



Fire safety in your home

FAQs

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How are you making my building safe?

Fire risk assessments are carried out in all blocks with a communal area, such as stairs or a corridor. All our fire risk assessments are currently up to date, however in light of the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in London, we have carried out extra safety reviews on all blocks with six storeys or more to be absolutely sure our residents are safe.

Is the cladding on my building the same as at Grenfell Tower?

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) requested cladding samples from all high rise tower blocks to be tested. We have had the results back from our tests and can confirm that the samples we submitted are not similar to those used at Grenfell Tower.

Do we need communal fire alarms?

In high rise blocks of flats, the walls and ceilings between flats are built to be able to contain a fire. In the event of a fire, only residents in the affected flat or flats need to evacuate, so there's no need to be notified immediately of a fire elsewhere in the building. For this reason, building regulations and other guidance recommends that communal fire alarms are not necessary.

However, if fire or smoke affects your home, or if you're instructed by the fire service to leave, you should do so at once. Please see what to do in the event of a fire.

What do I do if I discover a fire?

If you live in a block that operates a policy of "stay put" and you discover a fire in a flat or common area you should:

- Alert all occupants of the flat
- Do not use the lift
- Leave by the nearest exit
- Call 999 and ask for the fire brigade

Other occupants not directly affected by the fire should:

- Stay put in their flat unless told to leave by the fire brigade
- If told to leave, do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the fire brigade

If your home is a single dwelling or a flat in a block that operates an evacuation policy you should take the following action:

- Sound the alarm
- Call 999 and ask for the fire brigade
- Leave the building by the nearest exit

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On hearing the alarm:

- Leave the building by the nearest exit
- Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the fire brigade.

Your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Neighbourhood Officer or Fire Safety Officer will be able to tell you which evacuation procedure should be used at your home. Alternatively, if you live in a flat, refer to the red fire action notices that are displayed in communal areas.

What is a fire risk assessment?

A fire risk assessment is an evaluation of your apartment block and communal areas, which identifies any potential hazards or risks.

How do I know that my block is safe and has been inspected?

Great Places carries out regular inspections of your communal areas to ensure fire protection measures (such as emergency lights and fire alarms) are working properly. These inspections are carried out by our trained Fire Safety Officers (FSOs). The name and contact details of your FSO are displayed on the notice board in the entrance lobby to your building.

How can I help to prevent a fire in my building?

There are lots of things that you can do to help:

- Keep communal areas clear. Items blocking communal areas can help a fire to spread and also block your escape routes. This includes not leaving buggies, bicycles, thick or curled doormats, laundry, shoes or any other items in communal areas, entranceways or corridors.
- Keep your balcony clear at all times. Fires often spread on the outside of the building and flammable items left on the balcony increase this risk.
- Don't use barbecues or leave flammable items such as gas bottles on your balcony.
- Don't leave any open flames such as candles unattended.
- If you smoke in your home, make sure all cigarettes are properly extinguished. If possible, it is always safer to smoke outside.
- If you use heaters, make sure they are never covered or left near any other items.
- Make sure any electrical appliances or devices are in good condition.
- Make sure the fire doors in your home and communal areas are kept closed at all times – this is crucial in preventing the spread of fire.
- Do not tamper with the electrical or gas supply to your home.
- Do not block any vents in your home.
- Allow us access to your property to carry out your annual gas safety inspection.
- Make sure your family know what to do in the event of fire.