tenants leaving items in communal areas. Pilot being undertaken by Street Scene</p> <p>Community meeting involving fire service, housing and residents to be scheduled to communicate requirements to residents.</p> <p>Future methods of recycling currently being investigated (waste management)</p>	<p>Street Scene</p> <p>LH</p> <p>NH</p>
Part B: How blocks of flats differ from other residences	
<p>Sheltered schemes</p> <p>Sheltered alarm systems link to WEL for out of hours monitoring, however contain no detail so emergency services will be alerted in every case.</p> <p>LB to develop a procedure on the management of out of hours fire alarms</p>	<p>LB</p>

<p>Refurbished flats on Masefield Drive</p> <p>There is a fire alarm system in the refurbished flats that doesn't link to anything: TW to investigate and present options by June 2012.</p> <p>Fire detection in high rise</p> <p>Communal detection is not required as per guidance. However, there is a recommendation for hard-wired smoke alarms in flats. To be included in future investment plans</p> <p>Survey required for high rise and Eringden flats. Discussion on cost, estimated around £300 per unit x 350 flats.</p> <p>Also, suggested that under lettable standards that an upgrade from battery operated alarms to hard-wired could take place during void works:</p> <p>Leaseholders</p> <p>Discussion on implications of leasehold properties in relation to enforcement of fire doors (several leasehold flats fitted with non-regulation UPVC front doors). JB advised that Lichfield are currently in the process of attempting to enforce in a privately owned high rise block, to be updated on outcome. TM re-assured JB that action would be pursued to enforce the Housing Act where possible and where leaseholders alterations breach the fire safety of the building.</p>	<p>TW</p> <p>JM/PW</p> <p>JM/TM</p>
<p>Part C: The law governing fire safety in blocks of flats</p>	
<p>27.2: HHSRS:</p> <p>Only a sample of properties have had this completed.. Agreed that stock condition survey provided industry approved sample.</p> <p>Ventilation in high rise: Intumescent strips fitted and recommended</p> <p>Governance – unplanned expenditure to be reported to members once costs established</p>	<p>TM/PW</p> <p>TM/JM</p> <p>TM</p>
<p>Part D: Fire risk assessment</p>	
<p>Guidance to be built into contract for fire risk assessments</p>	<p>Gethin/Rob Etherington</p>
<p>Part E: Managing fire risk – preventing fires</p>	

High rise basements	
Discussion on future of the high rise basements. Options discussed included complete closure or conversion to open, caged storage areas (however this may be more of a hazard with accumulation of rubbish, blocked fire escapes etc).	
Reasonable approach would be to extend fire detection system to the basement area that links to WEL so that the alarm can be raised. JB to provide formal recommendations to undertake basement works given the options and implications	JB
Smoking and storage in communal areas	
Discussion on repeat incidences of tenants smoking in communal areas. Recommendation to refer to Environmental Health for enforcement.	TW
Sue P and Lisa to look at escalation procedure in dealing with repeated storage in communal areas.	SP/LH
Fire signage	
Recent fire risk assessments picked up that signage was lacking in communal areas. However, point 63.2 of the document states that if there is a "single staircase, regardless of the number of floors, would, for example, not usually require any fire exit signage". To be noted for future reference.	ALL
46.3: Electrical testing in flats	
JM confirmed picked up routinely on voids.	JM
47: Heating and ventilation systems and equipment	
John M to ask Rob E to check boilers in sheltered schemes in ref to shut offs after electrical fault. Works now completed	JM
Part F: Managing fire risk – fire protection	
TW to check on cleaners' cupboard signage in all communal areas	TW
JM to speak to Richard about dry riser testing	JM
65.3: Discussion on chute room, JB agreed that current measures are adequate.	

68: Discussion on thumb-turn locks, possibly to be picked up on the void?	JM
69.5: Caledonian flats share a stairwell with a commercial premises, JB advised that this is not a problem.	
70: Log of bedridden/immobile tenants to be kept by fire panels in sheltered schemes - completed	LB
Part G: Managing fire risk – ongoing control	
Ref p112	
Appointment of responsible officer for fire safety: confirmed JM	TM
Fire policy: to check with Steve Langston whether the corporate policy is sufficient for this and whether the landlord service requires it own policy	SL
Generic training for fire awareness for housing officers- Olive Branch training, possibly to extend to cleaners and caretaking services.	
LB to develop fire procedure for sheltered.	LB
78.6: Fire drills to be carried out for staff evacuation	
79.7: LB to develop emergency plans for sheltered	LB
79.10: Log of tenants who use oxygen cylinders in their flats to be kept in sheltered schemes, by fire panel.	LB
79.12: As previous notes, recommendation to store details of tenants and sheltered floor plans next to fire panel.	LB
80: Routine inspections to continue to control the works that we are aware of.	
P128/130: Checklists on these pages are good examples, possibly to highlight at sign-up stage	LB
87.7: Fire safety manual for sheltered to be developed.	LB

JB asked for it to be noted that TBC have taken a pro-active role in fire safety over the last 2/3 years, and if it wasn't for such actions, the LGG document would've posed more implications for the authority.

TM suggested follow up actions for the Health & Safety meeting would include:-

1. Landlord Services completing a Health & safety Plan linked to the Corporate policy that details the overall approach and reflects actions from this latest

workshop. TM recommended Steve Langston advise / be commissioned to write this

2. Action log to be updated to capture all the actions once fully assessed by April 2012
3. Governance required on un-planned expenditure by the end of the financial year 2011/12
4. Audit of the approach externally when this H&S plan is completed and further recommendations reported as required.