

Fire Risk Assessment

278 Richmond Rd, Flats 1-5

Version 3

15 August 2023



Review Date: 15 August 2024

Score: Moderate Risk

Assessor: Andy Harris

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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>Some electrical wiring is suspended in the common areas. A requirement introduced in 2015 in BS 7671 which covers electrical installations in the UK, states that all new wiring systems to use metal, rather than plastic, to support cables in escape routes, to prevent their premature collapse in the event of a fire.</p> <p>15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.</p>	Advisory	Identified		

2	Detection & Warning	Automatic Fire Detection	<p>There is a common fire alarm provided which may have been provided to compensate for there being no means of ventilating the staircase, and therefore a simultaneous evacuation policy adopted. It was noted that this fire alarm system is not of a suitable Grade and Standard to support such a policy. It would be expected to provide a fire alarm to BS5839-1 L3 in the common parts , interlinked to a heat detector sounder in the entrance hallway of each flat. Each flat should also be provided with a fire alarm to BS5839-6 LD3 (not interlinked).</p> <p>Alternatively - provide adequate means of smoke ventilation in the staircase in line with the recommendations of ADB.</p> <p>15/08/23 There is no evidence that this work has been carried out so would assume this task is still outstanding.</p>	Medium	Identified
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3	Signs & Notices	Other Signage	<p>Provide fire action notices which confirm the action to take in the event of a fire.</p> <p>15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.</p>	Medium	Identified
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4	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	<p>Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30S self-closing standard.</p> <p>15/08/23 Access was obtained into flat 1 & 2 and this door was fitted with a self-closing device, both these self closing devices required adjusting to allow them to close, it was not possible to check any other flat front doors but would be safe to assume would assume this task is still outstanding.</p>	Medium	Identified
5	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Ease of Use	<p>Obstructions should be removed from the escape routes in the following locations:</p> <p>There are a number of items in the staircase serving flat 1 which should be removed.</p> <p>15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.</p>	Medium	Identified
6	Fire Prevention	Housekeeping	<p>There was a significant volume of combustibile materials found in the staircase serving flats 4 & 5 which should be removed.</p>	High	Identified

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.

This is a small single staircase building, however the means of escape provisions, specifically the provision of an openable vent within the staircase has not been provided in accordance with the recommendations of paragraph 2.21 Approved Document B, Volume 2: 2006 (Small single stair buildings) which states that either of the following should be provided for the fire and rescue service:

- i. A high-level openable vent with a free area of at least 1m² at each storey.
- ii. A single openable vent with a free area of at least 1m² at the head of the stair, operable remotely at the fire and rescue service access level.

Neither has been provided however this must have been deemed acceptable by the relevant building control body and LFB at the time of the buildings construction. There is a Part 6 fire alarm in the common areas which may have been provided to compensate for there being no means of ventilating the staircase, and therefore a simultaneous evacuation policy adopted. It was noted that this fire alarm system is not of a suitable Grade and Standard to support such a policy. It would be expected to provide a fire alarm to BS5839-1 L3 in the common parts, interlinked to a heat detector sounder in the entrance hallway of each flat. Each flat should also be provided with a fire alarm to BS5839-6 D1 Grade LD3 Category (not interlinked).

Alternatively, modify the existing fixed glazing to allow it to be opened and provide smoke ventilation in accordance with the specifications given above, and remove the common fire alarm in line with National Guidance for purpose built, general needs flats

There is no Fire Action Notice provided. It is imperative that residents and visitors are given clear instructions as to the action they should take in the event of a fire.

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 moderate risk. This is in the main part due to the provision of an unsuitable fire alarm system for supporting a simultaneous evacuation policy.

This new version was created on 15/08/2023 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

278 Richmond Rd, Flats 1-5

Town

Hackney

Postcode

E8 3AA

FRA Type

Type 1 - Common parts only (non-destructive)

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.

Client

ISHA

Use

Purpose-built, self-contained flats

Number of floors - ground and above

3

Number of floors - below ground

0

Number of flats

5

Number of stair cores

1

Approach to flats

- Direct from stair
-

Approximate period of construction

1990-2000

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

No

Construction details

Masonry construction with solid concrete intermediate floors and stairs, masonry internal walls and a pitched roof. It was not possible to access the roof space.

Access to common areas is via a secure entrance controlled by an intercom system providing access to a common stairwell.

All flats are accessed off the stairwell, flat 1 is accessed at ground floor level, flats 2 – 3 at first floor level and flats 4 – 5 at second floor level.

An intake cupboard is accessed off the stairwell at ground floor level.

External wall details

Brick external walls, part rendered. There is no additional external wall system fixed to the building visible.

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. 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.

Are there any private balconies?

No

People

Are there any people especially at risk from fire?

Not Known

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.



Evidence of testing of fixed electrical installations

Gas

Are gas installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

N/A

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

N/A

Comments

There is no gas provision or equipment in the common areas.

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 main entrance door. The main entrance door was found to be locked and secure, preventing unauthorised access.

Housekeeping

Is accumulation of combustibles or waste avoided?

Yes

Are there appropriate storage facilities for combustible & hazardous materials?

N/A

Comments

There was a significant volume of combustible materials found in the staircase serving flat 1 which should be removed.

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.

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 lightening 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

The provision of thumb turn devices on final exits means the doors can be opened without the use of a key.

Some electrical wiring is suspended in the common areas. A requirement introduced in 2015 in BS 7671 which covers electrical installations in the UK, states that all new wiring systems to use metal, rather than plastic, to support cables in escape routes, to prevent their premature collapse in the event of a fire.

Tenants are presumed to be a typical cross section of the 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.

There are a number of items in the staircase serving flat 1 which should be removed.

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

Electrical Cupboard Doors

- FD30S

Flat Doors

- Not confirmed

Are fire doors to a suitable standard?

Yes

Is there suitable provision of self-closing devices?

Yes

Is there suitable provision of hold-open devices?

N/A

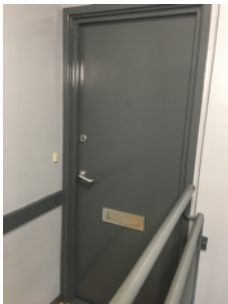
Are doors kept locked where appropriate?

Yes

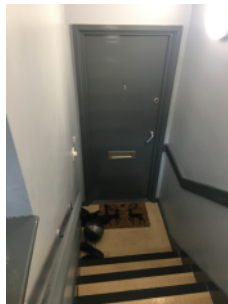
Comments

It is understood that communal doors are inspected regularly by neighbourhood officers and formally recorded in the quarterly/6 monthly estate inspections with residents. Records are held with the neighbourhood officers. Flat entrance doors are inspected during the annual LGSR visits where the gas engineers record on their PDA if a door closer exists and intumescent strips and cold smoke seals exist.

It was not possible to access any flat to assess the suitability of flat entrance doors. However from external examination only, the flat entrance doors appear to be flush timber original doors from the time of the buildings construction which should provide 30 minutes fire resistance. All flat entrance doors appear to be of the same age, condition and design and were probably all installed at the same time. It is therefore reasonable to assume that they are of the same FD30 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 FD30SC standard of fire resistance.



Example of flat entrance doors fitted in the building



Example of flat entrance doors fitted in the building

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:

• None

Is glazing reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

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:

• None

Is smoke ventilation reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Comments

There is a common fire alarm installed in the building. This has possibly been provided for the lack of means of ventilating the staircase, and a simultaneous evacuation policy adopted.

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

- Not confirmed

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?

No

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

No

Comments

There is a BS5839-6 fire alarm provided in the common parts of this building. This may be provided due as there is no means of ventilating the staircase within the building, and therefore the decision to adopt a simultaneous evacuation policy has been taken.

No documentation regarding the cause and effect of the system was available, however it does not appear to be interlinked to any alarm provided in the flats and therefore is not of an adequate Grade and Standard.

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.

Audibility

Are there adequate means of alerting all relevant persons?

No

Comments

Please see task generated in the Automatic Fire Detection section of this report, regarding the unsuitability of the provided fire alarm.

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?

No

Is provision of fire service facilities reasonable?

Yes

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:

- 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.

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?

N/A

Is there signage suitable for locked fire doors?

Yes

Is there signage suitable for automatic fire doors?

N/A



Signage provided on the electrical cupboard door.

Other Signs & Notices

Is there suitable signage for fire service facilities?

N/A

Are fire action notices suitable?

No

Are there suitable notices for fire extinguishers?

N/A

Is there suitable zone information for the fire alarm system?

N/A

Comments

Provide fire action notices which confirm the action to take in the event of a fire.

Fire Safety Management

Procedures & Arrangements

Current evacuation policy

Simultaneous

Further details

As detailed within this report, it is recommended to give consideration to the evacuation strategy in place in this building and to either provide smoke ventilation within the staircase in line with national guidance for a building of this type and remove the common fire alarm, or, upgrade the existing fire alarm to a system suitable to support a simultaneous evacuation policy.

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?

No

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?

No

Comments

Fire Action notices should be provided to give sufficient information to inform persons from outside organisations of the action to take in the event of a fire alarm actuation or discovering a fire.

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

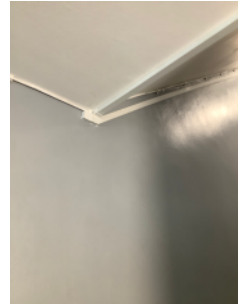
Comments

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	Some electrical wiring is suspended in the common areas. A requirement introduced in 2015 in BS 7671 which covers electrical installations in the UK, states that all new wiring systems to use metal, rather than plastic, to support cables in escape routes, to prevent their premature collapse in the event of a fire.
	15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	2 July 2022



Task 2

Source Version	1
Category	Detection & Warning
Sub Category	Automatic Fire Detection
Action Required	<p>There is a common fire alarm provided which may have been provided to compensate for there being no means of ventilating the staircase, and therefore a simultaneous evacuation policy adopted. It was noted that this fire alarm system is not of a suitable Grade and Standard to support such a policy. It would be expected to provide a fire alarm to BS5839-1 L3 in the common parts , interlinked to a heat detector sounder in the entrance hallway of each flat. Each flat should also be provided with a fire alarm to BS5839-6 LD3 (not interlinked).</p> <p>Alternatively - provide adequate means of smoke ventilation in the staircase in line with the recommendations of ADB.</p> <p>15/08/23 There is no evidence that this work has been carried out so would assume this task is still outstanding.</p>
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	31 December 2020

Task 3

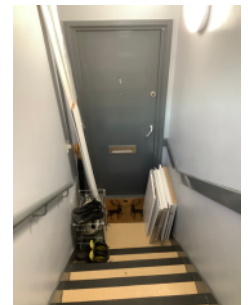
Source Version	1
Category	Signs & Notices
Sub Category	Other Signage
Action Required	<p>Provide fire action notices which confirm the action to take in the event of a fire.</p> <p>15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.</p>
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	31 December 2020

Task 4

Source Version	2
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30S self-closing standard. 15/08/23 Access was obtained into flat 1 & 2 and this door was fitted with a self-closing device, both these self closing devices required adjusting to allow them to close, it was not possible to check any other flat front doors but would be safe to assume would assume this task is still outstanding.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	7 February 2022

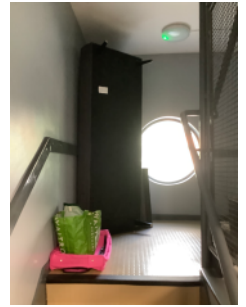
Task 5

Source Version	2
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Ease of Use
Action Required	Obstructions should be removed from the escape routes in the following locations: There are a number of items in the staircase serving flat 1 which should be removed. 15/08/23 This task is still outstanding.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	7 February 2022



Task 6

Source Version	2
Category	Fire Prevention
Sub Category	Housekeeping
Action Required	There was a significant volume of combustibile materials found in the staircase serving fiats 4 & 5 which should be removed.
Priority	High
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	7 November 2021



Risk Score

Risk Score

Moderate Risk

Next Assessment Due

15 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.