Summary Housing Management Offer to residents living in high rise Council owned accommodation.

April 2025

HILLINGDON
LONDON

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Contents

Introduction

This document sets out Hillingdon Council's approach to complying with the statutory management obligations set out in the Building Safety Act 2022 and to ensure that all residents living in its residential tower blocks are fire safe and fire aware. This housing management offer applies to all residents living in the Council's residential tower blocks which are taller than 18 metres or are at least 7 storeys high. A full list of buildings where this housing management offer applies is set out in Appendix 1.

The Council knows that the overriding responsibility of any responsible landlord is to keep residents safe and informed. The Council has continued to invest in fire safety related work and has embraced the statutory obligations reflected in the Building Safety Act 2022, associated Regulations and good practice.

The Council's response to fire safety management is to have a proportionate focus on 'property, 'people' and 'prevention'. This approach underpins the service offer to residents living in the Council's tower blocks. The Council knows that to effectively deliver its obligations it must move towards a more intensive approach to housing management which provides an appropriate level of focus on 'people' and 'prevention'. Working in partnership with residents to ensure they are fire safe and fire aware is a core housing management role. Two full time Tenancy Management Officers are dedicated to the management of all flats in the Council's 10 tower blocks and associated shared areas.

Summary of Offer

Taking a 'whole building approach' to fire safety requires a transparent approach, the development of new relationships and the improvement of existing ones with each and every household. As part of this offer the Council is committing to more personal contact with residents, more inspections, more information sharing and improved channels of communication. The Council knows that the people living in our high-rise blocks are our greatest source of information about our buildings and must be listened to. Through this housing management offer the Council is seeking to 'get the balance right' between safety, the level of intrusion and cost.

This offer sets out:

- A more intensive approach to housing management with dedicated Tenancy Management Officers as a key point of contact
- An inspection regime covering shared areas of the building in addition to flat entrance fire door checks and property inspections.
- The need to gather relevant information regarding occupiers aged 16 years or over to ensure that any presenting risks can be managed and to improve the effectiveness of communication.
- Clear guidance for 'staying put' and carrying out partial or total evacuation of buildings following direction by the fire and rescue service.
- How residents can participate in matters relating to building safety as part of a documented approach to engagement.
- A commitment to provide financial and safety related information to residents.
- A new Complaints system for residents living in tower blocks.

- The rights and duties of all households who reside in tower blocks including tenants, resident leaseholders and those who rent their home from a leaseholder.
- How new lettings are restricted to tenants and household members who can self-evacuate in the event of being ordered to do so by the emergency services.

Stay put

The Council has a 'stay put' policy in place for all its tower blocks. This policy is based upon our tower blocks being designed and maintained to 'contain' fires pending attendance by the Fire Brigade and means that you should stay put unless affected by smoke or directed to evacuate your flat by the London Fire Brigade. If you experience a fire in your own flat you should close the door to the room where the fire is located, leave your flat and move to the common area of the building. Do not go onto the balcony. Dial 999 to report the fire to the Fire Brigade.

The Council's high-rise blocks have earned a 'stay put' policy due to significant and ongoing investment in fire safety works and a regular and intensive programme of independent inspections. These inspections (Fire Risk Assessments) are a legal requirement.

Partial and full building evacuation

Fire containment and evacuation plans are not separate issues but are different sides of the same coin. Having a building which fully supports a 'stay put policy' alongside options for partial or full evacuation provides an added degree of security for residents and provides fire and rescue services with a wider range of response options. The Council is committed to introducing systems and plans for full and partial evacuation of its tower blocks to support the London Fire Brigade in terms of access to a wider range of response options. These systems and plans were an outcome from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

The Council's Approved Social Housing Allocation Policy requires new tenants seeking a home in a Council owned tower block to be able to demonstrate that they can self-evacuate from the flat unaided and within a reasonable period of time.

Customer Insight

One of the key roles of your Tenancy Management Officer is to improve the extent, quality and relevance of information which the Council holds regarding all persons living in a tower block.

The extent of information collected will be limited to that which is necessary and appropriate to effectively manage risks, meet the needs of vulnerable residents, ensure effective and timely communication and to support the Council in the discharge of its statutory management obligations. Once collected, we will ensure that all personal information about you is kept up to date, particularly in relation to matters which can change in a short period of time such as health and mobility related matters. The types of information we will collect, and use will include:

- Who lives in the flat including full names, dates of birth and contact details
- Next of kin details including names, contact numbers and addresses
- Details of preferred or first language spoken
- Any known underlying vulnerabilities which may affect the way in which we provide our services.
- General health information such as visual or hearing impairments and mobility issues.
- Conditions which may result in you reacting or responding differently to that which might be expected in relation to a real fire situation.
- Conditions which may increase the level of fire risk e.g. hoarding disorder and the presence of oxygen cylinders in the home linked to medical needs.
- Details of other services and support providers who may currently be providing a service to you

All personal data is stored securely. Further information can be found in the Housing Management privacy notice on the Council's website which can be located at Privacy policy - Hillingdon Council This Notice is designed to give you information about the personal data we hold about you, how we use it, your rights in relation to it and the safeguards that are in place to protect it.

New residents

Conversations about fire safety will start when you first move into your flat and will include key fire safety messages. Your Tenancy Management Officer will reinforce these messages throughout the duration of your occupancy. This initial induction to 'fire safety and awareness', provides the opportunity to ensure that you are clear about your obligations, the fire safety policy for the building and to provide you with any tailored information on fire safety. The 'Home Fire Safety Guide' will be worked through and discussed with all new residents. All residents will receive a 'fire safety information pack' tailored to the flat and block in which they live.

Personal emergency plans

We know that some residents have underlying issues which may need to be discussed and considered as part of a 'personal emergency plan'. This PEP will record what measures need to be put in place for or by you to reduce the potential for a fire starting, to ensure you have effective early warning of a fire starting and to ensure that you act appropriately once a fire is discovered. This tailored plan will be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently, subject to personal circumstances.

Personal emergency evacuation plans

We will identify residents who are unable to self-evacuate from the building unaided. Where this is the case, we will work with them and others who may support or live with them to develop a 'personal emergency evacuation plan' or PEEP. Again, we will review this plan each year or following a material change in circumstances**.** One of the options we can agree with a Council tenant is to move them to suitable alternative accommodation if they are unable to self-evacuate from their flat unaided.

Where leaseholders or tenants who rent from leaseholders are unable to self-

evacuate from their flat unaided, the Tenancy Management Officer will work with them on an individual basis to consider the housing options which are available to them.

‘Premises Information Boxes’ are fitted in all our tower blocks. These secure steel boxes contain important building related information which would be of use to the fire and rescue service. In addition to building related information the boxes contain details of all residents who the Council has assessed as being 'vulnerable' and who are the subject of a ‘personal emergency evacuation plan’ [PEEP]. The information provided will inform the Fire Brigade about residents who may be at particular risk in the event of an emergency, including those who may take more time to evacuate unaided or who may require assistance in evacuating the building due to mobility issues. Your Tenancy Management Officer keeps the information in the premises information box up to date following any changes in occupancy or any material change of circumstances.

Inspections

Property inspections are central to the proactive management of the building and the delivery of a more intensive approach to management.

Shared area inspections

The shared areas of the building are an extension of every resident’s home and therefore needs to be safe, clean, and maintained to a good standard. Internal shared areas of tower blocks present additional management challenges. Landings, stair ways and corridors provide the means of escape in the event of a fire. Anything which adds to the fire load, materially restricts the escape route or which presents a safety risk such as a slip or trip hazard is unacceptable. Internal shared areas also contain active fire precautions and other measures designed to support the fire safety strategy for the building. This includes sprinkler systems, automatic opening vents, emergency lighting and self-closing lobby doors. These building safety measures need to be regularly inspected to ensure they are in proper working order.

Your Tenancy Management Officer will undertake a rolling programme of quarterly shared area inspections covering the internal and external common areas of the building. The objective of these inspections is to:

- Identify and report maintenance defects.
- Ensure that standards applicable to the means of escape are complied with.
- Check the fire safety precautions and other fire safety measures including communal fire doors.
- Monitor the standard of service provided to shared areas.

Separate to these shared area inspections the Council independently commissions annual Fire Risk Assessments by an appropriately qualified and experienced assessor. These assessments are a legal obligation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as amended.

Flat inspections

As part of its more intensive approach to housing management, your Tenancy Management Officer will also make personal contact with you on a rolling six monthly basis. As part of this planned home visit the Tenancy Management Officer will:

- Inspect the flat entrance self-closing fire door.
- Ensure that the Council has up to date details on the occupancy of the flat and contact details.
- Establish if there have been any material changes which could impact a resident's ability to respond to an emergency or evacuate from the building.
- Establish if there is a need to develop a 'personal emergency plan' or a 'personal emergency evacuation plan' for any vulnerable member of the household or review an existing plan.
- Identify if there are any support needs requiring referral into other services.
- Check that no changes have been made which would impact upon the fire safety / compartmentation of the flat
- Check that any leaseholder who has sublet their flat and is acting as a landlord, is fully compliant with all safety certification
- Check that any leaseholder who is occupying the flat and has gas appliances and gas heating can evidence an annual gas safety check by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Ensure that smoke / heat detectors are in proper working order.
- Ensure that any balcony is not being used for storage of combustible items.
- Ensure residents remain clear about the fire safety policy for the building and how to prevent the likelihood of a fire starting.

Social Contract

The Building Safety Act 2022, in addition to tenancy and lease conditions, place duties on the Council, tenants, leaseholders and other occupiers of tower blocks. The Council's approach to building safety is to rely upon the formal enforcement of rights and obligations as a last resort rather than a first resort. In all cases the Council's preferred option is to work with residents through a 'social contract' which reflects the rights, duties, and obligations of all parties to maintain safe, clean, and well managed buildings and estate environments.

This service offer reflects the Council's commitment, as building owner and manager, to meeting its obligations. To support participation in a 'social contract' it is also important that tenants, leaseholders, and other residents meet their obligations too.

Rights and Obligations

Whilst residents have the right to expect that their home and the block in which they live is safe and fully compliant, they also have a key part to play in terms of building safety.

In order for the Council to meet its obligations, it is important that all residents:

- Provide access to the Council following reasonable notice for the purpose of inspection, survey or to undertake work. This includes but is not limited to gas and electrical safety testing.
- Keep in repair and proper working order any safety related item which is the responsibility of the resident. In the case of leaseholders and leaseholders who have sublet their flat, this will include gas and electrical installations.
- Take care not to interfere with, damage or allow to be damaged any safety related item in the building.
- Cooperate in relation to the provision of information needed by the Council to assess risks and take reasonable steps to prevent incidents in the building.
- Refrain from storing any items on the internal shared areas of the building and on private balconies.
- Participate in the management of the building and building safety decisions as part of the Council's approach to engagement.

Gas Safety

Gas Safety is important to everyone. This includes the Council in its capacity as a landlord and building manager, resident leaseholders who have gas appliances and gas heating and leaseholders who have sublet their flat and are therefore also landlords. Every dwelling containing gas appliances, fittings and flues will need to be checked annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer to ensure residents remain safe. This applies to all tenures.

All landlords are required by law to:

- Ensure gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition.
- Gas appliances must be serviced annually.
- Ensure an annual gas safety check is carried out on each appliance / flue.
- Inform tenants of where to turn off the gas and what to do in an emergency.
- Keep records of the gas safety check
- Issue a copy of the latest safety check record to the existing tenant.

All servicing and checks must be undertaken by an appropriate Gas Safe registered engineer.

Annual servicing to ensure that gas appliances, fittings and flues are in safe and proper working order is equally important to resident leaseholders.

In order for the Council to meet its obligations it will:

- Require all tenants to provide access to ensure that the annual gas service can take place.
- Require all leaseholders who have sub-let their flat to provide the Council with evidence each year that it has completed an annual gas safety check by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Check with all sub-tenants to ensure that they have received a copy of the latest gas check safety report.

- Require all resident leaseholders to show that they have had their gas installations serviced each year by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Electrical Safety

British Standards require all electrical installations to undergo inspection and testing at regular intervals. The industry agreed standard is 5 years for rented property or a change of tenant. This requirement applies to the Council in its capacity as a landlord and to leaseholders who have sub-let their flats.

British Standards also require landlords to have a mains wired smoke detector installed on the escape routes for each floor, a detector in the lounge (or principal habitable room), and a mains wired heat detector in the kitchen. All landlords are also required to ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in every room where there is a fixed combustion appliance (including a gas boiler). Where a new fixed combustion appliance is installed, a carbon monoxide alarm will be required to be installed by law.

Landlords are legally required to repair or replace smoke and carbon monoxide alarms once they have been informed that they are faulty. Testing of alarms remains the tenant's responsibility.

Information sharing

Safety related information

All residents will be given a 'Fire Safety Information Pack'. The content of the pack will be explained to residents by their Tenancy Management Officer. All packs will be tailored to individual tower blocks and your property type.

'Fire safety Information Packs' will be reviewed and updated in the light of any material changes to the building, Statutory / Regulatory changes and feedback from residents.

In addition to the use of Notice Boards located within tower block lobbies, key information will be published and made available on the Council's website, including a full version of this summary Housing Management Offer. This information will be reviewed and updated following feedback from residents and will include:

- Service contracts – including a summary of specification, frequency and compliance
- Fire Risk Assessments – including due dates, completed dates and summary outcomes
- Building Registration and certification
- Safety Case Reports – which document building safety risks and the steps taken / being taken to reduce and control those risks
- Mandatory occurrence reporting - specific issues which must be reported to the Building Safety Regulator

- Details of Accountable Persons who are responsible for ensuring that fire and structural safety is being managed for each and every tower block
- Fire safety concerns and complaints – details of how to raise fire safety concerns, make a complaint and details of the complaints procedure operated by the Building Safety Regulator
- Dates for shared area inspections and the outcomes from shared area inspections

Financial information

In addition to providing and publishing a range of safety related information, the Council also wants to be transparent about building safety costs.

There will be a cost for landlords associated with some of these new legal duties which can be passed onto leaseholders through their service charge. The Council will clearly set out a list of building safety costs which the law says can automatically be passed onto leaseholders and the statutory protections which are in place regarding such costs.

It is common for leaseholders to contribute to routine maintenance costs, building repairs and refurbishments through their service charge. Leaseholders will directly benefit from the building safety measures the Council has put in place to ensure that their home and building is safe.

Resident engagement

Engagement strategy

The Council has set out in writing a clear approach detailing how all residents aged 16 years and over can participate in the management of the building at a pace and at a level which suits them. This approach will evolve over time and will include:

- Information about how a safety related decision is made.
- Where decisions are required, what decisions the Council will consult residents on
- How views will be considered by the Council
- How decisions made and other information will be shared

The Council's approach to involvement will support transparency and the 'social contract' between the Council and all residents in the management of the building. Generic plans will be tailored to the needs of residents within individual blocks.

Complaints

A new and tailored complaints handling process has been introduced by the Council for residents living in tower blocks. This is to make sure effective action is taken where concerns are raised in relation to building safety risks and compliance matters.

The Council will continue to work with residents to ensure this process:

- Clearly defines a ‘relevant complaint’ associated with building safety risks and compliance matters.
- Sets out who can make a complaint and how.
- States the timeframe to consider and responded to a complaint.
- Sets out the circumstances when a complaint must be referred to the Regulator [Health & Safety Executive] and
- Commits to sharing information including the outcomes of ‘relevant complaints’ with residents.

In its offer to residents living in tower blocks the Council has provided an element within the complaints procedure that focuses on ‘building safety concerns’. Residents can report and identify a specific tower block when reporting their concerns. This feature within the complaints handling procedure allows for notifications to be sent directly and immediately to the appropriate service team for investigation, resolution and response. This same process applies to building safety concerns raised outside working hours**.**

As part of its complaints handling procedure the Council will:

Acknowledge receipt of a complaint within three working days of receipt and tell you who is going to investigate your concerns, the complaint reference number and when you can expect the response to be sent to you.

Aim to respond to formal complaints within 10 working days and the response will tell you how to escalate the complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the response you have received.

Notify you if there is going to be a delay in responding to a complaint.

If you are not happy with the response you receive, there are two further stages to escalate the matter. This includes an appeal to the Director of Housing [stage 2] and a further appeal to the Chief Executive of the Council [stage 3]. Further details on the Council’s complaints handling procedure, including how to report a complaint, can be found on the Council’s website https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaints

Management offer review

The Council’s management offer will be reviewed on a regular and ongoing basis to ensure that it supports the ‘social contract’ between the Council and residents, continues to deliver safe, well managed buildings and meets all statutory guidance and Regulations. All reviews and changes will be made in partnership with residents and published.

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Accountable Officer

Appendix 1: Schedule of tower blocks

Building Address	Flats	No of storeys
Cavenham Court, 18 Millington Road, Hayes, Middx, UB3 4FZ	Cavenham Court 1-96, Millington Road 11-28	7
Fairlie House, Pantile Walk, Uxbridge, Middx, UB8 1LT	Fairlie House - 1-72	11
Fitzgerald House, 237 Avondale Drive, Hayes, Middx, UB3 3PW	Fitzgerald House 1-48	13
Glenister House, 238 Avondale Drive, Hayes, Middx, UB3 3PP	Glenister House 1-48	13
Harding House, Addison Way, Hayes, Middx, UB3 2DH	Harding House 2-96 (evens)	13
Melbourne House, Yeading Lane, Hayes, Middx, UB4 9LJ	Melbourne House 1-96	13
Rabbs Mill House, 14 Chiltern View Road, Uxbridge, Middx, UB8 2PB	Rabbs Mill House 1-79	14
Skeffington Court, 51 Silverdale Road, Hayes, Middx, UB3 3BY	Skeffington Court 1-75	14
Sutcliffe House, Addison Way, Hayes, Middx, UB3 2DJ	Sutcliffe House 134-228 (evens)	13
The Gouldings, Pantile Walk, Uxbridge, Middx, UB8 1LR	The Gouldings - 1-72	11
Wellings House, 236 Avondale Drive, Hayes, Middx, UB3 3PN	Wellings House - 1-48	13

Translations

If you would like to receive this information in another language please contact us on 01895 277 038

اگر آپ یہ معلومات کسی دوسری زبان میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے ٹیلیفون 01895 277 308 پر رابطہ کریں.

Urdu translation.

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ 01895 277 038 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ.
Punjabi Translation.

જો તમે આ માહિતી બીજી ભાષામાં પ્રાપ્ત કરવા માંગતા હો, તો કૃપા કરીને અમારો સંપર્ક કરો ટેલિફોન 01895 277 038

Gujrati traditional.

यदि आप यह जानकारी किसी अन्य भाषा में प्राप्त करना चाहते हैं तो कृपया हमसे टेलीफोन 01895 277 038 पर संपर्क करें

Hindi

Hadii aad rabto macluumaad dheerad ah, oo habkale loo dhigey fadlan nala soo xidhiidh nambarka 01895 277 038

Somalia