

# **HARLOW COUNCIL**

## **STORT TOWER BLOCK**

**77 - 106**

**Harlow Essex**

**CM20 2NX**

## **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

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**Person With Fire Safety Responsibility**

**Overall Responsibility**

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# **HARLOW COUNCIL**

## **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

### **TOWER BLOCKS**

#### **STORT TOWER**

##### **General Statement**

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places statutory duties on employers to implement procedures with regards fire safety at places of work. The Order also requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary', and to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the case, with regards to communal and common areas which the Council are responsible for.

In order to help ensure the safety of residents and visitors, and to comply with current legislation, should a fire occur at Stort Tower, a well-documented Fire Risk Assessment is essential.

It should include a general assessment of the main hazards and details of the control measures put in place to minimise risk in the event of a fire.

There is an Action Plan within the Fire Risk Assessment; this is in place for either immediate action, planned action or for active monitoring to take place.

New residents of the block are given a 'sign up' pack which includes information on fire safety management of their premises and the block. This Fire Risk Assessment is accessible on the Internet.

Failure to comply with the Fire Risk Assessment will be considered a breach of Harlow Council's health and safety procedures and could result in disciplinary action being taken.

All tower blocks operate a NO SMOKING policy in all communal areas.

##### **Stort Tower**

Stort Tower is a nine residential floor block of flats. There is a staircase to access and a lift in the centre of the block. There are three flats on each floor.

There is fire resisting glazing and wooden panelling in the main entrance lobby/lift area.

The main door is accessed by a separate security key entry system.

##### **Fire Risks**

Within Stort Tower the main fire risks, in communal areas, are;

- Arson
- Faulty electrical installation
- Rubbish accumulation including flammable materials

##### **Fire Prevention**

In order to ensure that the main fire risks are suitably protected against the following, fire prevention measures are in place in respect of the common parts of the building.

**a) Electricity**

The electrical installation to the communal parts of the building are checked every five years in accordance with the guidance provided by the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

**b) Rubbish**

There are weekly refuse collections and fortnightly pick ups of recycled waste.

The below points should be strictly applied:

- No leaving of refuse/bags/recycling outside of flat doors – take rubbish down to bin cupboard and dispose of appropriately
- If your tower block has a balcony area adjoining your flat, it is not to be used to store and accumulate rubbish, flammable items etc – Housing will manage this if there are any hazards or risks that arise from such actions
- No leaving of rubbish in communal areas
- All routes, walkways, landings, corridors and exits to be kept sterile and free of any combustible / flammable materials
- Electrical & service cupboards must not be used for storing items, equipment or papers

**c) Heating**

The building heating system is regularly serviced to ensure that it is safe and does not pose a fire risk.

The gas supply system is serviced and checked on an annual basis by a Gas Safe registered contractor HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd.

**d) Fire Stopping**

Service/electrical cupboards, within the common areas, must be kept locked and shut at all times. This is to prevent any fire spread increased through any possible poor fire stopping within the cupboards around the ducting and pipe work between floors.

**e) Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted in any common parts of the building.

**If a fire breaks out – In your flat**

- Leave the room and close the door
- Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave - Close the flat entrance door behind you
- Do not stay behind to put the fire out
- Call the Fire Service
- Wait outside away from the building
- Do not use lifts

**If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building**

The building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.

You must also leave IMMEDIATELY if smoke or heat affects your home, or if you are told to leave by the Fire Service.

If you are in doubt – GET OUT  
Do not use lifts

### **To call the Fire Service**

- Dial 999 or 101
- When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for FIRE
- When the Fire Service reply give the address where the fire is
- Do not end the call until the Fire Service has repeated the address correctly

On the arrival of the fire brigade they will determine:

When and if to commence a full evacuation

When residents can return to their premises

When to involve the Police

Any other steps appropriate to the circumstances

### **Fire Precautions**

In order to minimise the risk from any fire that may occur within Stort Tower, and to ensure safe evacuation, the following control measures have been implemented.

#### **a) Evacuation Routes**

To ensure safe evacuation the routes must be kept free of flammable materials and obstructions at all times.

#### **b) Fire Exits**

All possible exits must be kept free of all obstructions, both inside and out, and be available for use when required.

Fire exits are inspected daily by the mobile caretaker to ensure they are clear and operating correctly.

#### **c) Fire Doors**

Fire doors are provided to help prevent the spread of smoke and fire and must be kept closed.

Fire doors are checked daily by the mobile caretaker to ensure they are operating correctly and are not damaged. A full inspection of the block is carried out on a monthly basis by Housing Officer.

They should NOT be propped open, tampered with or compromised in any way, i.e.; materials affixed to frame/door to prevent banging noises. Any problems should be reported immediately to the Housing Officer.

#### **d) Fire Extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are positioned in boiler / lift rooms and are not for use by the residents or the public. They should not be removed from their designated location.

The extinguishers are maintained and tested yearly.

**e) Dry Risers**

There are dry risers positioned and secured on each floor within the block.

They are inspected by the Fire Crews and wet tests are carried out by the Fire Service Water Section Headquarters. HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd maintains and services the risers on a regular basis.

**f) Signage**

Appropriate fire safety signage is displayed throughout the building indicating the fire exit/s and action notice information.

An inspection of the signage is carried out on a monthly basis.

Fire doors are marked to keep shut and no smoking signs are affixed inside the block.

**g) Emergency Lighting**

Ensure emergency lighting is adequate, serviced, maintained and recorded.

**h) Lifts**

Do not use lifts in the event of fire.

**People with Disabilities**

The fire brigade will assist the less able residents away from the building if and where necessary in the event of an evacuation.

**General**

Although every effort will be made to ensure that fire safety standards are maintained in Stort Tower, this can only effectively be achieved with the cooperation of the workforce and residents.

Deficiencies with any of the fire precautions should initially be referred to the relevant Housing Officer.

The Housing Officer responsible for the tower block carries out a monthly fire inspection detailing any faults or concerns in relation to fire issues. The Fire Risk Assessment will be reviewed on a periodic basis.

**HARLOW COUNCIL  
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

**STORT TOWER  
ACTION PLAN**

Hazard & Potential Risk	Who Is At Risk	Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p><b>Rubbish</b></p> <p>Some communal areas have bagged refuse left in the lobby area/s</p> <p>Dumped items to side of bin cupboard outside block - Potential risk of arson</p>	<p>Residents Visitors Officers/Maintenance Utility staff Key holders/Police All users of the building</p>	<p>Ensure residents are aware that refuse should be taken directly to the downstairs dustbin area /cupboard and disposed of in the correct manner. No refuse to be stored on the landings, in stairwells or in side cupboards</p> <p>Ensure adequate refuse/recycling collections made &amp; storage acceptable</p>	<p>Caretaker Housing Officer</p> <p>Housing Officer, Waste/Recycling Dept &amp; Refuse</p>	<p>Daily Monthly</p>
<p><b>Fire Doors</b></p> <p>Doors must be compliant with building regulations in respect to fire resistance – doors with missing letter boxes, holes for cat flaps and broken hinges and handles compromise their use and integrity of the door in a fire situation</p>		<p>Maintenance/service inspections required and repairs consequently carried out</p> <p>Inspection rota programme in place to ensure fire doors and exits are effective</p>	<p>Leaseholders, Housing &amp; HTS (Property &amp; Environment) Ltd</p> <p>Housing &amp; HTS (Property &amp; Environment) Ltd</p>	<p>April 2013 onwards</p>

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Hazard & Potential Risk	Who Is At Risk	Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p><b>Signage</b></p> <p>Signage to remind people that lifts are not to be used in the event of a fire</p> <p>Residents and visitors to be aware of exit doors and general fire awareness information to ensure a safe and efficient evacuation</p>	<p>Residents Visitors Officers/Maintenance Utility staff Key holders/Police All users of the building</p>	<p>External Contractor visits yearly to service and maintain the fire extinguishers on site (lift/plant room) – a review of current fire safety signage will be carried out on these visits at each tower block</p> <p>Appropriate action will be taken and necessary signage displayed as and if required</p>	<p>Anglia Fire Contractor</p> <p>Caretaker &amp; Housing Officer</p> <p>Communicating with Housing Officers &amp; Health &amp; Safety</p>	<p>Yearly</p> <p>Daily &amp; monthly visits</p>
<p><b>Stairwells</b></p> <p>Recommendation to highlight the nosing on all communal stairs – this would assist users of the building to escape more safely</p>		<p>Housing Services have allocated budget to progress with this work in the next financial year</p>	<p>Housing Manager &amp; HTS (Property &amp; Environment) Ltd</p>	<p>Completed 2015/2016</p>