

FRA Purpose Built Blocks

Responsible Person:	Islington Council
Auditor:	{REDACTED}
Location:	1-24 Park View, Collins Road, London N5 2UB
Area Housing Office:	PURPOSE-BUILT BLOCKS - UPPER STREET EAST
Date of Audit	16/06/2020
Suggested Review	



Overall Assessment of Fire Risk

Hazard from Fire:	Normal
Consequences Life:	Slight Harm
Overall Risk from Fire:	Tolerable

PRIVATE

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Introduction

This report has been completed in compliance with Article 9 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the risk to life from fire, and where appropriate, to make recommendations to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation.

The assessment was completed on the situation observed while at the premises and on information provided, either verbally or in writing.

The assessment does not involve destructive exposure, and it is not always possible to see in all rooms and areas, not inspect less readily accessible areas such as above ceilings. It is therefore necessary to rely on a degree of sampling and also reasonable assumptions and judgments.

The report represents only the best judgment of the auditor involved in the preparation and is based, in part, on information provided by others, such as other staff members or contractors.

Note that, although the purpose is to place the fire risk in context, the approach to fire safety risk assessment is subjective and for guidance only.

All hazards and deficiencies identified in this fire safety risk assessment should be addressed by implementing all the recommendations contained in the action summary.

General Building Information

Premises Description and/or Other Relevant Information:

Flats accessed directly from lift lobby; with three flats on each floor. Main staircase serves all floors with a secondary alternative exit staircase accessible from the lift lobby from 7th to 4th floors only; staircase continues down to ground floor and exits into the gardens behind the block. Flats on and above 4th floor have emergency exits into either the main or secondary staircase. Water tank room & lift motor room located at roof level. Staircases and lift lobbies have openable and louvered windows providing natural ventilation and smoke control. Refuse chute hoppers are provided within the lift lobbies at each level above ground.

Brief Details of the Block Construction:

Reinforced concrete framed with brick walls.

Number of Floors:	8 Storeys	Total Number of Units:	24
Number of Emergency Exits:	2	Number of Employees Present:	0+
Approximate Number of Residents:	60	Maximum Number of members of the Public at any one time:	30
Disabled Occupants:	Not Known		

Fire Loss Experience (if known):

None known

Audit Details

Section	2. Identifying the Fire Hazards	
Sub-Section	2.1 Sources of Ignition	
Question	2.1.1 Naked flames	No
Question	2.1.2 Electrical sources	Low Risk
Question	2.1.3 Acts of nature eg lightning	Low Risk

Sub-Section	2.2 Sources of Fuel	
Question	2.2.1 Combustive materials	Low Risk

Sub-Section	2.3 Sources of Oxygen	
Question	2.3.1 Sources of oxygen other than naturally occurring?	None

Section	3. Identifying People at Risk	
Question	3.1 Are employees and/or visitors at risk from fire hazards?	Low Risk
Question	3.2 Are residents at risk from fire hazards?	Low Risk
Question	3.3 Are vulnerable persons at risk from the fire hazards?	Low Risk

Section	4. Evaluating the Fire Hazards	
Question	4.1 Do the premises have an effective smoking policy?	Low Risk
<i>“No Smoking “signage is displayed in the premises.</i>		
Question	4.2 Does electrical equipment or wiring appear to be free from damage or misuse?	Low Risk

Electrical intake cupboards are routinely checked as part of the Quality Assurance Officer (QAO) inspection regime, which is documented. Estate/Caretaking Services will ensure doors remain adequately secured when not in use.

Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?	Medium Risk
<i>Block entry security system.</i>		
ACTION	Secure refuse bins away from the building (ideally at least 6m away) to prevent them being set alight and pushed against the building.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Refuse bins not secured and could be moved closer to the building.	Action & Completion By 16/06/2021
ACTION	Secure refuse bin store/chamber.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Refuse chamber unsecure. Fires in refuse chambers are unfortunately relatively common. The chute can transfer smoke and hot gases to the upper floors of a building. For this reason, it is important that refuse chambers are secured between refuse collections.	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
Question	4.4 Do the premises have any protection against acts such as lightning	Yes
<i>Lightening protection evident on building.</i>		
Question	4.5 Are the common and landlord areas of the premises free from an accumulation of combustible materials, storage and/or waste?	Medium Risk
<i>Islington Council operates a managed use policy, where items of limited combustibility such as door mats, plant pots etc. are generally permitted. Regular inspections are carried out by Quality Assurance Officers (QAO's) to ensure this policy is being adhered to and that properties are kept free of an accumulation of combustible waste. A 'zero tolerance' policy will be introduced where residents are unable to adhere to a sensible managed use arrangement.</i>		
ACTION	Clear waste/storage/combustibles from common/Landlord areas and advise residents of the policy for waste disposal and take enforcement action where appropriate.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
ACTION	Clear or substantially reduce waste/storage/combustibles on private balconies.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Some balconies have excessive storage and some have enclosed their balcony in combustible materials. Both are likely to aid the spread of fire.	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020

Question	4.6 Are wall, ceiling or floor coverings of a fire-resistant nature?	Low Risk
Question	4.7 Are holes in fire resistant partitions (service ducts, fire compartments or flues) within the premises adequately fire stopped?	Low Risk
Question	4.8 Is fire separation on the means of escape routes adequately maintained?	Low Risk
Question	4.9 Are there arrangements to ensure the safe evacuation of the premises where it is used for sleeping?	Low Risk
<p><i>Security gates fitted within block to individual dwellings.</i></p> <p><i>Islington Council recognises the balance between safety and security, adopting an advisory approach to security gates/grills and warning residents of the dangers/potential delays to the fire and rescue authority. Where gates/grills hinder access/egress to more than one property they will be disabled and/or removed immediately. The Construction and Fire Safety Team (CFST) will write to residents with gates installed periodically to refresh this information. This will also be repeated through resident newsletters and web articles etc. periodically.</i></p>		
Question	4.10 Are evacuation arrangements for vulnerable people suitable/sufficient?	Low Risk
<p><i>No vulnerable people formerly identified but there may be occupants with varying degrees of physical/mental disability, in line with the general population.</i></p>		
Question	4.11 Are the escape routes identified with effective signage to allow for all people to safely evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency?	Yes

Section	5. Means of Escape	
Question	5.1 Are the available escape routes and exit widths suitable and sufficient for the number of people within the premises?	Yes
Question	5.2 Are the available escape routes and widths suitable and sufficient for the physical layout of the premises?	Yes
Question	5.3 Are all pathways corridors and escape routes (internal and external) free from obstruction or other	Medium Risk

	fire risks?	
See 4.5.		
Question	5.4 Are escape routes likely to be compromised in early stages of fire? i.e unprotected staircase or inadequate ventilation	Low Risk
<i>Open-able and permanent vents on stairway and within lift lobbies.</i>		
ACTION	Clear blocked refuse chute.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
Question	5.5 Is the lighting adequate?	Low Risk
<p><i>Islington Council will install emergency lighting in purpose built blocks of flats (2 storey+) in line with its planned upgrade and renewal/cyclical improvement programme/CIP. High rise blocks (10 storey+) and those with complex layouts will be completed as a priority, with each block being assessed during the planning stages of CIP works. Properties with a simultaneous evacuation strategy will also be considered a priority.</i></p> <p><i>There was evidence of emergency lighting on the stairway. However, it was difficult to determine the extent of coverage as many units were not showing indicator lights.</i></p>		
Question	5.6 Do all exits within the premises lead to a place of reasonable or total safety?	Yes
Question	5.7 Are dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) of a suitably fire resisting construction for the type of property and the location?	No
<p><i>The majority of flat entrance doors have been replaced to comply with current standards, however, this block contains a significant number of leaseholder doors which have not been replaced.</i></p> <p><i>In light of the MHCLG investigations and findings, Islington council, has a robust program in place to identify all composite fire doors/sets. As this program rolls out, dependent on the findings, results of the testing and certification etc. taking into consideration the actions raised in the Fire Risk Assessment, the complexity of the premise design, layout, and the evacuation procedures, appropriate action will be taken.</i></p> <p><i>(The appropriate remedial action will be undertaken within a suitable time frame on a risk managed basis).</i></p>		
ACTION	Repair/replace dwelling secondary means of escape door to ensure it provides 30 minutes' fire resistance.	

Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
ACTION	Inspect front entrance door to ensure it provides 30 minutes' fire resistance.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
Question	5.8 Are the dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) fitted with fully functional self-closing devices?	No
See 5.7.		
<i>The majority of doors have recently been upgraded to current standards, therefore, most self-closers are likely to be in place and working, however, this block contains a significant number of leaseholder doors which may not have a working self-closer.</i>		
Question	5.9 Are the fire doors within the common and landlord areas suitable and sufficient, and fitted where necessary, with intumescent strips and smoke seals?	Medium Risk
<i>Islington Council has established a dedicated fire safety project team to survey all flat front entrance doors (and alternative means of escape doors where applicable) and carry out upgrade or replacement works where required, in line with recommendations made in the LGG's Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats guidance document. For tenanted properties, as a minimum upgrade works will include the installation of a self-closing device. Surveys of leasehold properties will also be carried out, with leaseholders able to opt-in to the upgrade programme. The survey/works programme will also include communal doors where applicable, to ensure means of escape routes are suitably protected.</i>		
ACTION	Intumescent strips & smoke seals should be installed on cross corridor, staircase and/or lift lobby doors where applicable.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/06/2021
Question	5.10 Are self-closing devices provided appropriately on fire doors within the common and landlord areas? If so, are they in working order?	Medium Risk
ACTION	Repair/replace/adjust self-closing mechanism on fire doors to ensure they close effectively.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
Question	5.11 Are the internal fire doors indicated with the appropriate signage	Yes

Question	5.12 Do the doors used for means of escape from the premises open in direction of travel where necessary?	Yes
Question	5.13 Are doors used for means of escape from the premises provided with suitable fastenings that can be easily and immediately opened without the use of a key?	Yes
<i>Entry doors are incorporated into routine Quality Assurance Officer (QAO) inspections, with any repair issues raised with Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service.</i>		
Question	5.14 Are the floor surfaces on the escape route (internal and external) free from trip/slip hazards?	Low Risk
Question	5.15 Are Fire Service facilities and access to the premises suitable and sufficient?	Low Risk
ACTION	Consider retro-fitting a dry-riser to this building.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Getting water to the upper floors for fire fighting would be made easier if a dry riser were installed.	Action & Completion By 16/06/2021
Question	5.16 Are floor level indicators present and legible?	Yes
Question	5.17 Do Fire Services facilities such as dry/wet risers, door entry/lift overrides appear to be free from damage and vandalism?	Yes
Question	5.18 Are Fire Service facilities and controls for the premises subjected to a suitable system of maintenance and/or repair?	Yes
<i>Testing of LFB access switches is incorporated into routine Quality Assurance Officer (QAO) inspections, with any repair issues raised with Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service.</i>		
<i>The lift overrides are tested on a monthly basis as part of the PPM maintenance visit carried out by the Lift Contractor.</i>		

Section	6. Detection and Warning	
Question	6.1 Do the dwellings (from random sample) appear to have suitable hard wired smoke/heat detection installed?	Low Risk
<i>Mains powered smoke/heat detection (to LD2 standard) was installed extensively to tenanted</i>		

properties as part of the Decent Homes programme between 2004 & 2010. Since the conclusion of the Decent Homes programme, mains powered smoke/heat detection (LD2) is now installed as part of void property process and the cyclical (5 yearly), domestic electrical inspection/testing regime where it is not already provided. It is likely the majority of leasehold properties will not benefit from mains powered detection systems, although some grade F systems (battery operated) are likely to exist.

Question	6.2 Are methods of detection and warning within the premises considered suitable and sufficient?	Low Risk
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Section	7. Emergency Plans	
Question	7.1 Based upon the overall risk of fire, evaluation of fire hazards and means of escape, is the policy of "Stay put, unless affected by smoke or fire" considered adequate for the dwellings within these premises?	Yes
Question	7.2 Based upon the overall risk of fire, evaluation of fire hazards and means of escape, is the policy of "Full Evacuation" considered adequate for the dwellings within these premises?	N/A
Question	7.3 Have emergency plans been communicated to residents and other relevant people	Yes
<p><i>Fire action notice displayed in entrance lobby to block.</i></p> <p><i>The majority of purpose built blocks of flats operate on the principle that residents should 'stay put, unless directly affected by smoke, heat or fire'. This is communicated to residents through the tenant sign-up pack, regular newsletter articles and the Islington Council website, which also links to the LFB's 'know the plan' website. Caretakers are informed through periodic training.</i></p>		

Section	8. Further Surveys and Investigation	
Question	8.1 Are there any serious or suspected structural deficiencies which could lead to spread of fire beyond the dwelling of origin, warranting further investigation such as a Type 2, 3 or 4 survey?	No
Question	8.2 Are there any un-accessed areas or known voids that warrant further investigation to confirm adequate fire safety measures are in place?	No

Question	8.3 Are the external escape staircases and gangways for the premises subjected to a suitable system of periodic inspection, maintenance and repair?	N/A
Question	8.4 Are there other types of occupancy forming part of/or within the block (shops, offices, nurseries etc)?	No
Question	8.5 Are there any other issues which may have an impact on the fire safety of the premises?	Medium Risk
ACTION	Repair door to roof.	
Findings (ISSUE)	The access door to the roof has been broken off resulting in a pigeon infestation in the tank room.	Action & Completion By 16/12/2020
Question	8.6 Are the external surfaces of the building likely to promote fire spread?	No

Section	9. Overall Assessment of Fire Risk	
Question	9.1 Evaluation of overall fire hazard	Normal
Question	9.2 Evaluation of overall consequences for life safety	Slight Harm
Question	9.3 Overall evaluation of fire risk	Tolerable
Question	9.4 The most appropriate fire strategy for this building is	Stay-put
<i>Stay put unless directly affected by fire, heat, smoke or asked to leave by the Fire Service.</i>		
Question	9.5 Height of Building	N/A
Question	9.6 Next FRA Due	N/A

Audit Details

Section	4. Evaluating the Fire Hazards
Action Ref	0036209
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action Required	Secure refuse bins away from the building (ideally at least 6m away) to prevent them being set alight and pushed against the building.
Action Notes	Refuse bins not secured and could be moved closer to the building.
Due Date	16/06/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0036208
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action Required	Secure refuse bin store/chamber.
Action Notes	Refuse chamber unsecure. Fires in refuse chambers are unfortunately relatively common. The chute can transfer smoke and hot gases to the upper floors of a building. For this reason, it is important that refuse chambers are secured between refuse collections.
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0036216
Question	4.5 Are the common and landlord areas of the premises free from an accumulation of combustible materials, storage and/or waste?
Action Required	Clear waste/storage/combustibles from common/Landlord areas and advise residents of the policy for waste disposal and take enforcement action where appropriate.

Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0036217
Question	4.5 Are the common and landlord areas of the premises free from an accumulation of combustible materials, storage and/or waste?
Action Required	Clear or substantially reduce waste/storage/combustibles on private balconies.
Action Notes	Some balconies have excessive storage and some have enclosed their balcony in combustible materials. Both are likely to aid the spread of fire.
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Section	5. Means of Escape
Action Ref	0036210
Question	5.7 Are dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) of a suitably fire resisting construction for the type of property and the location?
Action Required	Repair/replace dwelling secondary means of escape door to ensure it provides 30 minutes' fire resistance.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0036211

Question	5.7 Are dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) of a suitably fire resisting construction for the type of property and the location?
Action Required	Inspect front entrance door to ensure it provides 30 minutes' fire resistance.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0036212
Question	5.15 Are Fire Service facilities and access to the premises suitable and sufficient?
Action Required	Consider retro-fitting a dry-riser to this building.
Action Notes	Getting water to the upper floors for fire fighting would be made easier if a dry riser were installed.
Due Date	16/06/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0036214
Question	5.9 Are the fire doors within the common and landlord areas suitable and sufficient, and fitted where necessary, with intumescent strips and smoke seals?
Action Required	Intumescent strips & smoke seals should be installed on cross corridor, staircase and/or lift lobby doors where applicable.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/06/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN

Action Ref	0036215
Question	5.10 Are self-closing devices provided appropriately on fire doors within the common and landlord areas? If so, are they in working order?
Action Required	Repair/replace/adjust self-closing mechanism on fire doors to ensure they close effectively.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0036218
Question	5.4 Are escape routes likely to be compromised in early stages of fire? i.e unprotected staircase or inadequate ventilation
Action Required	Clear blocked refuse chute.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	OPEN
Section	8. Further Surveys and Investigation
Action Ref	0036213
Question	8.5 Are there any other issues which may have an impact on the fire safety of the premises?
Action Required	Repair door to roof.
Action Notes	The access door to the roof has been broken off resulting in a pigeon infestation in the tank room.
Due Date	16/12/2020

Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	OPEN

Previous O/S Actions (as of report generation date)

None