



# Housing Fire Safety Strategy

23 April 2024

Next Revision Date: April 2025

# Foreword

Local authorities have several responsibilities relating to Health and Safety. This HRA Fire Strategy solely covers those relating to those as a landlord to properties within the Housing Revenue Account. This consists of homes for over 33,000 council tenants and leaseholders and 200 council-owned hostels which are used as temporary accommodation.

Above all else, the most important duty of any landlord must be ensuring the safety of their tenants. An effective approach to fire safety is also required to make sure we protect people's homes, protect the environment, that we can continue delivering services and that we have an appropriate response to emergency incidents.

## The 5 themes

### 1. Ensure Resident Safety

The council carries out the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and ensures that Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are carried out. These form the basis of our approach to ensuring residents are kept safe.

A risk matrix approach which considers factors such as the height, construction and access of buildings determines the frequency of assessments, and allocation of capital resources to our fire safety investment programme. This includes guiding decisions on the installation of sprinkler systems, fire doors, fire alarms and the approach towards external wall insulation.

Part of ensuring resident safety is having arrangements in place in the event of an emergency. Our policy remains as 'stay put' or 'remain in place' unless you are directly affected by the fire or until the London Fire Brigade (LFB) make a tactical decision to evacuate during an incident.

The Council already has robust corporate response arrangements around supporting the Emergency Services in the event of an incident and ensuring the welfare of the resident and people affected by such an emergency is the paramount concern.

### 2. Engage Residents

Fire safety is a joint responsibility, residents need to ensure that communal areas are kept clear, and that sensible precautions are taken within the home to prevent accidental fires. The council takes a robust approach in raising awareness of resident responsibilities and taking necessary enforcement action.

There are various policies and procedures on our [Internet Page](#) around specific risks such as balcony fire safety, mobility scooter fire safety, fire safety in communal areas & electric bikes and scooters.

Lambeth has introduced a new approach to resident engagement. Our approach ties in with the direction of travel proposed by the Hackitt Review, The Grenfell Public Enquiry and the Fire and Building Safety Acts. Residents should be engaged, involved and consulted on the decision-making process for building works and management actions that impact on resident safety and there should be an effective mechanism for residents to raise safety concerns.

The current approach is to have residents actively tell us about their concerns through our Rapid app, which allows them to report local fire safety issues directly to us on their phones.

This work will be overseen by the 'Fire Forum' of tenants and officers of the council and is linked into the emerging resident Engagement Strategy 2024. See Resident Engagement Fire Strategy 2024 on our [Internet Page](#)

Lambeth aim is that residents have useful and meaningful involvement both at a strategic level and the ability to influence specific projects taking place within their homes and buildings.

### 3. Keeping up to date / Working in Partnership

Through the regular updating of this strategy we will make sure that the council fulfils its obligations and adopts relevant best practise. In late 2023 we decided to move away from the old H&S Board and develop a more corporate approach. This review resulted in the formation of the Building Safety Assurance Group which has now met once in January 2024 and is working through its terms of reference.

Lambeth Housing is also an active participant in London Councils Fire Safety meetings, and events organised via the GLA and similar bodies.

### 4. Innovate and Improve Services

All our high-rise buildings are registered with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), and we are working with partners to deliver Building Safety Cases (BSC) for all 81 high rise blocks from April 2024. We are taking a risk-based approach with all our LPS high rise blocks starting in April 2024 and working through the rest over the next 18 months. We have introduced an element automation using an app that can pull details from the Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEW) the structural surveys into a BSC template. These building safety cases will then be the basis for the resident engagement for each block as managed by the Building Safety Coordinator and the incumbent housing officers.

We are also conducting door inspections (both FEDs and communal) using an app and QR codes that enable immediate access to all door information.

### 5. Looking after vulnerable residents

We have continued with Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) where appropriate and have installed PIB boxes in all blocks over 6 storeys. Information regarding emergency access and evacuation is regularly updated by the housing officers to ensure short term evacuation procedures are up to date for those with short term conditions such as lower limb injuries, late-stage pregnancies as well as those with long term vulnerabilities and with oxygen etc.