



**Wigan**<sup>♥</sup>  
**Council**



# High Rise Building Safety Guidance

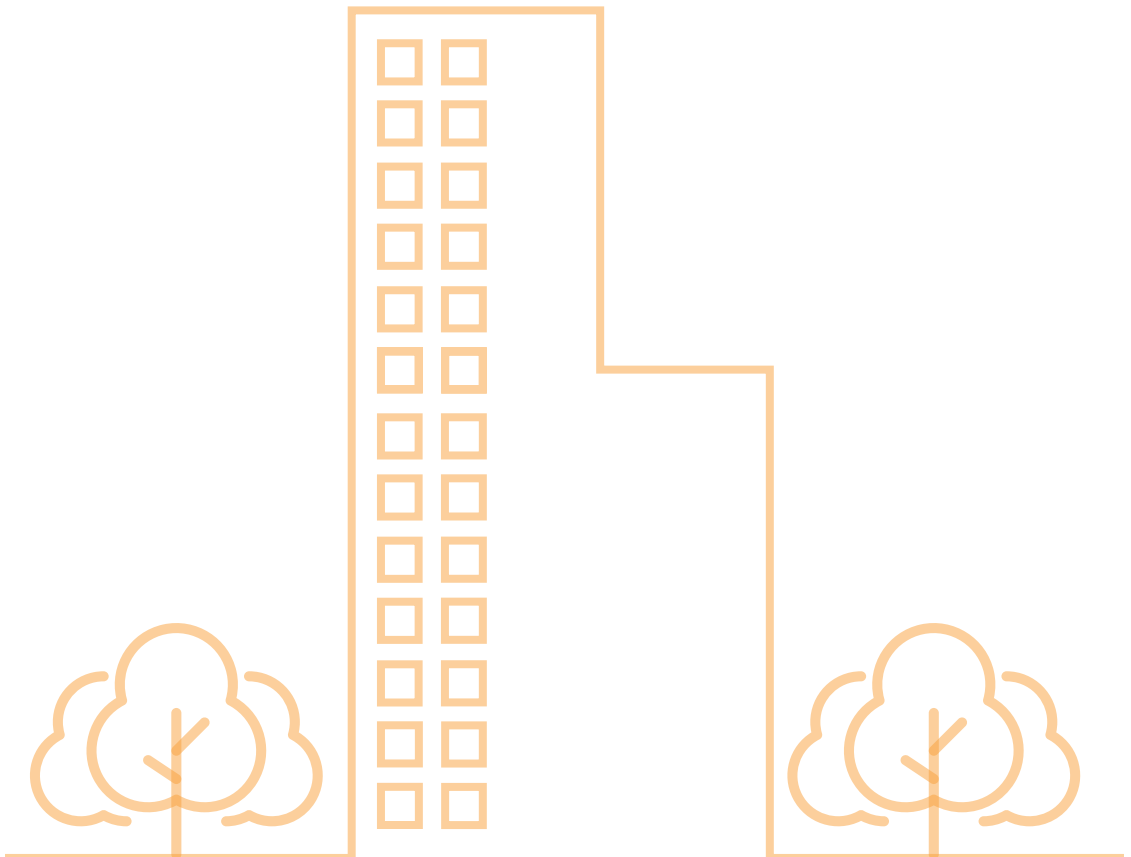
How to keep safe in your home





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## High Rise and Communal Living Safety

Living in a high rise block or communal building, doesn't mean you are any more at risk from fire, but it does mean you need to consider your fire safety and the impact a fire in your home could have on yourself and other residents.

It's important to understand what to do in the event of a fire, whether it's in your flat or somewhere else in the building.

### Did you know?

That most high rise flats are built to delay the spread of fire for up to an hour. Your building has been designed and built with fire safety in mind.

### Lift Access:

Never use the lift when evacuating the building. The fire may cause a power failure, trapping you inside.

### Emergency Access:

Never block emergency access to your building. The fire service needs to get as close as possible to the entrance.

### Fire Doors:

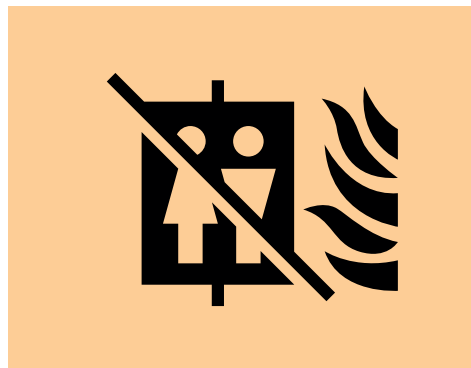
Your flat entrance and communal doors would prevent the spread of fire for a minimum of 1 hour. Remember to always close fire doors and never prop fire doors open.

Do not make any alterations to fire doors, including adding additional locks, spy holes etc.

### Firefighting Equipment:

Dry or wet riser pipes run internally through the high rise block and are usually painted red. The pipes provide water to higher floors to tackle fires. It is important that any damage to this equipment is reported as soon as you see it.

If you notice any alterations, damage, or gaps around the door frame please report this to the contact centre 01942 489005.



## How to Stay Safe in the Event of a Fire/ How to Report a Fire

The evacuation strategy for your building is 'Stay Safe'. You may also hear this called a Stay Put policy. This means that if there is a fire in your flat you should leave the flat and the building. If there is a fire somewhere else in the building, you can remain in your flat and do not need to leave the building unless told to do so.

If the fire is in your flat, then leave immediately and do not stop to collect personal belongings and ensure your front door is closed securely behind you. Do not return until told to do so. If you have a mobile phone to hand, take this with you to contact the emergency services. When you are safe dial 999 and ask for the fire service. Do not try to put the fire out yourself, you could get injured – raise the alert!

If the fire is not in your flat, stay inside and ensure your front door is fully closed. Your building has a Stay Put policy and you should stay in your flat unless advised by the fire service to evacuate. Dial 999 and report the fire to emergency services.

If you would like to discuss any part of your evacuation policy or anything relating to building safety, please contact your accountable person or send an e-mail to:

**Building.Safety@wigan.gov.uk**

We will be happy to answer any questions or visit you in your home.



**Be prepared:**

- Keep all exits in communal corridors and in your home clear. This may be your only route to escape.
- Keep doors and windows closed and keys accessible.
- Prepare a grab bag that you can take if you need to be evacuated – Think about prescriptions, documents such as your driving licence and passport, spare keys, a mobile phone, charger and a torch.
- Know how to isolate your flats electric and water supply.
- Get to know your neighbours. Are they young, elderly, or vulnerable? They may need assistance in an emergency.

## Evacuating in an Emergency

Your safety is important to us, we want to understand what support you may require in the event of an emergency.

If requested to evacuate by Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service (GMFRS), the lifts will not be working, this means you would need to leave the building using the stairs.

If you feel you have any vulnerabilities that may affect your ability to evacuate independently, please contact us on 01942 489005 to provide us with any information.



## Voice Sounders/Detectors

In nearly all circumstances you will not be aware of a possible fire or emergency in other parts of your building. This is because you operate on a **Stay Put** policy. Consequently, there are no fire alarm sounders in the communal areas or in your flat. However, there is a voice speaker in your flat where the Fire Service can tell you by announcement or automatic message that they wish you to evacuate the building. This is only for a building emergency occurrence and can only be operated by the Fire Service.

In your flat, there are detectors with sounders that will warn you of a fire, but they don't transmit signals beyond your flat.

Consequently, if you do have a fire in your flat follow the procedure for **“Reporting a Fire”**.

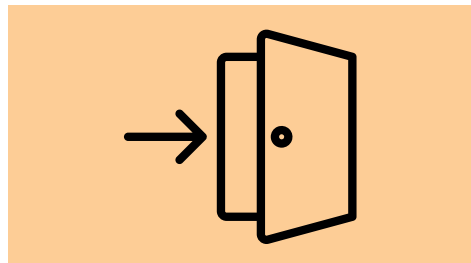
## Testing

We have a legal responsibility to carry out fire safety tests/inspections within your property. These need to be carried out on an annual basis. Our competent and approved contractors will contact you for a convenient time to visit your home to inspect your:

- smoke detectors
- voice evacuation speaker
- flat entrance door to ensure it closes and latches with the door closes

The total time of the testing is less than 30 minutes.

This is a legal requirement, and we ask for your cooperation in helping us to keep you safe.



## Advice on E-Bikes, Chargers, and Balcony Safety

### E-Bikes add illustration

We are starting to see a number of serious fires caused by e-bikes which are mainly down to DIY charger kits. There have been a number of e-bike fires in England. This has resulted in some injuries and considerable damage to properties.



Never leave your e-bike on charge in the hallway of your home. It's your only way out of the flat and any fire will trap you in the flat.

Never use DIY conversion kits to make your bike an e-bike. Ensure you buy a purpose-built e-bike. This could save your life.

Visit the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue website for more information:  
[www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/fire-safety/e-bikes-and-e-scooters](http://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/fire-safety/e-bikes-and-e-scooters)

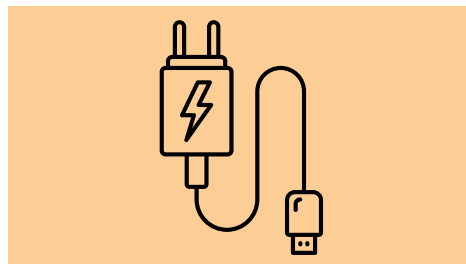
### Electrical Goods add illustration

Always buy electrical products from reputable retailers and manufacturers - fake, counterfeit and substandard products are a fire risk. Electrical appliances should always have a British or European safety mark.



When charging electrical goods, follow the manufacturer's instructions and look for the CE mark that indicates chargers comply with European safety standards.

Never charge phones, tablets or any electrical device on your bed, under a pillow or anywhere the device might overheat. Avoid charging devices unattended or overnight.



Visit [www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk) for more electrical safety information.

### Vapes

Only use the charger that came with the vape. Never charge the vape with a phone, tablet or other charger.

Never charge the vape overnight or leave it charging anywhere without regularly checking on it.

Unplug the vape once it's fully charged. Don't leave it charging for an extended period.

Charge the vape on a clean, flat surface, away from anything that could easily catch fire, and somewhere you can clearly see it—not on a sofa or pillow where it is more prone to overheat or get switched on accidentally.

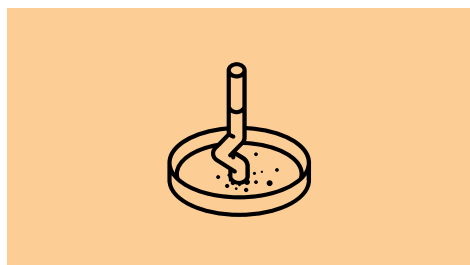
Only buy vape equipment and chargers new, from reputable sellers. Second hand or counterfeit equipment may be dangerous.



### Balcony Safety

If a fire starts on a balcony, the risk is higher. The fire is exposed to the open air and can be affected by strong winds. This can lead to unpredictable fire behaviour and the potential spread of fire from one balcony to another, compromising the safety of the entire building.

- Never use barbecues under any circumstances.
- Never use chimineas, fire pits or any other equipment which involves the use of open fire.
- Never store flammable materials like gas on your balcony.
- Reduce clutter and try and keep items on the balcony to a minimum.
- If you smoke, make sure you stub cigarettes out properly in an ashtray and never flick them off your balcony.





### Communal Areas

It is important to:

- Keep all landings, corridors and doorways clear of obstructions, including rubbish.
- Never wedge communal doors open.
- Never keep things in your home or communal areas that burn easily. This includes bottled gas, paraffin heaters or liquid fuel.



**This is a communal area.  
Everyone is responsible for  
keeping this area tidy. Please  
tidy up after yourself.**

## Access your Building Safety Information

Your building has a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) which helps identify potential risks and improve fire safety measures to protect people. Residents have the right to access the Fire Risk Assessment for their building.

You can access a copy by:

- E-mailing [Building.Safety@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:Building.Safety@wigan.gov.uk)
- Contacting your building's responsible person.
- Contacting the accountable person.

Some Fire Risk Assessments carry photographs of the building and specific flats, this part of the assessment will not be released on an enquiry for the FRA as this breaches GDPR regulations.





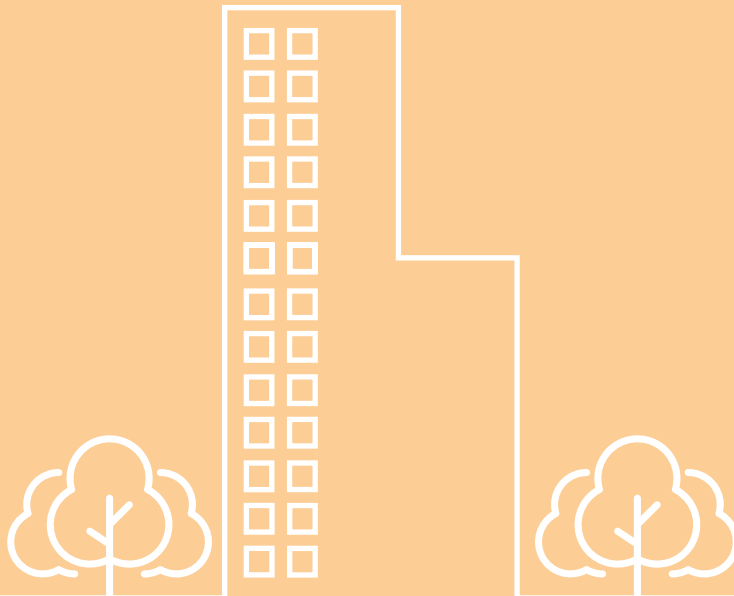
## Information on your Accountable Person for Building Safety


The Accountable Person for your building is the Building Safety Manager at Wigan Council. To contact them email: **Building.Safety@wigan.gov.uk**, stating your mail is for the attention of Building Safety Manager.

In the event of a fire or emergency please dial **999**.

To report important matters that are not emergencies please contact **01942 489005** and request the information is passed to the building safety manager.

All general enquiries for building safety should be directed to **Building.Safety@wigan.gov.uk**.





High Rise Building Safety Guidance Booklet Version 2 (July 2024)