

Fire Risk Assessment

1-20 St Mary's House

Version 5

23 August 2024



Next Assessment Due: 31 August 2025

Risk Score: Tolerable 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	Fire Doors	Confirm that the following doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard: Flats 6 and 15 VERSION 3: Door fitters are on site, and are replacing all flat entrance doors in this building with new fire resisting door sets, including doorframes. The door blanks, glazing, and frames of the doors being installed were inspected and were noted to all be of at least a 30 min fire resisting standard. 07/09/2023 It was not possible to gain access to the flats listed above to confirm if these flat front doors are to an FD30 self closing standard, so this task remains outstanding.	Medium	Identified		

2	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Ease of Use	Although the amount of items currently in escape routes is not unreasonable, routes should be monitored to ensure that a build-up of items does not impede escape. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding. 23/08/24 This task remains outstanding.	Low	Identified
3	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Construction and Glazing	There is a vent (probably from a tumble drier) at low level outside flat 9. This is a penetration onto the common balcony below 1.1 m and therefore should have an intumescent grill fitted. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding. 23/08/24 This task remains outstanding.	Low	Identified
4	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	Adjust the self-closing device on the following doors: Flat 7 Flat 10 Flat 11 Flat 18 Flat 19	High	Identified

Introduction

This report presents the 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

VERSION 5. 23/08/24

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.

This new version was created on 23/08/2024 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.

There is a vent (probably from a tumble drier) at low level outside flat 9. This is a penetration onto the common balcony below 1.1 m and therefore should have an intumescent grill fitted.

The self closing device on flats 19, 18, 11, 10 and 7 requires adjusting to overcome the latch.

Confirm that the following doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard: Flats 6 and 15

Although the amount of items currently in escape routes is not unreasonable, routes should be monitored to ensure that a build-up of items does not impede escape.

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.

Premises Details

Address line 1	1-20 St Mary's House
Address line 2	Gaskin Street
Town	Islington
Postcode	N1 2RS
FRA Type	Type 3 – Common parts and flats (non-destructive)
Description	
A Type 3 fire risk assessment includes the work involved in a Type 1 fire risk assessment, but goes beyond the scope of the FSO (though not the scope of the Housing Act). This risk assessment considers the arrangements for means of escape and fire detection (ie smoke alarms) within at least a sample of the flats. Within the flats, the inspection is non-destructive, but the fire resistance of doors to rooms is considered. Measures to prevent fire are not considered unless (eg in the case of maintenance of the electrical and heating installations) the measures are within the control of, for example, the landlord. A Type 3 fire risk assessment may sometimes be appropriate for rented flats if there is reason to suspect serious risk to residents in the event of a fire in their flats. (This might be, for example, because of the age of the block or reason for suspicion of widespread unauthorised material alterations). This type of fire risk assessment will not be possible in the case of long leasehold flats, as there is normally no right of access for freeholders.	
Client	ISHA

Building Information

Use	Purpose-built, self-contained flats
Number of floors - ground and above	5
Number of floors - below ground	0
Number of flats	20
Number of stair cores	1
Approach to flats	• Via balconies / decks • Direct external access
Approximate period of construction	1940-1960
Is the top occupied storey over 18 metres above access level?	No

Construction details

Traditional brick construction with solid concrete intermediate floors and stairs, masonry internal walls and a flat roof. Access to common areas is via an unsecure open stairwell providing access to the open balconies above. Flats 1 – 4 are accessed externally at ground floor level, the remaining flats are accessed via the open balconies. Flats 5 – 8 are located at first floor, 9 – 12 at second floor, 13 – 16 at third floor and flats 17 - 20 at fourth floor level. An external refuse store is located to the bottom of the stairwell with refuse hoppers accessed off the open balcony above. An intake cupboard is accessed beneath the stairwell at ground floor level. A water tank room is located on the flat roof area accessed to the top of the stairwell.



Original brick/mortar external walls



Private balconies

External wall details

Original Brick/mortar external walls with no evidence of any additional combustible external wall systems evident within the scope of this FRA.

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

Concrete deck to balconies, probably a continuation of the concrete compartment floor. Brick/mortar up stands

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.

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

External gas pipe work appeared in good condition.

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

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

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.

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?

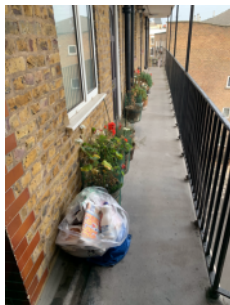
Yes

Comments

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

A concrete step between the 2nd and 3rd floor has spalled and may present a trip hazard for escaping persons and should be repaired.



Dimensions

Are travel distances reasonable?

Yes

Is there sufficient exit capacity?

Yes

Fire Doors

Doors which are expected to be fire resisting:

- Flats

Flat Doors

- FD20 (notional)

Are fire doors to a suitable standard?

No

Is there suitable provision of self-closing devices?

No

Is there suitable provision of hold-open devices?

N/A

Are doors kept locked where appropriate?

Yes

Comments

Flats have either direct access, or are approached via common balconies.

Entrance doors to flats which have direct external access, and flats which are at the far end of balconies (and therefore would not need to be passed by escaping occupants of other flats in the event of a fire) are not required to be fire resisting. The remainder (the entrance doors to flats 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18 and 19) should afford at least an FD30SC standard of fire resistance.

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

Access was gained into flats 3 and 19 which have entrance doors fitted which would probably afford a FD30 (notional) standard, and the internal doors which open onto the entrance hallways are not fire resisting. There was no self closing device fitted to these doors. (NB: The entrance door to flat 3 is not required to be fire resisting as it has direct external access on the ground floor, however, as access was possible into this flat it was inspected as it may be reasonable to assume it is of a similar standard to those fitted in the rest of the building) .

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 that which was 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 and effective door closing action of these doors however could not be assessed and this should be confirmed to ensure all doors afford at least an FD30 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.

In general, the common escape routes from individual flats (common balcony approach), satisfy the recommendations of Clause 7.3 and Diagram 5(b) of British Standard 9991 (2015), with the exception of the recommended fire resisting standard of fire resisting flat entrance doors (FEDs).

Clause 7.3 recommends FEDs provide an FD30SC standard of fire resistance. However, it is noted that this building was constructed before this British Standard was produced and therefore unreasonable to expect the building to meet all its recommendations.

LGA Publication, Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats, offers acceptable benchmarks for blocks of flats that do not meet the current design requirements for means of escape. It recognises that it will not be practicable to test existing doors to confirm their actual fire resistance.

Following visual examination of the doors provided in this building it is reasonable to assume that they are of the design and type that satisfied the standard applicable at the time of their installation, they are in sound condition and have a good fit in their frames (aside from any that are individually identified within this report) and therefore can be considered to afford and FD30 (Notional) standard of fire resistance. It should be ensured that all flat entrance doors are provided with a positive action self closing device to afford at least an FD30SC (notional) standard of fire resistance.

Whilst it is acknowledge that the FEDs may provide an acceptable notional standard of fire resistance, given the age of FEDs provided, it is recommended to consider upgrading all FEDs to those meeting current standards, should any major refurbishment work be planned for the building in the future.

VERSION 3:

It was noted that door fitters were on site at the time of this inspection, and were beginning a programme of replacing all flat entrance doors in this building. The new door sets being fitted were inspected and it is considered that these will afford the required FD30SC standard of fire resistance.



Fire rated hinges on the new door sets being installed



BWF Fire door identification plugs on the new door sets being installed



BMTrada QMARK certification label on NEW door frames being installed

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

There are fanlights in flat entrance doors, and windows on common balconies. All of which are located above 1.1m from the

balcony deck and therefore are not required to be fire resisting glazing.

Access could not be gained into the intake cupboard at the base of the stairs, however a new fire door has been fitted. There is a grill above this door which is broken and it is apparent that the cupboard is not fire stopped at this point. This should be properly fire stopped and it should be confirmed that all pipe and cable penetrations in this location are also properly fire stopped.

There is a vent (probably from a tumble drier) at low level outside flat 9. This is a penetration onto the common balcony below 1.1 m and therefore should have an intumescent grill fitted.



Fanlights and window glazing located above 1.1m



All glazing on common balconies above 1.1m

Dampers, Ducts & Chutes

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

Minor Defects

Comments

There is a rubbish chute provided. Some of the hatches are rusted and require replacement or repair to ensure they afford a 30 minute standard of fire resistance.

Smoke Ventilation

Areas where smoke ventilation is expected:

- Staircases

Staircases

- Permanently Open

Is smoke ventilation reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Detection & Warning

Is an electrical fire alarm system expected?

No

Why not?

Purpose-built flats

Is a fire detection and/or alarm system provided?

No

Control Equipment

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?

N/A

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

N/A

Comments

As part of this Fire Risk Assessment access was gained into a sample flat to assess the provision and suitability of fire alarms.

Access was gained into flats 3 and 18 which have a fire alarm provided to BS5839-6 LD3 standard.

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.

VERSION 3:

Access was gained into flats 6 and 1 which have a fire alarm provided to BS5839-6 LD3 standard.

Audibility

Are there adequate means of alerting all relevant persons?

N/A

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.



Maintained EL 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?

No

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?

Yes

Are there suitable notices for fire extinguishers?

N/A

Is there suitable zone information for the fire alarm system?

N/A

Fire Safety Management

Procedures & Arrangements

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

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 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	Fire Doors
Action Required	Confirm that the following doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard: Flats 6 and 15 VERSION 3: Door fitters are on site, and are replacing all flat entrance doors in this building with new fire resisting door sets, including doorframes. The door blanks, glazing, and frames of the doors being installed were inspected and were noted to all be of at least a 30 min fire resisting standard. 07/09/2023 It was not possible to gain access to the flats listed above to confirm if these flat front doors are to an FD30 self closing standard, so this task remains outstanding.
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	06 January 2021

Task 2

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Ease of Use
Action Required	Although the amount of items currently in escape routes is not unreasonable, routes should be monitored to ensure that a build-up of items does not impede escape. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding. 23/08/24 This task remains outstanding.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	06 January 2022



Task 3

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Construction and Glazing
Action Required	There is a vent (probably from a tumble drier) at low level outside flat 9. This is a penetration onto the common balcony below 1.1 m and therefore should have an intumescent grill fitted. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding. 23/08/24 This task remains outstanding.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	06 January 2022



Task 4

Source Version	5
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Adjust the self-closing device on the following doors: Flat 7 Flat 10 Flat 11 Flat 18 Flat 19
Priority	High
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	21 November 2024



Risk Score

Risk Score	Tolerable Risk
Next Assessment Due	31 August 2025

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.