

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
REVIEW OF FIRE SAFETY 2017/18
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Islington Council should follow all relevant recommendations for local authorities and social landlords arising from the Grenfell Tower inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, and any fire safety guidance issued by the Local Government Association.
2. Following the conclusion of the Grenfell Tower inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, a report should be submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee detailing what actions the council will be taking in response to the recommendations.
3. The Housing Scrutiny Committee notes the London Fire Brigade's continued support of the 'Stay Put' policy. Islington Council should clearly communicate the London Fire Brigade's advice to tenants and leaseholders, and promote understanding of when residents should 'Stay Put' and when they should evacuate. Guidance on this should be available in a range of languages and should be displayed in prominent areas.
4. The council should maintain the dedicated email address for residents to report fire safety concerns to the council. This should be displayed in prominent locations and promoted regularly. This information should also be provided to new tenants in a welcome pack.
5. Islington Council should work with vulnerable and disabled tenants and leaseholders to co-produce personalised emergency evacuation plans. These must be realistic and achievable. Any remedial works or adaptations that are required to facilitate safe evacuation should be carried out as soon as possible.
6. Islington Council should encourage Partners for Improvement in Islington, TMOs and Housing Associations operating in the area to co-produce personalised emergency evacuation plans for their disabled and vulnerable residents, and carry out remedial works or adaptations as necessary.
7. Islington Council should maintain an up-to-date list of vulnerable council tenants and leaseholders who may need assistance to evacuate and make this available to the London Fire Brigade and Emergency Planning service. This should detail their flat number and floor, and the assistance they require. This information should be kept in a secure information box at the premises.
8. Islington Council should encourage Partners for Improvement in Islington, TMOs and Housing Associations operating in the area to make information available to the London Fire Brigade and Emergency Planning service on the location and assistance needs of vulnerable residents.

9. Islington Council and the London Fire Brigade should explore the feasibility of developing a secure electronic solution to accessing the location and assistance needs of disabled and vulnerable residents in an evacuation.
10. Islington Council should consider retrofitting sprinkler systems in all high rise housing blocks. The council should review the feasibility of installing sprinklers, the anticipated cost of the works, and model the financial impact of the works on other aspects of the housing service.
11. Islington Council should make representations to the government that the cost of retrofitting sprinkler systems and carrying out any necessary fire safety works in local authority housing should be met by central government, given that no additional funds have been allocated to date.
12. The Housing Scrutiny Committee supports the zero tolerance approach to keeping items in communal areas adopted by Islington Council and Partners for Improvement in Islington. The Committee would support more targeted communications being issued to residents where problems persist.
13. Islington Council should consider if a suitably qualified and experienced fire engineer is needed to supplement the risk assessment work carried out by the council's in-house fire safety officers. This may provide additional reassurance that fire risks are being managed effectively.
14. The council should consider consulting a suitably qualified and experienced fire engineer at the design stage of new build projects. This would help to ensure that properties are designed to the highest possible safety standards.
15. Given that hoarding can be a fire hazard, the council should further promote the services available to help hoarders, and consider installing mobile sprinkler systems in the homes of vulnerable people who are known to hoard.
16. Housing Services should work further with the Season Health Intervention Network (SHINE) to target interventions at vulnerable residents who are known to light their homes through candles rather than electricity.
17. The council should routinely monitor if communal area fire doors and front entrance fire doors are working correctly.
18. To allow the fire safety features of properties to be easily monitored, the housing asset management plan should be revised to detail the fire safety features of components.
19. Dry risers in the council's housing blocks should be checked for damage regularly. Staff on estates should be encouraged to report any visible damage or vandalism which would affect their functioning.
20. Housing services should maintain a register of fires in council housing. It is suggested that this register is backdated for ten years. Recording the cause, extent, and other details of fires may help to inform the council's fire prevention work.