

## Flat block residents: advice to keep you and your family safe

Did you know that people who live in rented or shared accommodation are seven times more likely to have a fire? We want to provide you with some useful fire safety reminders. We also want to reassure you that we take fire safety seriously and work closely with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service.



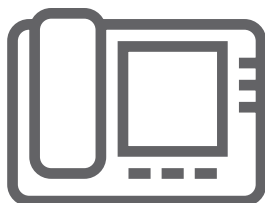
### Report problems

Our flat blocks are regularly inspected for fire safety. This involves checking for risks, checking fire alarms, identifying problems and carrying out repairs. Don't forget that if you see any faults around your building or spot a problem with a fire door (e.g. does not self-close / cracked etc), don't assume we know. Please report problems to us by calling Housing Repairs on: 08000 281870.

### Keep communal areas clear

We have responsibility for making sure that escape routes in flat blocks are kept clear of clutter. It's for your safety that we do not tolerate items being left in communal areas – this means hallways, corridors, stairs, lobbies and landings. It's important that you don't leave, store or dispose of any items – such as door mats, bikes, buggies and rubbish – in communal areas. Contact us if this is a problem in your building. We will arrange to have items removed and will talk to the residents concerned. We can take further action if it continues to happen as this could be a breach of tenancy.

Also, let us know if you or a neighbour has a problem with hoarding (being unable to throw things away). Hoarding is a fire risk and we can help tackle the problem. Contact the Tenancy Advice Team on 01202 451915.



### Fire safety for your flat block

Please ensure your flat front door closes automatically and keep it clear of any obstruction. It is there to protect you and your neighbours in the event of a fire, keep it shut at all times.

Did you know that fire safety information for your flat block can be found on the back of your flat door and in and around the communal areas of the building? This information is important, please read it. If you need any help understanding this information or have questions, please contact the Tenancy Advice Team on 01202 451915.

### What to do if there's a fire

If the fire is in your building, but not in your flat: stay in your flat with the front flat door firmly closed. This is to protect you from the fire within the building and to ensure you are safe whilst the fire service deals with the fire. Your flat is designed to offer a safe area, for at least 30 minutes, against a fire within the building. If the fire service need to evacuate you from your flat, they can do so in a controlled and safe manner.

**If the fire is in your flat:** evacuate the flat immediately ensuring all the doors are closed behind you as you leave. Do not attempt to fight the fire as this puts you at considerable risk. Follow the escape route out of the building and activate any 'break glass' call points you may pass. **Do not use the lift.** Once outside, call the fire service on 999 to report the fire.

**If you are in any of the common areas (internal stores for example) and you hear the fire alarm:** you must evacuate the building using the nearest escape exit and find a safe place. **Do not use the lift.** Once outside, call the fire service on 999 to report the fire.

**If you discover a fire in any of the common areas:** evacuate the building using the nearest escape exit and if possible, activate any 'break glass'

call points you may pass. **Do not use the lift.** Once outside, call the fire service on 999 to report the fire.

Warn others not to enter the building until it is safe. If you can, wait outside the building for the fire service to arrive and give them as much information as possible, such as the location of the fire, the floor level of the affected flat etc.

## Remember

- Know the fire safety information for your flat block
- Keep external and internal fire doors closed and never wedge these open
- Never tamper with fire doors and report any problems to us
- Do not store items in communal areas
- Think about where you park to ensure vehicles don't block access for fire rescue vehicles.



## Ways to help you stay safe

Your home is fitted with a smoke alarm. Never remove your smoke alarm's batteries and leave them out. It is your responsibility to regularly check that your smoke alarm is working. If there is a fault with your smoke alarm, report it to Housing Repairs on: 08000 281870.

Have a bedtime routine and check that:

- sockets, appliances, cookers and heaters are turned off
- candles and cigarettes have been safely put out
- doors are closed (to help prevent the spread of fire and smoke)
- you and family members know where the keys are located.



## Common dangers

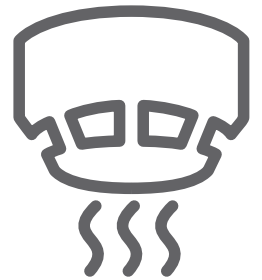
Most fires are preventable. People often put themselves and family members at risk without realising. Some of the common dangers include:

- cooking – never leave cooking unattended, do not cook if you are under the influence of alcohol
- smoking – never dispose of cigarettes in waste paper baskets, put your cigarettes out in water
- sockets – do not put too many plugs into a socket as this can overload the socket and cause a fire
- candles – put candles in a holder and keep them away from things that can burn such as curtains and paper
- vapes / phone chargers – be careful when charging these devices as they draw extra current and are a fire risk.

As part of your tenancy agreement, you should not make any home alterations without getting our permission. One of the reasons for this is to ensure changes do not compromise fire safety. If you want to make alterations to your home, contact us for advice. Contact the Tenancy Advice Team on 01202 451915.

## Safe and well visits

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service offer residents free 'safe and well' visits. They will visit you in your home and offer advice to make you and your family safer. The appointment normally lasts around one hour and covers using electricity safely, cooking safely, what to do if there is a fire and keeping children safe.



To request a free safe and well visit, telephone

**0800 038 2323**

Visit their website for lots of useful fire safety advice

**[www.dwfire.org.uk](http://www.dwfire.org.uk)**

## Remember

- Report any faults to us
- Always book your annual Gas Safety check when you receive a letter from us
- Check your smoke alarm is working and give us access to do your annual smoke detector test.

## Housing & Communities – how to contact us

Repairs Desk: **08000 281870** | [housing.repairs@bournemouth.gov.uk](mailto:housing.repairs@bournemouth.gov.uk)

Tenancy Advice Team: **01202 451 915** | [housing.landlord@bournemouth.gov.uk](mailto:housing.landlord@bournemouth.gov.uk)

