

HARLOW COUNCIL

**SUPPORTED HOUSING
ACCOMMODATION**

**KATHERINES HOUSE
Brookside
Harlow, Essex, CM19 5NL**

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

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Person With Fire Safety Responsibility

Overall Responsibility
Andrew Murray - Head Of Service
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Fire Safety Coordination
Viv Hales – Supported Housing Manager
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Fire Safety Support – Health & Safety Team
Natasha Terrell – Human Resources / Health & Safety Manager
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HARLOW COUNCIL

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

KATHERINES HOUSE

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.

In order to help ensure the safety of staff and to comply with current legislation, should a fire occur at Katherines House, a well-documented safety plan 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.

The appendices, attached to the fire risk assessment, provide additional information and advice on general evacuation procedures and duties undertaken by specific members of staff and volunteers.

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

Additional information to the Plan is a Proforma for the scheme which gives locations of utilities and useful premise information.

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.

The Katherines House complex operates a NO SMOKING policy in all communal areas.

Fire Prevention

Katherines House is a residential, supported housing complex consisting of 29 one bed flats and two three bed flats. The complex is 38 years old and consists of a three level flat block, lift, common room and laundry. There is a small kitchen within the common room. There is a car park to the front of the building and a grassed fenced area, surrounding the block, to the rear. There are two locked gates in the rear area which tenants can access with keys.

The scheme is adjacent to Katherines Primary School, with a boundary fence dividing the two buildings.

Within the Katherine's House complex the main fire risks are; electricity, rubbish, heating, storage of flammable materials. The elderly or disabled, who may require wheelchair access, also reflects the type of evacuation that takes place.

The communal areas and each individual property has a pull cord system linked through to the Call Handling Service Provider, which has a guaranteed 24 hour 365 day response.

As part of a planned system upgrade all smoke detectors have been replaced in 2011.

There is a key safe facility on all schemes which allows access to tenants properties by emergency services only.

A fire log book is kept in the alarm cupboard of each scheme which records the weekly tests and check dates of the fire panel.

a) Electricity

All electrical equipment and appliances should be listed for regular PAT testing which is scheduled periodically by the Health & Safety Team.

Any obvious faults with electrical equipment or systems, including lighting and wiring, should be reported to HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd immediately.

b) Rubbish

Every effort must be made to ensure that unwanted materials and rubbish are removed from the complex, in particular the laundry, and disposed of as quickly as possible.

There are rubbish chutes on the first and second floors, which must not be used as a general dumping area.

There are weekly collections from the flats via the communal bin cupboards. There is a fortnightly collection of recycled waste.

c) Heating

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

There is a boiler room which supplies to the flats and communal areas.

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

d) Flammable Liquids/Substances

There is the use of cleaning liquids and powders, dry goods and cloth materials/toilet rolls. These are stored safely, in very small quantities and kept to a minimum.

Flammable materials should not be stored near to where work is carried out that might cause a fire risk.

All liquids are stored appropriately and stored in their correct containers and disposed of in the correct manner.

Evacuation

If there is an evacuation situation out of hours, the Call Handling Service Provider will contact the on call service provider between the hours 5.00pm-12 midnight Mon-Fri and 8.30am to 12 midnight Weekends and Bank Holidays. Outside of these hours HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd would be contacted.

Any evacuation of premises would be Fire Service led.

During working hours, if the Supported Housing Officer is not on site, they would be made aware of the situation.

THE FIRE BRIGADE HAVE ADVISED THAT TENANTS SHOULD REMAIN IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES UNLESS THEY ARE IN THE IMMEDIATE LOCATION OF THE FIRE, IN WHICH CASE THEY SHOULD MAKE THEIR WAY TO A PLACE OF SAFETY

On the arrival of the fire brigade they will determine:

When and if to commence a full evacuation

When to instigate a visual inspection

When tenants 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 the Katherines House complex, 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 appropriate fire exits must be unlocked when the building is in use.

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

c) Fire Doors

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

d) Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are positioned in appropriate locations on the complex.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the location and operation of extinguishers, and the types of fire they are suitable for.

Extinguishers must not be removed from their designated location. The extinguishers are maintained and tested yearly.

There is a fire blanket in the kitchen.

e) Fire Alarm

Katherines House is fitted with two separate fire alarm systems, the smoke detectors in tenants properties are linked to the emergency alarm system and are tested 6 monthly by the Supported Housing Officers. The Call Handling Service Provider provides maintenance of this system on a 24-hour 365-day basis.

The fire alarm panel in common areas is tested weekly by the Supported Housing Officers; a different call point will be used to activate the alarm every time it is tested.

Any faults are reported to Central Control for any necessary repairs.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the location of the call points within their work areas.

f) Fire Drills

Tenants will be advised of any changes to fire procedures as and if necessary.

g) Signs

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

People with Disabilities

Supported Housing Officer, in liaison with the fire brigade, if appropriate, may assist the less able tenants off the complex if and where necessary.

Training

Regular fire safety updates are provided as part of Harlow Council's commitment to Health and Safety related training.

Maintenance

The fire extinguishers are all subject to periodic inspection and maintenance from an outside contractor.

General

Although every effort will be made to ensure that fire safety standards are maintained within the Katherines House Supported Housing complex, this can only effectively be achieved with the cooperation of staff and tenants.

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

The fire risk assessment, and appendices, will be reviewed on a periodic basis.

Health & Safety Team
September 2018

HARLOW COUNCIL

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

KATHERINES HOUSE

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT – Appendix A

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Whenever there is a continuous operation of the fire alarm the fire procedure must be instigated. The only exception to this being when the alarm is tested weekly and the alarm will be operated as a continuous sound.
2. If appropriate use the evacuation route nearest to your location if a full evacuation is required.
3. Fire Action Notices and procedures are displayed throughout the building for visitors information and action.
4. Be aware of any staff or visitors who may require assistance during evacuation.
5. A member of staff, if on site, should make themselves aware and that they are acting as the responsible person for the evacuation prior to the Fire Brigade attending.
6. All persons must remain at the assembly point until formal permission to leave or re-enter the building has been given.
7. Please forward concerns or comments regarding any of the procedures to the Health & Safety Team or the Supported Housing Manager.

Health & Safety Team
September 2018

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KATHERINES HOUSE

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT - Appendix B

EVACUATION PROCEDURE & INSTRUCTIONS

ON DISCOVERY OR SUSPICION OF A FIRE (REGARDLESS OF HOW SMALL)

1. Raise the alarm by breaking the nearest call point
2. Call the Fire Brigade (see below for further details)
3. Warn people in the vicinity of the fire if possible
4. Commence evacuation procedures if necessary

ON HEARING THE ALARM

5. Treat every fire alarm operation as if it were a fire
6. If possible, close doors and window to help prevent the spread of smoke and fire
7. Walk to the nearest safe exit and proceed to the assembly point if evacuating
8. The Supported Housing Officer, if on site/call handling provider will ensure that the Fire Brigade has been called.

ASSEMBLY POINT – CAR PARK TO FRONT OF BUILDING

CALLING THE FIRE BRIGADE

9. Call the Fire Brigade immediately to every fire or on suspicion of a fire
10. Lift the receiver and dial **999**
11. When the operator answers ask for Fire and you will be connected to the Fire Brigade
12. When the Fire Brigade operator answers give the location as:
KATHERINES HOUSE, BROOKSIDE, HARLOW, ESSEX, CM19 5NL
Do not replace the receiver until the address has been correctly repeated back to you

Health & Safety Team
September 2018

Hazard & Potential Risk	Who Is At Risk	Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p>Signage</p> <p>Check signage to exit routes are clear and up to date</p> <p>Ensure adequate signage in common room for fire procedures/exit locations and Action Notices</p> <p>Confirm assembly point has been agreed and tenants are aware of location - Tenants could be misguided in a possible evacuation</p>	<p>Tenants</p> <p>Staff & Representatives of Harlow Council (SHO's)</p> <p>Visitors</p> <p>Key Holders / Police Other Agencies</p> <p>Utility Officers</p> <p>Maintenance Staff</p>	<p>External Contractor visits yearly to service and maintain the fire extinguishers on site – a review of current fire safety signage will be carried out on these visits at each scheme</p> <p>Appropriate action will be taken and necessary signage displayed as and if required</p>	<p>Anglia Fire Contractor</p> <p>Communicating with Health & Safety / Supported Housing Officers</p>	<p>To commence signage reviews whilst on extinguisher inspections - from November 2011 – yearly in each scheme</p>
<p>Fire Alarm</p> <p>Fire alarm system on site is checked by the Supported Housing Officers weekly and noted in fire alarm log book</p> <p>Alarms should receive a full service and be on a regular maintenance programme to ensure efficiency and reliability in the event of activation in a fire</p>	<p>Tenants</p> <p>Staff & Representatives of Harlow Council (SHO's)</p> <p>Visitors</p> <p>Key Holders / Police Other Agencies</p> <p>Utility Officers</p> <p>Maintenance Staff</p>	<p>Confirmation that an external Contractor visits 6 monthly to inspect, service and maintain the fire alarm systems on each scheme – information recorded and logged in fire book</p>	<p>HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd</p>	<p>Ongoing 6 monthly inspections – Nov 2011</p>

Additional Information	Who Is At Risk	Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p>Health & Safety Checklist</p> <p>All Supported Housing Officers carry out a Health & Safety checklist consisting of general repair inspections, lighting, fire extinguisher checks, access routes, exits/fire doors, signage, alarm tests and ensuring Fire Plans are displayed</p>			Supported Housing Officers	Weekly
<p>Some “Break Glass” points and mounted extinguishers are not always easily accessible as they are obstructed by furniture</p>				SEE FIRE EXITS & EVACUATION ROUTES
<p>Notice boards to be tidied and loose papers to be stored appropriately. Paper on notice boards prove to be a potential risk as fire spreads more easily in these areas</p>		<p>Remove unwanted papers to eliminate potential spread of fire</p> <p>Keep information on notice boards neat and relevant</p>	Supported Housing Officer	Ongoing – December 2011
<p>Concern raised regarding access to car park due to the wooden railings surrounding the ground floor flats</p>	<p>Tenants enquired, should the need arise, as to how easily they could access from the flat block in an emergency situation</p>	<p>Discussion and inspections carried out - confirmed that the access is adequate and acceptable – no wooden railings to be removed</p>		NO FURTHER ACTION – March 2009

Additional Information	Who Is At Risk	Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p>Reassurance required as to whether the tenants at flat number 11, above the common room, was at any more risk of fire</p>	<p>Issue of fire alarm bells only being audible in communal areas was raised – therefore the tenants not being aware of a potential fire occurring below their flat</p>	<p>Discussion and inspections carried out – confirmed that the risk was very low as no smoking, gas appliances, cooking carried out in this area and all portable electrical appliances were PAT tested. Note: The risk is higher for flats above flats as the above does not apply as in the common/communal areas</p>		<p>NO FURTHER ACTION – March 2009</p>
<p>Request for a self-closer to be fixed to the fire door from lift lobby area to the stairwell. Action of fire door is compromised, due to the lack of self closer, therefore the spread of fire within this area is more of a risk</p>		<p>Reported that door must be inspected/repared to eliminate increased risk of non-containment of fire. Self-closer to be affixed</p>	<p>HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Additional Information		Action Required	By Who	Timescales & Review
<p>New blinds have recently been installed to the windows in all of the common rooms. The fire exit doors have also been fitted with blinds to aid security of the building</p>		<p>The blinds MUST be pulled open and secured back when the room is in use. The fire exit door must not be compromised in any way due to the blinds/cords obstructing the use of the door in an emergency evacuation situation. The door should be easy to access and cause no difficulty for users with walking aids, wheelchairs or scooters</p> <p>The exit signage must be clearly visible, and the PUSH BAR accessible at all times</p> <p>To be raised as a set item on the agenda for the TPM, (Tenant Participation Meeting), held twice yearly in every scheme</p>	<p>Tenants and other users of the common room</p> <p>Supported Housing Officers</p>	<p>From January 2012</p> <p>Twice yearly in each scheme commencing September 2017</p> <p>Records to be kept of meetings within each scheme</p>