Fire Risk Assessment

Victor Cazalet House

Version 4

7 September 2023

Review Date: 7 September 2024

Score: Tolerable Risk

Assessor: Andy Harris

Contents

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 flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard: Entrance doors to flats 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 18 07/09/2023 Following an inspection of 3 flat front doors it was found that 1 door did not have a self closing device fitted, it is recommended a full survey be carried out to confirm which flat front doors are missing these devices, this task remains identified.	High	Identified		
2	Fire Prevention	Smoking	No Smoking signage should be provided in the communal areas. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding.	Low	Identified		
3	Fire Prevention	Arson	Lock bin stores to prevent unauthorised access. 07/09/2023 This task is still outstanding.	Low	Identified		

4	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Fire Doors	Install a self-closing device on the following doors: Flat 17 07/09/2023 It was not possible to gain access to this property so this task remains outstanding.	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@qfsmltd.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.

As expected, there is no common fire detection and alarm system, which supports the Stay Put strategy appropriate for the building.

Based on those sampled, it is reasonably assumed that all flats are provided with a BS 5839 Part 6 fire alarm system comprising of a mains powered (with integral battery backup) smoke alarm in the hallway, meeting an LD3 installation standard. This meets the minimum expectation for a flat in a purpose built, general needs, block of flats.

Based on the sample of flat entrance doors sampled, it is reasonable to assume that flat entrance doors fitted are to an FD20 (notional) standard, with no self closing devices fitted. It is detailed within this report those doors which should be replaced to ensure they afford at least an FD30SC standard of fire resistance.

These doors that were assessed and those assessed in other buildings on the St Mary's Path estate have no certification labels or plugs visible and therefore it is not possible to definitively confirm their standard of fire resistance. From an informed visual inspection only, it is unlikely that these doors would meet the required 30 minutes standard of fire resistance. Those assessed did not have working self closing devices installed. Approved Document B requires flat entrance doors with a common balcony approach which need to be passed by escaping occupants of other flats to afford at least an FD30SC standard of fire resistance. It is strongly recommended that in the first instance self closing devices are provided on the entrance doors to each flat which are essential in supporting a stay-put policy. It should then be considered to have a detailed examination of a sample of doors under test conditions to ensure they afford the required 30 minutes of fire resistance, and these doors to be replaced if they do not.

There were some obstructions/combustibles located on common balconies which should be removed and all common escape routes should be kept sterile as such.

There is a refuse chute provided, and the access hatches were found to be in a state of ill-repair and should be repaired or replaced to ensure they afford a 30 minutes standard of fire resistance.

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 for the most part, due to the lack of self closing devices on flat entrance doors (where required), and the standard of flat entrance doors which would not meet the required FD30SC standard of fire resistance.

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.

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, or the provision and standard of fire alarms within flats 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.

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.

It was noted that there remains a number of tasks outstanding from the previous FRA which detail recommended remedial work required to ensure the safety of the building and that it is compliant with relative fire safety regulations and guidance. It is imperative that such remedial work is carried out within the recommended time frames given.

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

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 tolerable risk.

VERSION 3:
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 was noted that the majority of tasks generated in previous fire risk assessments have been completed.

There were a number of flat entrance doors which were identified in the previous fire risk assessment as requiring replacement. It was noted that these have been replaced with new flat entrance doors. It is understood from residents that they have been informed that all flat entrance doors will soon be replaced.

Common balconies were found to be clear of combustibles and obstructions. The electrical cupboard was found to be clear of combustibles. It was not possible to access the roof as the door accessing the roof space is fitted with a non-standard key.

Areas around the immediate footprint of the building were found to be clear of combustibles.

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 07/09/2023 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	1-19 Victor Cazalet 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

Use	Purpose-built, self-contained flats
Number of floors - ground and above	5
Number of floors - below ground	0
Number of flats	18

Number of stair cores	1
Approach to flats	• Via balconies / decks • Direct external access
Approximate period of construction	1920-1940
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 – 2 are accessed externally at ground floor level, the reaming flats are accessed via the open balconies. Flats 4 – 7 are located at first floor, 8 – 11 at second floor, 12 - 15 at third floor and flats 16 – 19 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 walls.

Original brick/mortar walls

Private balconies

External wall details

Original brick/mortar walls with no external wall systems evident within the scope of this FRA.

Are there any private balconies?	Yes

Private balcony details

Concrete deck to balconies, probably a continuation of the main compartment floors. Brick/mortar upstands.

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?	Not Known
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

Gas pipe work in good condition and appropriately labelled. Gas meters located in bespoke external cabinets.

Gas pipe work in good condition and appropriately labelled

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?	No
Is there a reasonable absence of external fuels and ignition sources?	No

Comments

The bin store is unsecured

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.

CCTV is provided around the building

Housekeeping

Is accumulation of combustibles or waste avoided?	Yes
Are there appropriate storage facilities for combustible & hazardous materials?	N/A

Electrical cupboard clear of combustibles

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?	No

Comments

Whilst no “No Smoking" signage is provided, there was no evidence of smoking taking place in the common parts of the building. However, “No Smoking” signage should be provided in common parts to enforce the no smoking policy in place.

Dangerous Substances

Are dangerous substances present, or liable to be present?	No

Lightning

Is a lightning protection system installed?	No

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?	No
Are there reasonable measures for the evacuation of disabled people?	Yes

Comments

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.

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	• FD30
Flat Doors	• FD20 (notional)
Are fire doors to a suitable standard?	Minor Defects
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 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17 and 18) should afford at least an FD30SC standard of fire resistance.

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 17 which has an entrance door fitted which would probably afford a FD20 (notional) standard, and the internal doors which open onto the entrance hallway are not fire resisting. There was no self closing device fitted to this door.

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.

There is damage to the doors to flats 8 and 12 which, although a temporary repair has been made, would undoubtedly affect their fire resistance. However, these doors are located at the end of their respective balconies and therefore are not required to be fire resisting, although it is always good practice to ensure all flat entrance doors are in a good state of repair.

The flat entrance doors assessed in this building and those assessed in other buildings on the St Mary's Path estate have no certification labels or plugs visible and therefore it is not possible to definitively confirm their standard of fire resistance. From an informed visual inspection only, it is unlikely that these doors would meet the required 30 minutes standard of fire resistance. Those assessed did not have working self closing devices installed. Approved Document B requires flat entrance doors with a common balcony approach which need to be passed by escaping occupants of other flats to afford at least an FD30SC standard of fire resistance. It is strongly recommended that in the first instance self closing devices are provided on the entrance doors to each flat which are essential in supporting a stay-put policy. It should then be considered to have a detailed examination of a sample of doors under test conditions to ensure they afford the required 30 minutes of fire resistance, and these doors to be replaced if they do not.

VERSION 2:
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
As part of this Fire Risk Assessment, access was gained into a sample flat to assess the suitability of flat entrance doors

Access was gained into flat 17 which has an entrance door fitted to FD30 SC standard, however, there is no self closing device fitted. This door would need to be passed by the occupants of flat 16 in the event of a fire and is therefore required to be fire resisting, with a working self closing device.

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:	• Flats
Flats Glazing	• Georgian wired
Is glazing reasonable and free from any obvious defects?	Yes

Comments

Vision panels in flat entrance doors are Georgian wired.

Fanlights and glazing to flat windows are above 1.1m and therefore are not required to be fire resisting.

Dampers, Ducts & Chutes

Are there suitable measures to restrict fire spread via ducts and concealed spaces?	No

Comments

There is a rubbish chute provided serving all floors, however, it is in a state of ill repair. The hatch on the 4th floor is rusted and does not close completely. Other hatches are cracked and loose from the brickwork. These should be serviced and repaired accordingly.

Example of rubbish chute hatch in need of repair.

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

Control Equipment

Is an electrical fire alarm system expected?	No
Why not?	Purpose-built flats
Is a fire detection and/or alarm system provided?	No
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

Although outside of the scope of the FSO, access was gained into a sample flat to assess the provision and suitability of fire alarms.

Access was gained into flat 17 which has 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 flat 7 which has 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?	Yes
Types of facility	• Fire fighting lift
Is provision of fire service facilities reasonable?	Yes

Comments

The firefighting lift control was not tested during this inspection, however, ISHA and the Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed all testing and maintenance of fire safety measures is up to date.

Firefighters switch to lift (not tested during this inspection)

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.

Maintained emergency lighting on common balconies

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?	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	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?	No

Comments

A provided Fire Action notice would give 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 flat front doors, inspection of which was not possible, are to an FD30 self-closing standard: Entrance doors to flats 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 18 07/09/2023 Following an inspection of 3 flat front doors it was found that 1 door did not have a self closing device fitted, it is recommended a full survey be carried out to confirm which flat front doors are missing these devices, this task remains identified.
Priority	High
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	8 July 2020

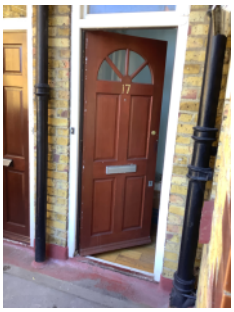
Task 2

Source Version	1
Category	Fire Prevention
Sub Category	Smoking
Action Required	No Smoking signage should be provided in the communal areas. 07/09/2023 This task remains outstanding.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	6 January 2022

Task 3

Source Version	2
Category	Fire Prevention
Sub Category	Arson
Action Required	Lock bin stores to prevent unauthorised access. 07/09/2023 This task is still outstanding.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	4 December 2021

Task 4



Source Version	3
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Fire Doors
Action Required	Install a self-closing device on the following doors: Flat 17 07/09/2023 It was not possible to gain access to this property so this task remains outstanding.
Priority	High
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	4 January 2022

Risk Score

Risk Score	Tolerable Risk
Next Assessment Due	7 September 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.