

FRA Purpose Built Blocks

Responsible Person:	Islington Council
Auditor:	{REDACTED}
Location:	President House, Kings Square, London EC1V 8DB & 8DD
Area Housing Office:	PURPOSE-BUILT BLOCKS - ST JOHN STREET
Date of Audit	16/11/2020
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:

President House is a long lateral block with open balcony approaches. Block has a central staircase and one at each end of open balconies. There are also two individual lifts placed roughly one third in from each end. Access to the staircase and lift enclosures at ground floor level is by a door entry system. Dry riser and lifts with FB control.

Brief Details of the Block Construction:

Reinforced concrete, with brick infill walls, concrete floors and stairs.

Number of Floors:	6 Storeys	Total Number of Units:	94
Number of Emergency Exits:	3 excluding ground floor flats with direct egress.	Number of Employees Present:	0+
Approximate Number of Residents:	240	Maximum Number of members of the Public at any one time:	100
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

<i>Electrical intake cupboards are routinely checked as part of the Estate Service Co-ordinators' inspection regime, which is documented. Estate/Caretaking Services will ensure doors remain adequately secured when not in use.</i>		
ACTION	Repair door entry system to provide security against unauthorised access.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Locking mechanism on block entrance door at west end of block is defective.	Action & Completion By 16/05/2021
ACTION	Secure loose wiring.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Loose cable running across top of ground floor exit door from centre stairway.	Action & Completion By 16/05/2021
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?	Low Risk
<i>Block entry security system. CCTV on estate.</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 are routinely stored outside the bin chamber, this situation should be addressed by providing a facility to house sufficient bins.	Action & Completion By 16/05/2021
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 two tiered approach to managing communal areas dependent on the design layout. Where corridors are enclosed or substantially enclosed a zero tolerance approach will be adopted. Where blocks have an open corridor design a managed use policy will be in place, where items of limited combustibility such as door mats, plant pots etc. are generally permitted in line with the guidance note for fire prevention in communal areas. Regular inspections are carried out by Estate Service Co-ordinators or TMO staff 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	Alternative arrangements must be made for the parking of motor cycles/mopeds. Motorcycles/mopeds must not be stored or parked on common approaches or on escape routes.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By

		16/05/2021
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 16/05/2021
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
ACTION	Inspect fire stopping within secured service risers and take remedial action as appropriate to ensure adequate fire separation is maintained.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Unable to inspect all risers due to defective locks/doors, but of those viewed it would appear that fire stopping could be improved.	Action & Completion By 16/11/2027
Question	4.8 Is fire separation on the means of escape routes adequately maintained?	Low Risk
<p><i>The enclosing at the top of the stairway appears to be fibreglass, this enclosure should have been fire resisting. However, due to the fact fibreglass does not burn (but will buckle and melt) in this location it is very unlikely to cause a problem.</i></p>		
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	Low Risk

	premises in the event of an emergency?	
ACTION	Provide "In the event of fire do not use lift" signage adjacent to the lifts at each floor level.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/11/2021

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 fire risks?	Low Risk
<i>See 4.5.</i>		
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 balcony approach and vents at the top of the stairways.</i>		
ACTION	Adjust/repair/replace refuse chute hoppers as appropriate to ensure that they fully shut against effective seals.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 16/11/2021
Question	5.5 Is the lighting adequate?	Low Risk
<i>No emergency lighting on means of escape.</i>		
<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>		

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?	Yes
<p><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></p>		
Question	5.8 Are the dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) fitted with fully functional self-closing devices?	No
<p><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></p>		
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?	Low Risk
<p><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></p>		
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?	Yes
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	Yes

	premises open in direction of travel where necessary?	
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 Estate Service Co-ordinators' 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?	Yes
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?	Low Risk
<p><i>DRM and WRM are inspected, maintained and tested in accordance with relevant British Standard by contractors working on behalf of Housing Property Services. Inspection/testing records are maintained by the Cyclical Testing Team.</i></p> <p><i>Testing of LFB access switches is incorporated into routine Estate Service Co-ordinators' inspections, with any repair issues raised with Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service.</i></p> <p><i>The lift overrides are tested on a monthly basis as part of the PPM maintenance visit carried out by the Lift Contractor.</i></p>		
ACTION	Maintain or remove fire extinguisher/s.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Fire extinguisher in the ground floor boiler/plant room off the east lift lobby has not been maintained. Contractors are required to provide their own extinguishers. Therefore, it is acceptable to remove the fire extinguishers. If the extinguishers do remain they should be maintained.	Action & Completion By 16/11/2021

Section	6. Detection and Warning
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Question	6.1 Do the dwellings (from random sample) appear to have suitable hard wired smoke/heat detection installed?	Low Risk
<p><i>Mains powered smoke/heat detection (to LD2 standard) was installed extensively to tenanted 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.</i></p>		
Question	6.2 Are methods of detection and warning within the premises considered suitable and sufficient?	Yes

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	Low Risk
<p><i>Fire action notice displayed in lift lobbies 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>		
ACTION	Install fire action notice/s in block.	
Findings (ISSUE)	A fire action notice has been installed in the centre lift lobbies but not the east or west stairways. People using these stairways may never go into the lift lobbies. Display a fire action notice in the two stairways at either end of the block. Fire action notice SP01L should be used.	Action & Completion By 16/11/2021

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?	Low Risk
<i>Plant room on ground floor of west lift lobby not accessed.</i>		
Question	8.3 Are the external escape staircases and gangways for the premises subjected to a suitable system of periodic inspection, maintenance and repair?	Low Risk
<i>Estate Service Co-ordinators' inspections include all external staircases, gangways and other such areas associated with a particular block. Defects are raised via Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service and monitored to completion through the inspection process.</i>		
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?	No
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	0037021
Question	4.2 Does electrical equipment or wiring appear to be free from damage or misuse?
Action Required	Repair door entry system to provide security against unauthorised access.
Action Notes	Locking mechanism on block entrance door at west end of block is defective.
Due Date	16/05/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0037017
Question	4.7 Are holes in fire resistant partitions (service ducts, fire compartments or flues) within the premises adequately fire stopped?
Action Required	Inspect fire stopping within secured service risers and take remedial action as appropriate to ensure adequate fire separation is maintained.
Action Notes	Unable to inspect all risers due to defective locks/doors, but of those viewed it would appear that fire stopping could be improved.
Due Date	16/11/2027
Responsible	Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037014
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 are routinely stored outside the bin chamber, this situation

	should be addressed by providing a facility to house sufficient bins.
Due Date	16/05/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037015
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	Alternative arrangements must be made for the parking of motor cycles/mopeds. Motorcycles/mopeds must not be stored or parked on common approaches or on escape routes.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/05/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037016
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	16/05/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037018

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?
Action Required	Provide "In the event of fire do not use lift" signage adjacent to the lifts at each floor level.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/11/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0037022
Question	4.2 Does electrical equipment or wiring appear to be free from damage or misuse?
Action Required	Secure loose wiring.
Action Notes	Loose cable running across top of ground floor exit door from centre stairway.
Due Date	16/05/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	COMPLETE
Section	5. Means of Escape
Action Ref	0037019
Question	5.4 Are escape routes likely to be compromised in early stages of fire? i.e unprotected staircase or inadequate ventilation
Action Required	Adjust/repair/replace refuse chute hoppers as appropriate to ensure that they fully shut against effective seals.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	16/11/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services

Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037023
Question	5.18 Are Fire Service facilities and controls for the premises subjected to a suitable system of maintenance and/or repair?
Action Required	Maintain or remove fire extinguisher/s.
Action Notes	Fire extinguisher in the ground floor boiler/plant room off the east lift lobby has not been maintained. Contractors are required to provide their own extinguishers. Therefore, it is acceptable to remove the fire extinguishers. If the extinguishers do remain they should be maintained.
Due Date	16/11/2021
Responsible	Cyclical Testing Team
Status	OPEN
Section	7. Emergency Plans
Action Ref	0037020
Question	7.3 Have emergency plans been communicated to residents and other relevant people
Action Required	Install fire action notice/s in block.
Action Notes	A fire action notice has been installed in the centre lift lobbies but not the east or west stairways. People using these stairways may never go into the lift lobbies. Display a fire action notice in the two stairways at either end of the block. Fire action notice SP01L should be used.
Due Date	16/11/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	COMPLETE

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

None