

**Fire Risk Assessment**

**5-8 Vivian Comma Close**

Version 3

31 July 2023



Review Date: 31 July 2024

Score: Substantial 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	Fire Prevention	Electrical	A requirement introduced in 2015 in BS 7671 which covers electrical installations in the UK, states that all new wiring systems are to use metal, rather than plastic, to support cables in escape routes, to prevent their premature collapse in the event of a fire.	Advisory	Identified		
2	Fire Prevention	Housekeeping	The storage of combustible items in escape routes should be prohibited.  Combustible items were noted outside flats 7 and 8.	Medium	Identified		
3	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Ease of Use	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.	Advisory	Identified		
4	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30S self-closing standard.  Flats 5, 6 and 8.	Medium	Identified		

5	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Construction and Glazing	A panel within the electrical cupboard has been removed needs to be replaced as its absence compromises the fire resistance of this cupboard.	Medium	Identified
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6	Detection & Warning	Automatic Fire Detection	<p>Upgrade the existing BS 5839-6 Category LD3 automatic fire detection &amp; alarm system provided in flats to one in accordance with BS 5839-6 Grade D1 Category LD1.</p> <p>Control and indicating equipment for these fire alarms should be located in the wardens office.</p> <p>This should be interlinked to an alarm receiving centre for the periods that the wardens office is not staffed.</p>	High	Identified
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7	Signs & Notices	Other Signage	<p>There is both a fire action notice for a simultaneous evacuation policy provided, and also a fire action notice for a stay put policy. This gives conflicting information for residents and staff and would cause confusion in the event of a fire.</p> <p>The correct fire action notice (stay put policy) should remain and that denoting a simultaneous evacuation policy should be removed.</p>	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](mailto:office@qfsm ltd.co.uk).

## Executive Summary

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. St Martin of a Tours staff also carry out regular testing of the fire alarm system and emergency lighting.

This building contains four purpose built self contained flats, occupied by persons with learning difficulties and mental health issues. The building itself is owned and managed by Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association, and is leased by St Martin of Tours who are a provider of mental healthcare and accommodation in London.

A St Martin of Tours duty warden/carer is located in an office in an adjacent detached building. There is a BS5839-6 LD3 fire alarm provided in each flat, and a separate BS5839-6 LD3 fire alarm provided in the common staircase which is not interlinked to the alarm provided in the flats.

There is no control and indicating equipment provided in the wardens office, and it cannot be guaranteed that the warden would be able to hear any fire alarm should one be actuated, nor can it be guaranteed that residents would call the fire service or the warden on the event of a fire. The current fire alarm provision is therefore inadequate and recommendations are made within the detection and alarm section of this report about how this provision should be upgraded to ensure the fire and rescue attend a fire as soon as possible as occupants may take longer to evacuate than general needs residents.

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 due to the inadequate fire alarm provision.

### VERSION 2:

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.

It is understood that the previous charity providing support support to residents (Saint Martin's of Tours) no longer manage the residents. The organisation now providing support to residents is "Centre 404", with staff located in the managers office remote from the building.

Following discussion with the duty support officer in the office, it was not possible to fully confirm the means of detecting a fire within the flat or the method in place for quickly calling the Fire Service. Residents have a range of learning difficulties and it was agreed with the support officer that they may not understand the need to evacuate if necessary and would rely on others to summon the Fire service

It was noted in the previous FRA that there is no Telecare system provided to residents in order to alert in the event of a fire. The duty support officer again stated that it would be expected residents to call or text the duty support officer if they had an issue such as a fire within the flat. This is unacceptable as it could not be guaranteed that the residents would be capable to do this especially during a fire situation, and relying on mobile phones could be problematic with regards to phones being charged and having adequate signal etc. Therefore it is imperative that the fire alarm provided within residents flats is interlinked to a remote alarm receiving centre (ARC) where the Fire service would be able to be called in at as soon as possible in the event of a fire.

Whilst carrying out this inspection discussion with two residents confirmed that they had no telecare system provided within their flats.

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 construction.

The building was found to be generally well maintained with the standard of housekeeping considered satisfactory, with common areas clear of combustible materials and obstructions

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 substantial risk. This has been raised from the previous fire risk assessment due to the ongoing concern of the lack of means of communicating the presence of fire by residents in order to quickly some of the fire service.

# Premises Details

## Building Information

Address line 1

5-8 Vivian Comma Close

Town

Islington

Postcode

N4 2BQ

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

Supported living

Number of floors - ground and above

4

Number of floors - below ground

0

Number of flats

4

Number of stair cores

1

Approach to flats

- Direct from stair



Approximate period of construction

1960-1980

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

No

Construction details

A detached building of four floors, of brick and concrete construction containing four purpose built self contained flats. There is one flat per floor, with these flats being accessed directly from a single staircase.



External walls - front elevation



External walls - end elevation

External wall details

External walls is of brick/mortar construction on all elevations. No additional external wall system evident.

Are there any private balconies?

No

## People

Are there any people especially at risk from fire?

Yes

People especially at risk from fire

• Other

Details of people especially at risk from fire

4 purpose built, self contained flats occupied by residents with learning difficulties and mental health issues.

Residents are supported from staff located at a St Martins of Tours office which is in an adjacent detached building.

St Martins of Tours is a provider of mental healthcare and accommodation in London, who rent this building from Islington and Shoreditch housing association.

# Fire Prevention

## Electrical

Are electrical installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

Yes

Are fixed installations periodically inspected and tested?

Not Known

Are portable electrical appliances used?

No

### Comments

Electrical installations appeared free from defect and some test labels visible were in date. It is understood that fixed electrical installations are subject to a five yearly test in accordance with BS 7671. This has been confirmed by the ISHA Neighbourhood Officer.

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.

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



Electrical installation with current test label.

## 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

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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

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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

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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.

## Housekeeping

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Is accumulation of combustibles or waste avoided?

No

Are there appropriate storage facilities for combustible & hazardous materials?

N/A

Comments

The storage of combustible items in escape routes should be prohibited.

Combustible items were noted outside flat 8. They're also a high volume of combustible items including tins of paint located within the electrical cupboard which should be removed

## Building Works

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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

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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

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Are dangerous substances present, or liable to be present?

No

## Lightning

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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

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Are exits easily and immediately openable?

Yes

Do fire exits open in direction of escape where necessary?

Yes

Are escape routes unobstructed and safe to use?

Minor Defects

Are there reasonable measures for the evacuation of disabled people?

No

### Comments

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.

There are a small number of items located in the common areas, which whilst currently do not present a significant risk, these areas should be monitored to ensure they do not build up.

Please see “Detection and Alarm” section of this report, regarding the provision of suitable and sufficient fire alarms to ensure early warning of fire in this building, given the dependency of the residents.

## Dimensions

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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

- FD30S self-closing (notional)

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

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 7 which has an entrance door fitted to FD30S SC (notional) standard, and the internal doors which open onto the entrance hallway are fire resisting.

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 FD30S SC standard of fire resistance.

### 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.



Intumescent strips and cold smoke seals on entrance door to flat 7.



A working self closing device fitted on entrance door to flat 7.

## Construction & Glazing

Are escape routes protected with suitable walls and floors?

Yes

Is there adequate compartmentation?

Minor Defects

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

Comments

A panel within the electrical cupboard has been removed needs to be replaced as its absence compromises the fire resistance of this cupboard.

## 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

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Areas where smoke ventilation is expected:

- Staircases

Staircases

- Openable Windows
- Openable Doors

Is smoke ventilation reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes



# Detection & Warning

## Control Equipment

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Is an electrical fire alarm system expected?

Yes

Is a fire detection and/or alarm system provided?

Yes

Areas covered

- Flats
- 

Flats

System Category

- BS 5839 Pt6 Grade D Category LD3

Cause & Effect

- Sounds alarm in flat of origin
- 

Is the control equipment suitably located?

N/A

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

N/A

## Manual Fire Alarms

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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

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Is there sufficient provision of automatic fire detection?

No

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

No

### Comments

It is reasonable to assume that this building was originally constructed to contain purpose built, self contained flats for general needs occupancy, and since that time the building's use has changed to specialised housing, housing residents with varying degrees of learning difficulties. Given the construction of the building to a stay put standard and the small number of flats, the continuation of a stay-put policy is reasonable.

However, the provision of any fire alarm system within the flats should reflect the occupancy type and given that the residents of this building may not immediately call the fire service in the event of a fire, and may take longer to evacuate the building than a building with general needs occupancy, the fire alarm should be suitable and sufficient to ensure the fire service is called to any fire at the earliest opportunity.

At present, all flats contain a fire alarm meeting the recommendations of BS5839-6 Category LD3 standard. The fire alarm is not interlinked to any ARC, nor is either provided with any indicating and control equipment in the wardens office.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance "Fire Safety in Specialised Housing" gives recommendations for the standard of fire alarm system that should be provided in certain types of specialised housing. A recommendation within that guidance states that within flats a fire alarm should be provided to BS5839-6 Category LD1 standard, which is above the standard currently provided.

The location of this building is remote from the wardens office/sleeping accommodation and it cannot be guaranteed that the duty warden would necessarily hear any alarm. Neither can it be guaranteed that residents would either call the fire service, or call the scheme warden in the event of a fire. Sufficient arrangements should be in place by means of fire alarm control and indicating equipment within the wardens office to ensure that the warden is immediately made aware of any fire alarm actuation in any flat, and that they can quickly identify the flat of origin in order to speedily investigate and call the fire service if necessary. This should be interlinked to an alarm receiving centre to ensure that it is monitored during periods when the office is not staffed.

## Audibility

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Are there adequate means of alerting all relevant persons?

No

### Comments

Please see comments and tasks above.

# Firefighting

## Fire Extinguishers

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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

Comments

Fire extinguishers are located in the wardens office for use by staff only and are not accessible by residents. Staff have not received any training in the use of this equipment.

## Fixed Systems

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Are any fixed systems provided?

No

Is provision of fixed systems reasonable?

Yes

## Fire Service Facilities

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Are any fire service facilities provided?

No

Is provision of fire service facilities reasonable?

Yes

# Lighting

## Normal Lighting

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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

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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

## 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

There is both a fire action notice for a simultaneous evacuation policy provided, and also a fire action notice for a stay put policy. This gives conflicting information for residents and staff and would cause confusion in the event of a fire.

The correct fire action notice (stay put policy) should remain and the notice denoting a simultaneous evacuation policy should be removed.

# Fire Safety Management

## Procedures & Arrangements

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Current evacuation policy

Stay Put

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

## Training & Drills

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Are staff regularly on the premises?

Yes

Do staff receive suitable training on the following areas:

Fire risks on the premises & fire prevention measures?

No

Action to take on discovering a fire?

No

How to raise an alarm?

No

Responding to the fire alarm?

No

Calling the fire service?

No

Location & use of fire fighting equipment?

No

Are fire drills carried out at appropriate intervals?

No

Are employees from outside organisations given appropriate fire safety information?

No

## Testing & Maintenance

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Was testing & maintenance information available?

No

Are fire extinguishers subject to suitable test & maintenance?

Yes

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.

It was noted during the previous fire risk assessment that additional fire safety testing and maintenance was carried out by St Martin of Tours staff. It could not be confirmed whether this additional testing is being undertaken by Centre 404, However it is essential that fire safety measures such as the emergency lighting is tested as required, and given the vulnerability of the residents that fire alarms provided within the flats are tested to the recommendations of BS5839-6

## Record Keeping

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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	Fire Prevention
Sub Category	Electrical
Action Required	A requirement introduced in 2015 in BS 7671 which covers electrical installations in the UK, states that all new wiring systems are to use metal, rather than plastic, to support cables in escape routes, to prevent their premature collapse in the event of a fire.
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	28 January 2023

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## Task 2

Source Version	1
Category	Fire Prevention
Sub Category	Housekeeping
Action Required	The storage of combustible items in escape routes should be prohibited.  Combustible items were noted outside flats 7 and 8.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	28 January 2021

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### Task 3

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Ease of Use
Action Required	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.
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	28 January 2023

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### Task 4

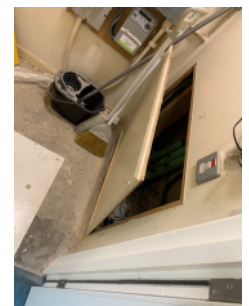
Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Confirm that flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30S self-closing standard.  Flats 5, 6 and 8.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	28 January 2021

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### Task 5

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Construction and Glazing
Action Required	A panel within the electrical cupboard has been removed needs to be replaced as its absence compromises the fire resistance of this cupboard.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	28 January 2021

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## Task 6

Source Version	1
Category	Detection & Warning
Sub Category	Automatic Fire Detection
Action Required	<p>Upgrade the existing BS 5839-6 Category LD3 automatic fire detection &amp; alarm system provided in flats to one in accordance with BS 5839-6 Grade D1 Category LD1.</p> <p>Control and indicating equipment for these fire alarms should be located in the wardens office.</p> <p>This should be interlinked to an alarm receiving centre for the periods that the wardens office is not staffed.</p>
Priority	High
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	28 April 2020

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## Task 7

Source Version	1
Category	Signs & Notices
Sub Category	Other Signage
Action Required	<p>There is both a fire action notice for a simultaneous evacuation policy provided, and also a fire action notice for a stay put policy. This gives conflicting information for residents and staff and would cause confusion in the event of a fire.</p> <p>The correct fire action notice (stay put policy) should remain and that denoting a simultaneous evacuation policy should be removed.</p>
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	28 January 2021

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# Risk Score

Risk Score

Substantial Risk

Next Assessment Due

31 July 2024

Likelihood	Potential Consequence		
	Slight Harm	Moderate Harm	Extreme Harm
High	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable
Medium	Tolerable	Moderate	<b>Substantial</b>
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.