

Fire Risk Assessment

1-16 Portfleet Place

Version 4

31 August 2023



Review Date: 31 August 2024

Score: Tolerable Risk

Assessor: Mark Thomas

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Action Plan Summary

Task No.	Category	Sub Category	Action Required	Priority	Status	Action Taken	Date Completed
1	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Ease of Use	<p>There is a security gate across the balcony approach to flat 16, which found to be padlocked. This gate would only affect escaping occupants of this flat.</p> <p>Residents should be advised of the dangers of locked security gates in the event of a fire to ensure that they are able to exit quickly in an emergency.</p>	Advisory	Identified		
2	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	<p>Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard.</p> <p>Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer</p>	Medium	Identified		
3	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	<p>Adjust the self-closing device on the following doors:</p> <p>Flat 15.</p> <p>Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer</p>	Medium	Identified		

4	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	Confirm that the following doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 standard: Electrical cupboard/riser doors. Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer as the lock is non-standard and a key was not provided so access into the cupboards was not possible.	Medium	Identified
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Introduction

This report presents the significant findings of a fire risk assessment carried-out at the premises by QFSM Ltd. The scope, format and limitations of the fire risk assessment have been discussed and agreed with the client.

The scope of the assessment does not include individual dwellings. Notwithstanding any statement or recommendation made with respect to smoke/heat alarms within dwellings, it is always recommended as best practice to ensure that working smoke alarms are provided in all dwellings at least to a BS 5839-6 Category LD3 standard. These should ideally be Grade D alarms (mains powered with integral battery back-up), although Grade F alarms (battery powered only) are a reasonable short term measure.

The report includes an action plan which contains recommended tasks, each with a suggested due date. These due dates are only our suggestions, and may or may not be appropriate, depending on individual circumstances such as financial constraints and requirements of enforcing authorities.

The premises risk score was assessed at the time of the fire risk assessment, and a recommended review date has been provided. The actual level of risk may change over time, as a result of tasks being completed, or new risks arising. Regardless of the review date, the fire risk assessment should be reviewed regularly so as to keep it up to date and particularly if:

- there is reason to suspect that the fire risk assessment is no longer valid; or
- there has been a significant change in the matters to which the fire risk assessment relates.

If you have any queries please contact QFSM Ltd at office@qfsm ltd.co.uk.

Executive Summary

The previous FRA for this building was reviewed prior to this inspection, paying particular attention to any tasks generated by that FRA. During this inspection these tasks were inspected where access was possible, to ascertain if the recommended remedial work had been completed, and comments regarding the progress of any remedial work made accordingly.

Records for the testing and maintenance of fire safety related systems are not kept on site. These are managed centrally and are held at the ISHA Head Office.

The wall, floors and stairs in the common areas are of masonry/concrete and steel construction.

A common fire alarm (to BS5839-6 LD3 standard) has been provided in the common parts of the building. The presence of a common fire alarm system contradicts national guidance for a building of this type (purpose built, self contained flats). A letter dated 6th January 2020 from QFSM Ltd to ISHA regarding the provision of fire alarms in common parts of blocks of flats offers guidance and recommendations on this matter and this letter should be referred to when considering whether this is a necessary provision, or if the fire alarm is of the Standard required.

There is no ventilation provided within the enclosed staircase other than the openable doors on each level. Requirements for common escape routes in balcony/deck approach buildings with a single stair are given within Figure 5(b) of BS9991 (2015) which shows that the single staircase should be provided with an openable vent for fire and rescue service use from the top storey.

This building was constructed in 2006 and therefore it would be expected that it meet the requirements of the building regulations however this must have been accepted by the building control body at the time of construction.

It was not possible to access any electrical cupboard or riser cupboard due to the availability of keys at the time of this inspection. It should be confirmed that the doors to these areas afford an FD30 standard of fire resistance, and that any cable or pipe penetrations in these areas are adequately fire stopped.

VERSION 3 - 17/11/21

This is the annual review of the fire risk assessment and it is noted that there are a number of outstanding actions from the previous assessment.

These actions should be completed and evidence provided so that this fire risk assessment can be updated.

Giving consideration to the general fire safety arrangements within the building, and the tasks recommended as detailed within this report, it is assessed that this building presents a tolerable risk.

This new version was created on 31/08/2023 and is not a review of the fire risk assessment. This is purely an on-site audit carried out at the request of the client to ascertain the progress of any action carried out against previous tasks identified in previous versions of this fire risk assessment.

Premises Details

Building Information

Address line 1	1-16 Portfleet Place
Address line 2	De Beauvoir Road
Town	Hackney
Postcode	N1 5SZ

FRA Type	Type 1 - Common parts only (non-destructive)
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Description	A Type 1 fire risk assessment has been conducted at this building. This means the inspection of the building has been non-destructive. As well as considering the arrangements for means of escape, the fire risk assessment has included, where possible, the examination of a sample of flat entrance doors. It has also considered, so far as reasonably practicable, the separating construction between the flats and the common parts without any intrusive examination of construction. This Type of fire risk assessment has not involved entry to flats beyond the area of the flat entrance door.
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Client	ISHA
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Use	Purpose-built, self-contained flats
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Number of floors - ground and above	4
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Number of floors - below ground	0
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Number of flats	20
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Number of stair cores	1
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Approach to flats

- Via balconies / decks
- Direct external access

Approximate period of construction

2000-2010

Is the top occupied storey over 18 metres above access level?

No

Construction details

Steel frame and masonry construction with solid concrete intermediate floors and stairs, masonry internal walls and a parapet flat roof.

Access to common areas is via a secure entrance gate controlled by an intercom and fire override switch.

The secure entry gate provides access to an open carpark area with further access to an common stairwell.

Flats 1 – 4 and maisonettes 17 – 20 are accessed externally at ground floor level.

All other flats are accessed with common balconies accessed off the common stairwell.

Flats 82 and 88 are accessed at ground floor level, flats 84 and 90 at first floor level and flats 86 and 92 at second floor level.

An intake cupboard and two riser cupboards are accessed off the common stairwell at ground floor level, although access to these was not possible due to the availability of keys, aside from this which were found to be open.

External wall details

Walls are of brick/mortar construction and there are some sections of the building which have render applied, the substrate to which this render has been applied cannot be confirmed within the scope of this fire risk assessment.

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”).

The Advice Note recommends that building owners should consider the risk of external fire spread as part of the fire risk assessment for multi-occupied residential buildings.

Consideration has been given to this matter within this fire risk assessment. The Advice Note further recommends the assessment of the fire risks of any external wall system, irrespective of the height of the building.

Assessment of the fire risks of external walls and any cladding are excluded from the scope of this current fire risk assessment, as this is outside our expertise. (6) Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that you obtain advice from qualified and competent specialists on the nature of, and fire risks associated with, the external wall construction, including any cladding, of this building.

(6) This exclusion is consistent with advice provided by The Fire Industry Association and is discussed in their guidance note to fire risk assessors on this matter (<https://www.fia.uk.com/news/guidance-on-the-issue-of-cladding-and-external-wallconstruction-in-fire-risk-assessments-for-multi-occupied-residential-premises.html>).

This assessment by specialists should follow the process set out in the Advice Note and as noted in diagram 1 of that document. This assessment should show how the external wall construction supports the overall intent of Requirement B4(1) in Part B of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010, namely that “the external walls of the building shall adequately resist the spread of fire over the walls and from one building to another, having regard to the height, use and location of the building”. In this connection, the assessment should address this functional requirement (regardless of the height of the building) and not just the recommendations set out in guidance that supports the Regulations (e.g. Approved Document B under the Regulations). The assessment should not just comprise a statement of either compliance or non-compliance with the functional requirement or the guidance, but should include a clear statement on the level of risk and its acceptability.

This assessment by specialists should take into account a number of factors, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- The type of evacuation strategy used in the building, i.e. Simultaneous, staged, phased or ‘stay put’ and the anticipated evacuation time should evacuation become necessary;
- Suitability of the facilities for firefighting, including firefighting access for the fire and rescue service;
- The construction of the external walls, including any cladding and its method of fixing;
- The presence, and appropriate specification, of cavity barriers;
- The height of the building;
- The vulnerability of residents;
- Exposure of external walls or cladding to an external fire;
- Fire protection measures within the building (e.g. compartmentation, automatic fire suppression, automatic fire detection);

- Apparent quality of construction, or presence of building defects;
- The combustibility of the building structure and the use of modern methods of construction, such as timber framing, CLT etc;
- The location of escape routes;
- The complexity of the building; and
- The premises’ emergency plan including an assessment of the adequacy of any staffing levels for the type of evacuation method employed.

The assessment is likely to take account of information on any approval of the building (and alterations to the building) under the Building Regulations, and of information on external wall construction and any cladding available from the Responsible Person (e.g. in operation and maintenance manuals, or handed over for compliance with Regulation 38 of the Building Regulations); It is unlikely that an RICS EWS1 form will provide adequate assurance on its own.

Are there any private balconies?

Yes

Private balcony details

There are private balconies located on the front elevation of the building. Steel framed with glazed up-stands.

People

Are there any people especially at risk from fire?

No

Fire Prevention

Electrical

Are electrical installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

Yes

Are fixed installations periodically inspected and tested?

Yes

Are portable electrical appliances used?

No

Comments

Documentation regarding the testing and maintenance of fixed electrical installations is held centrally by ISHA. The Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed these are all up to date.

There are electrical sockets in the common areas, presumably for use by cleaning staff. These were in good condition and showed no evidence of misuse by residents or visitors.



Electrical sockets in the staircase.

Gas

Are gas installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

Yes

Is gas equipment protected/located so as not to be prone to accidental damage?

Yes

Comments

Gas meters are located in external bespoke cabinets.



Gas meter cupboards

Heating

Are fixed heating installations free from any obvious defect?

N/A

Are portable heaters used?

No

Comments

There is no heating provision in the common areas.

Cooking

Does cooking take place on the premises?

No

Comments

Cooking takes place within flats only and does not take place in the common parts.

Arson

Is security against arson reasonable?

Yes

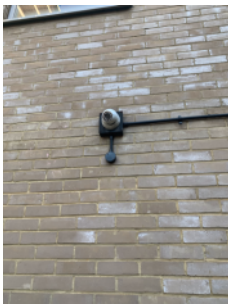
Is there a reasonable absence of external fuels and ignition sources?

Yes

Comments

Access was gained into this building via a secured (fob access) main entrance gate. There is also a fob accessed gate to the rear carpark.

CCTV cameras are installed internally and externally. Whilst these cameras may have been installed for security purposes they also serve to reduce the risk of deliberate fire setting.



CCTV cameras (external)

Housekeeping

Is accumulation of combustibles or waste avoided?

Yes

Are there appropriate storage facilities for combustible & hazardous materials?

N/A

Comments

All common areas appeared clean, tidy and free of combustible items.

Building Works

Are there any hot works being carried-out at this time?

No

Are the premises free of any obvious signs of incorrect hot work procedures in the past?

Yes

Smoking

Are there suitable arrangements taken to prevent fires caused by smoking?

Yes

Comments

“No Smoking” signage is provided, and there is no evidence of smoking taking place in the common parts.



The provided “No Smoking” signage

Dangerous Substances

Are dangerous substances present, or liable to be present?

No

Lightning

Is a lightning protection system installed?

No

Comments

There is no lightning protection visible, However, if there is lightning protection in place it should be periodically inspected by a competent person, to the frequency recommended in BS EN 62305.

Escape Routes & Fire Spread

Ease of Use

Are exits easily and immediately openable?

Yes

Do fire exits open in direction of escape where necessary?

N/A

Are escape routes unobstructed and safe to use?

Minor Defects

Are there reasonable measures for the evacuation of disabled people?

Yes

Comments

No specific occupancy risk identified. Tenants are a typical cross section of public and would include visitors and contractors. It is assumed occupants are capable of using the means of escape, unaided to reach a place of ultimate safety.

There is a security gate across the balcony approach to flat 16, which found to be padlocked. This gate would only affect escaping occupants of this flat.

Residents should be advised of the dangers of locked security gates in the event of a fire to ensure that they are able to exit quickly in an emergency.

Dimensions

Are travel distances reasonable?

Yes

Is there sufficient exit capacity?

Yes

Fire Doors

Doors which are expected to be fire resisting:

- Electrical Cupboards
- Flats
- Risers

Electrical Cupboard Doors

- Not confirmed

Flat Doors

- FD30S self-closing

Riser Doors

- Not confirmed

Are fire doors to a suitable standard?

Yes

Is there suitable provision of self-closing devices?

Minor Defects

Is there suitable provision of hold-open devices?

N/A

Are doors kept locked where appropriate?

Minor Defects

Comments

As part of this Fire Risk Assessment, access was gained into a sample flat to assess the suitability of flat entrance doors, and any internal doors which open onto the entrance hallway.

Access was gained into flat 15 which has an entrance door fitted to FD30 SC standard, and the internal doors which open onto the entrance hallway are fire resisting. However, the "PERKO" type self-closing device requires adjustment as it did not fully close the door on its action.

The remainder of flat front doors within the building could not be assessed due to access. However, these all appear to be of the same age, condition and design of those which were accessed and were probably all installed at the same time. It is therefore reasonable to assume that they are of the same fire resisting standard.

The provision and condition of self closing devices, intumescent strips/cold smoke seals, and effective door closing action of these doors however could not be assessed and this should be confirmed ensure all doors afford FD30 SC standard of fire resistance.

Access could not be gained into the electrical cupboards, due to the availability of keys. It should be confirmed that these doors afford an FD30 standard of fire resistance, and they should be kept locked shut.

VERSION 2:

Due to current government guidelines regarding the current COVID-19 pandemic, access into flats to confirm the provision and standard of fire resisting flat entrance doors was not possible. Inspection of flat entrance doors was made by external examination only, taking into account the age and condition of the doors, and where possible referring to previous FRAs where more detailed information regarding flat entrance doors and fire alarm provision may be found. All flat entrance doors appeared to be in good condition, with no obvious visible damage or defects and therefore it can reasonably assume they would afford the same level of fire resistance as found in the previous FRA.



“PERKO” type self closing device -
flat 15

Construction & Glazing

Are escape routes protected with suitable walls and floors?

Yes

Is there adequate compartmentation?

Yes

Is there reasonable limitation of linings that might promote fire spread?

Yes

Glazing which is expected to be fire resisting, inc vision panels and fanlights:

- Staircases

Staircase Glazing

- Georgian wired

Is glazing reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Comments

There is some exposed structural steel supporting the staircase, which does not appear to have any form of intumescent protection applied. It is assumed that this has been over engineered to compensate for this, and that this must have been deemed acceptable at the design and build stages. Structural steelwork located externally has some painted covering applied, it cannot be confirmed if this covering is intumescent. If this is not the case again it is assumed that it would have been over engineered to compensate.

There is window glazing to flats along common balconies, however, these are above 1.1m and are therefore not required to be fire resisting.

Access could not be gained into electrical cupboards and risers. It should be confirmed that all cable and pipe penetrations within these cupboards are appropriately fire stopped.



Structural staircase steel without intumescent protection.



Showing window glazing to flats - above 1.1m



Georgian Wired glazing on staircase



The externally accessed bin store appears in perfect to the flats above



Structural steelwork.

Dampers, Ducts & Chutes

Are there suitable measures to restrict fire spread via ducts and concealed spaces?

Yes

Comments

No Dampers, Ducts or Chutes evident.

Smoke Ventilation

Areas where smoke ventilation is expected:

- Staircases

Staircases

- Openable Doors

Is smoke ventilation reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Comments

There is no ventilation provided within the enclosed staircase other than the openable doors on each level. Requirements for common escape routes in balcony/deck approach buildings with a single stair are given within Figure 5(b) of BS9991 (2015) which shows that the single staircase should be provided with an openable vent for fire and rescue service use from the top storey.

This building was constructed in 2006 and therefore it would be expected that it meet the requirements of the building regulations however this must have been accepted by the building control body at the time of construction.

Should any future maintenance work be carried out within the staircase area, it should be considered to enhance the smoke ventilation provision in this area by means of openable windows.

Detection & Warning

Control Equipment

Is an electrical fire alarm system expected?

No

Why not?

Purpose-built flats

Is a fire detection and/or alarm system provided?

Yes

Areas covered

- Communal areas

Communal Areas

System Category

- BS 5839 Pt6 Grade D Category LD3

Cause & Effect

- Single alarms, not interlinked

Is the control equipment suitably located?

N/A

Is the control equipment free from any obvious fault or defect?

N/A

Manual Fire Alarms

Are there sufficient means of manually raising an alarm?

N/A

Are manual callpoints appropriately located and free from obvious defect?

N/A

Automatic Fire Detection

Is there sufficient provision of automatic fire detection?

Yes

Is the type of automatic fire detection suitable and free from obvious defect?

Minor Defects

Comments

There is a BS5839-6 Grade D fire alarm located at the head of the staircase. It is not known why this alarm has been installed here, as it contradicts National Guidance for a building of this type (general needs, purpose built self contained flats) which would recommend a stay put policy without a common fire alarm. The provision of a common fire alarm may cause confusion to residents and visitors as to the action they should take in the event of a fire. It is recommended to consider removing this fire alarm.



BS5839-6 Fire Alarm at the head of the staircase

Audibility

Are there adequate means of alerting all relevant persons?

N/A

Comments

The common fire alarm provided within the staircase would not provide suitable audibility to alert residents of a fire and therefore could not be considered sufficient to support a simultaneous evacuation strategy. Insufficient audibility from a fire alarm may cause a person to evacuate at a later stage where a fire may be more developed and put them in more danger. As previously stated in this fire risk assessment it is recommended to remove this common fire alarm in line with national guidance for a building of this type.

Firefighting

Fire Extinguishers

Are fire extinguishers expected?

No

Why not?

- Not practicable to train residents
- Fire unlikely in communal areas
- Vandalism concerns

Are fire extinguishers provided?

No

Is the provision of fire extinguishers reasonable?

Yes

Fixed Systems

Are any fixed systems provided?

No

Is provision of fixed systems reasonable?

Yes

Fire Service Facilities

Are any fire service facilities provided?

Yes

Types of facility

- Entrance door override

Is provision of fire service facilities reasonable?

Yes

Comments

Entrance door override was tested during the inspection and was found to operate correctly.

Lighting

Normal Lighting

Is there adequate lighting of internal escape routes?

Yes

Is there adequate lighting of external escape routes?

Yes

Is there adequate lighting in risk critical areas?

N/A

Emergency Lighting

Method of emergency lighting of internal escape routes:

- Borrowed light
- Maintained emergency lighting (local)

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Method of emergency lighting of external escape routes:

- Borrowed light

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Method of emergency lighting of other areas:

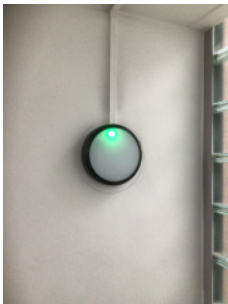
- Not applicable

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Comments

Although this inspection took place during daylight hours, given the provision of street lighting in the immediate vicinity and lighting provided by surrounding buildings, it is reasonable to assume there would be sufficient borrowed light to aid escape in these areas.



Non-maintained emergency lighting in the staircase

Signs & Notices

Escape Routes

Is escape route signage necessary?

No

Why not?

- Simple escape routes
- Routes in ordinary use

Is escape route signage provided?

Yes

Is provision of escape route signage suitable?

Yes

Fire Doors

Is there signage suitable for self-closing fire doors?

No

Is there signage suitable for locked fire doors?

No

Is there signage suitable for automatic fire doors?

N/A

Comments

“Fire door keep locked shut” signage should be provided on riser cupboard doors.

“Fire door keep closed signs” should be provided on staircase doors.

Other Signs & Notices

Is there suitable signage for fire service facilities?

Yes

Are fire action notices suitable?

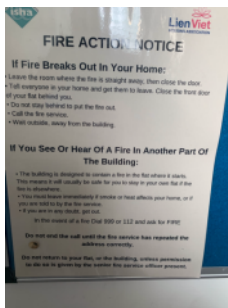
Yes

Are there suitable notices for fire extinguishers?

N/A

Is there suitable zone information for the fire alarm system?

N/A



The provided Fire Action Notice

Fire Safety Management

Procedures & Arrangements

Current evacuation policy

Stay Put

Further details

There is a Stay-Put policy in place in this building, however, the provision of a single common fire alarm may cause confusion to residents and visitors to the building in the event of a fire.

Are fire action procedures suitable and appropriately documented?

Not Known

Are there suitable arrangements for calling the fire service?

N/A

Is there a suitable fire assembly point?

N/A

Are there suitable arrangements for the evacuation of disabled people?

Yes

Comments

These are general needs flats and as such no specific occupancy risk is identified. Tenants are presumed to be a typical cross section of public and could include visitors and contractors. It is assumed that all occupants and visitors are capable of using the means of escape unaided to reach a place of ultimate safety.

Training & Drills

Are staff regularly on the premises?

No

Are employees from outside organisations given appropriate fire safety information?

Yes

Comments

Fire Action notices provide sufficient information to inform persons of outside organisations of the action to take in the event of fire alarm actuation.

Testing & Maintenance

Was testing & maintenance information available?

No

Are fire extinguishers subject to suitable test & maintenance?

N/A

Comments

Fire Safety documentation for the testing and maintenance of fire safety systems is held centrally at the ISHA Head Office. The ISHA Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed that these are up to date.

Record Keeping

Were fire safety records available?

No

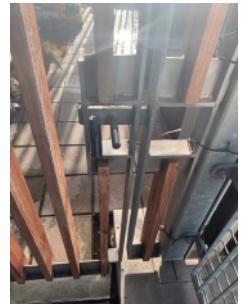
Comments

Fire Safety documentation for the testing and maintenance of fire safety systems is held centrally at the ISHA Head Office. The ISHA Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed that these are up to date.

Tasks

Task 1

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Ease of Use
Action Required	<p>There is a security gate across the balcony approach to flat 16, which found to be padlocked. This gate would only affect escaping occupants of this flat.</p> <p>Residents should be advised of the dangers of locked security gates in the event of a fire to ensure that they are able to exit quickly in an emergency.</p>
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	15 January 2023



Task 2

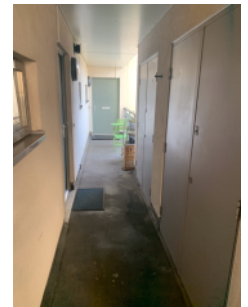
Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	<p>Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard.</p> <p>Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer</p>
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	15 January 2021

Task 3

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Adjust the self-closing device on the following doors: Flat 15. Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	15 January 2021

Task 4

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Confirm that the following doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 standard: Electrical cupboard/riser doors. Version 3 This should be checked by the Neighbourhood Officer as the lock is non-standard and a key was not provided so access into the cupboards was not possible.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	15 January 2021



Risk Score

Risk Score

Tolerable Risk

Next Assessment Due

31 August 2024

Likelihood	Potential Consequence		
	Slight Harm	Moderate Harm	Extreme Harm
High	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable
Medium	Tolerable	Moderate	Substantial
Low	Trivial	Tolerable	Moderate

Likelihood

Low Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition.

Medium Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).

High Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant increase in likelihood of fire.

Consequence

Slight Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).

Moderate Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.

Extreme Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.