

FRA Purpose Built Blocks

Responsible Person:	Islington Council
Auditor:	{REDACTED}
Location:	Lagonier House, Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 2TJ
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

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

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:

Single offset central staircase enclosure leading onto open balcony approaches. The block is comprised of maisonettes only; the single lift opens directly on to the balconies that serve the maisonette entrances (ground, 2nd & 4th floor levels) only. Ground floor maisonettes are accessed via small separate gardens. Pram stores are provided to each side of the lift above ground floor level; the lobby on one side provides access to the two refuse chutes, one of which has been designated for recycling only. The block is believed to have been completed in 1970.

Brief Details of the Block Construction:

Concrete frame and floors with brick walls. Open balcony approach. Infill panels below windows.

Number of Floors:	6 Storeys	Total Number of Units:	24
Number of Emergency Exits:	2	Number of Employees Present:	0+
Approximate Number of Residents:	75	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	None

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?	Medium Risk
ACTION	Remind residents of the smoking policy, monitor adherence & take enforcement action as necessary.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By

		17/05/2021
Question	4.2 Does electrical equipment or wiring appear to be free from damage or misuse?	Low Risk
<p><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></p>		
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?	Low Risk
<p><i>Block entry security system. CCTV on estate.</i></p>		
ACTION	Storage in gardens and/or on lower private balconies is vulnerable; advise residents of the risk and recommend that combustible storage be minimised in these areas.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 17/05/2021
ACTION	Repair block entrance door to ensure security.	
Findings (ISSUE)	The block entrance door is sticking on the threshold preventing it from fully closing.	Action & Completion By 17/05/2021
Question	4.4 Do the premises have any protection against acts such as lightning	Low Risk
<p><i>The installation of lightning protection is to be considered as part of future Cyclical Improvement Programme (CIP) works, following assessment by specialists.</i></p>		
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
<p><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></p>		
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 17/05/2021
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 17/12/2020
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)	Clear waste/storage/combustibles from shed/storage areas accessed via refuse chute lobby. Not all these areas were accessible due to non-FB locks, but it is possible to see the build up of waste from the outside of the block via the windows to these areas. Access to these areas will determine if the storage facility is being used responsibly.	Action & Completion By 17/05/2021
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)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 17/11/2021
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>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

No vulnerable people formerly identified but there may be occupants with varying degrees of physical/mental disability, in line with the general population.

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
<i>Simple exit route.</i>		

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. Vent at top and bottom of stairway.</i>		
Question	5.5 Is the lighting adequate?	Yes
<i>Emergency lighting on stairway and balconies.</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?	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</i></p>		

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.

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.

(The appropriate remedial action will be undertaken within a suitable time frame on a risk managed basis).

Question	5.8 Are the dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) fitted with fully functional self-closing devices?	No
<p><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 number of leaseholder doors which may not have a working self-closer.</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 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 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?	Low Risk
<i>The floor levels in this building do not have conventional marking but this is unlikely to cause the Fire Service too much confusion. Whole floors have be labelled as mezzanine floors.</i>		
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
<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>		

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
<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</i></p>		

<i>systems (battery operated) are likely to exist.</i>		
ACTION	Determine if the existing provision of detection installed is suitable for the current layout and upgrade if required.	
Findings (ISSUE)	This block appears to contain maisonettes. Inspect internally to determine if original fire safety measures are still in place/available and adequate means of escape/warning are provided for the layout of the dwelling.	Action & Completion By 17/11/2021
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	Yes
<i>Fire action notice displayed in entrance lobby to block.</i>		
<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>		

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	Low Risk

	warrant further investigation to confirm adequate fire safety measures are in place?	
ACTION	The pram stores should be accessed to confirm that only appropriate items are being stored within and that the access lobbies are clear of combustible materials (and inner lobby fire doors kept locked shut), adequate ventilation is maintained (previous assessment highlighted some blocked ventilation grilles) and the lighting and other electrical installations are in full working order.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Unable to access most pram storage areas as non FB locks are fitted. The one that was accessed had storage issues and the external photos show that this may be an issue on other floors.	Action & Completion By 17/11/2021
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?	Low Risk
ACTION	The building exterior consists of infill panels below windows and adjacent to flat entrance doors. Consideration should be given to testing the panels to ensure they do not promote the spread of flame across their surface, they offer adequate fire separation to the means of escape and are suitable for the height of the building.	
Findings (ISSUE)	From visual observation, the exposed surface of external walls gives the appearance of infill panels applied over an unknown substrate. Attention is drawn to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government Consolidated Advice Note for building owners of multi-storey, multi-occupied residential buildings, dated January 2020 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buildingsafety-advice-for-building-owners-including-fire-doors) (the "Advice Note").	Action & Completion By 17/11/2021

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 Tolerable Stay-put
Question	9.3 Overall evaluation of fire risk	
Question	9.4 The most appropriate fire strategy for this building is	
<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	0037035
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action Required	Storage in gardens and/or on lower private balconies is vulnerable; advise residents of the risk and recommend that combustible storage be minimised in these areas.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	17/05/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037031
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	17/05/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037030
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	17/12/2020
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0037033
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	{REDACTED}
Due Date	17/11/2021
Responsible	Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037034
Question	4.1 Do the premises have an effective smoking policy?
Action Required	Remind residents of the smoking policy, monitor adherence & take enforcement action as necessary.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	17/05/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037036
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action	Repair block entrance door to ensure security.

Required	
Action Notes	The block entrance door is sticking on the threshold preventing it from fully closing.
Due Date	17/05/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0037032
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	Clear waste/storage/combustibles from shed/storage areas accessed via refuse chute lobby. Not all these areas were accessible due to non-FB locks, but it is possible to see the build up of waste from the outside of the block via the windows to these areas. Access to these areas will determine if the storage facility is being used responsibly.
Due Date	17/05/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Section	6. Detection and Warning
Action Ref	0037028
Question	6.1 Do the dwellings (from random sample) appear to have suitable hard wired smoke/heat detection installed?
Action Required	Determine if the existing provision of detection installed is suitable for the current layout and upgrade if required.
Action Notes	This block appears to contain maisonettes. Inspect internally to determine if original fire safety measures are still in place/available and adequate means of escape/warning are provided for the layout of the dwelling.

Due Date	17/11/2021
Responsible	Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Section	8. Further Surveys and Investigation
Action Ref	0037029
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?
Action Required	The pram stores should be accessed to confirm that only appropriate items are being stored within and that the access lobbies are clear of combustible materials (and inner lobby fire doors kept locked shut), adequate ventilation is maintained (previous assessment highlighted some blocked ventilation grilles) and the lighting and other electrical installations are in full working order.
Action Notes	Unable to access most pram storage areas as non FB locks are fitted. The one that was accessed had storage issues and the external photos show that this may be an issue on other floors.
Due Date	17/11/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0037027
Question	8.6 Are the external surfaces of the building likely to promote fire spread?
Action Required	The building exterior consists of infill panels below windows and adjacent to flat entrance doors. Consideration should be given to testing the panels to ensure they do not promote the spread of flame across their surface, they offer adequate fire separation to the means of escape and are suitable for the height of the building.
Action Notes	From visual observation, the exposed surface of external walls gives the appearance of infill panels applied over an unknown substrate. Attention is drawn to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government Consolidated Advice Note for building owners of multi-storey, multi-occupied residential buildings, dated January 2020 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buildingsafety-advice-for-

	building-owners-including-fire-doors) (the “Advice Note”).
Due Date	17/11/2021
Responsible	Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN

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

None