

FRA Purpose Built Blocks

Responsible Person:	Islington Council
Auditor:	{REDACTED}
Location:	Selkirk House, Bemerton Estate, London N1 0AB
Area Housing Office:	PURPOSE-BUILT BLOCKS - UPPER STREET WEST
Date of Audit	09/02/2021
Suggested Review	



Overall Assessment of Fire Risk

Hazard from Fire:	Normal
Consequences Life:	Moderate Harm
Overall Risk from Fire:	Moderate

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:

Single staircase block with two lifts. Staircase located at one end with flats accessed from central internal corridor. The top floor has a surrounding external balcony that provides an alternative escape route from flats at that level. Maisonettes on the higher levels have alternative exits that come out on a different access level. Refuse chutes on open balconies are provided at each floor level above ground. There is a disused pram store facility at lower ground level. There is a lift motor room and a water tank and mechanical communal extract (bathrooms) plant room at roof level. CCTV is provided both internally and externally.

Brief Details of the Block Construction:

Reinforced concrete frame & floors with glazed/composite panels and cavity brick/block infill walls.

Number of Floors:	10 Storeys	Total Number of Units:	68
Number of Emergency Exits:	2	Number of Employees Present:	0+
Approximate Number of Residents:	170	Maximum Number of members of the Public at any one time:	70
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

<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	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 stored too close to building.	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
ACTION	Secure doors, cupboards, risers etc to prevent unauthorised access.	
Findings (ISSUE)	The security gate to the stairway exit does not self close as it has been damaged. The locking mechanism is working fine but the self closer appears to have been damaged.	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
ACTION	Secure doors, cupboards, risers etc to prevent unauthorised access.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/02/2022
Question	4.4 Do the premises have any protection against acts such as lightning	Yes
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 risk based 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 10/08/2021

ACTION	Inform residents that the use of BBQs on balconies and common areas is not allowed.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
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
<i>Fire stopping works to risers completed in January 2020.</i>		
ACTION	Inspect fire stopping within secured service risers and take remedial action as appropriate to ensure adequate fire separation is maintained.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Fire stopping within the electrical riser, in the ground floor lift lobby, appears to be inadequate.	Action & Completion By 10/02/2022
Question	4.8 Is fire separation on the means of escape routes adequately maintained?	Low Risk
ACTION	Securely fix electrical cupboard frame to wall to provide adequate fire/smoke separation.	
Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
ACTION	Remove vents from riser doors/panels and make good or replace.	
Findings (ISSUE)	Many riser doors or panels have vents fitted. These should be repaired/replaced to provide adequate fire separation from the means of escape.	Action & Completion By 10/02/2022
Question	4.9 Are there arrangements to ensure the safe evacuation of the premises where it is used for sleeping?	Low Risk
<i>Security gates fitted within block to individual dwellings.</i>		
<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>		

Question	4.10 Are evacuation arrangements for vulnerable people suitable/sufficient?	Low Risk
<p><i>Information in premises information box present & up to date.</i></p> <p><i>Information on vulnerable residents supplied within the premises information box to assist the Fire Service in the event of an evacuation of the block becoming necessary.</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
<p><i>Simple single stairway exit route.</i></p>		

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?	Previous Action O/S
{REDACTED}		
Question	5.4 Are escape routes likely to be compromised in early stages of fire? i.e unprotected staircase or inadequate ventilation	Low Risk
<p><i>Open refuse chute lobby. Corridor has permanent ventilation at both ends.</i></p>		
Question	5.5 Is the lighting adequate?	Low Risk
<p><i>There was evidence of emergency lighting on the stairway and in the corridor serving flats. However, it was difficult to determine the extent of coverage as many units were not showing indicator lights.</i></p> <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</i></p>		

evacuation strategy will also be considered a priority.

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

All doors appear to be at least notional FD30 doors.

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.

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).

ACTION	Replace any missing or defective letterbox installations.	
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Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
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Question	5.8 Are the dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) fitted with fully functional self-closing devices?	No
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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.

ACTION	Ensure dwelling entrance door has a working self-closing mechanism.	
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Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
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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
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ACTION	Repair/adjust door installation to ensure that the door/s fully self closes into its/their frame/s.	
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Findings (ISSUE)	{REDACTED}	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021
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?	Yes
<i>{REDACTED}</i>		
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
<p><i>Also see 5.3.</i></p> <p><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></p>		
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?	Yes
<p><i>DRM and WRM are inspected, maintained and tested in accordance with relevant British Standard by contractors working on behalf of Islington Council. 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</i></p>		

Service.

The lift overrides are tested on a monthly basis as part of the PPM maintenance visit carried out by the Lift Contractor.

Section	6. Detection and Warning	
Question	6.1 Do the dwellings (from random sample) appear to have suitable hard wired smoke/heat detection installed?	Previous Action O/S
<p><i>1 Action(s) Still Outstanding</i></p> <p><i>Action Ref: 0035202</i></p> <p><i>Action Details:</i></p> <p><i>Determine if the existing provision of detection installed is suitable for the current layout and upgrade if required.</i></p>		
Question	6.2 Are methods of detection and warning within the premises considered suitable and sufficient?	Low Risk

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</i></p>		

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.

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>Ground floor external plant rooms not accessed due to non FB locks fitted.</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)?	Low Risk
<p><i>Unit on ground floor accessed externally.</i></p> <p><i>Associated premises will be audited by the London Fire Brigade, to assess compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, under its risk based audit programme. The London Fire Brigade audit all commercial premises periodically according to risk.</i></p> <p><i>A percentage of even the lowest risk premises are audited each year, so over a longer period all commercial premises will receive a visit to assess compliance.</i></p>		
Question	8.5 Are there any other issues which may have an impact on the fire safety of the premises?	Low Risk
ACTION	Secure the area under the ground floor hallway.	
Findings (ISSUE)	The door adjacent to the side entrance gives access to a void under the ground floor access hallway. In order to protect the exposed timber this area should be adequately secured and kept sterile. The area currently has a small amount of waste and the access door whilst padlocked has	Action & Completion By 10/08/2021

	<i>a poorly secured hasp and staple.</i>	
Question	8.6 Are the external surfaces of the building likely to promote fire spread?	Previous Action O/S
<p><i>1 Action(s) Still Outstanding</i></p> <p><i>Action Ref: 0035218</i></p> <p><i>Action Details:</i></p> <p><i>The building exterior consists of infill panels below windows. 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.</i></p>		

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	Moderate Harm
Question	9.3 Overall evaluation of fire risk	Moderate
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	0038008
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	Fire stopping within the electrical riser, in the ground floor lift lobby, appears to be inadequate.
Due Date	10/02/2022
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038011
Question	4.8 Is fire separation on the means of escape routes adequately maintained?
Action Required	Securely fix electrical cupboard frame to wall to provide adequate fire/smoke separation.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038012
Question	4.8 Is fire separation on the means of escape routes adequately maintained?
Action Required	Remove vents from riser doors/panels and make good or replace.
Action Notes	Many riser doors or panels have vents fitted. These should be repaired/replaced to provide adequate fire separation from the means of escape.

Due Date	10/02/2022
Responsible	Cyclical Improvement Programme (CIP)
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038003
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 stored too close to building.
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038004
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action Required	Secure doors, cupboards, risers etc to prevent unauthorised access.
Action Notes	The security gate to the stairway exit does not self close as it has been damaged. The locking mechanism is working fine but the self closer appears to have been damaged.
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0038005
Question	4.3 Have satisfactory measures been taken to reduce the risk of arson?
Action Required	Secure doors, cupboards, risers etc to prevent unauthorised access.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}

Due Date	10/02/2022
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team/Housing Repairs Service
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038006
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	10/08/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0038007
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	Inform residents that the use of BBQs on balconies and common areas is not allowed.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Section	5. Means of Escape
Action Ref	0038009
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	Replace any missing or defective letterbox installations.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Tenancy Management
Status	COMPLETE
Action Ref	0038010
Question	5.8 Are the dwelling front entrance doors (from random sample) fitted with fully functional self-closing devices?
Action Required	Ensure dwelling entrance door has a working self-closing mechanism.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	CIP / Fire Safety Works Team
Status	OPEN
Action Ref	0038013
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	Repair/adjust door installation to ensure that the door/s fully self closes into its/their frame/s.
Action Notes	{REDACTED}
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Estate Maintenance Team
Status	COMPLETE

Section	8. Further Surveys and Investigation
Action Ref	0038002
Question	8.5 Are there any other issues which may have an impact on the fire safety of the premises?
Action Required	Secure the area under the ground floor hallway.
Action Notes	The door adjacent to the side entrance gives access to a void under the ground floor access hallway. In order to protect the exposed timber this area should be adequately secured and kept sterile. The area currently has a small amount of waste and the access door whilst padlocked has a poorly secured hasp and staple.
Due Date	10/08/2021
Responsible	Area Housing Office - Estate Services
Status	OPEN

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

Action Ref: 0035211 - Full height bars have been added on the 9th floor secondary means of escape route. Investigate to ensure access is still available along the balcony should it be required.

Action Ref: 0031395 - Investigate the additional security bars added to determine if access is still possible along the secondary means of escape route.

Action Ref: 0035202 - Determine if the existing provision of detection installed is suitable for the current layout and upgrade if required.

Action Ref: 0035218 - The building exterior consists of infill panels below windows. 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.