

Fire safety: Our responsibilities



Shian
Housing
Association
Ltd

Like you, here at Shian, we were shocked and dismayed by the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.

We want to reassure you that we take your health and safety very seriously. We work hard to meet Government fire standards and we regularly review our fire safety arrangements.

Be assured:

- We follow all fire regulations and meet the requirements of health and safety law.
- We follow the recommendations of experts including London Fire Brigade.
- Before the Grenfell Tower fire, we were already carrying out fire risk assessments at all our properties. In the past, we did these checks ourselves, but we have now commissioned an external fire risk assessor.
- Since the fire, we have responded to urgent Government requests for information about our properties and we have complied with all their requirements.

We are responsible for making sure:

- stairs, hallways, steps and pathways are free of slipping and tripping hazards and are in good repair
- tenant belongings are not left in communal areas – they can obstruct access and constitute a hazard
- locks and door entry systems work properly
- refuse areas are clean and tidy, and
- automatic fire detection systems work properly
- common areas are well lit.

Fire safety: Your responsibilities

Communal areas **MUST** be clear of personal items

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, we now operate a **zero tolerance policy** towards items left in communal areas.

London Fire Brigade warn that leaving items in corridors, stairways and entrances is a big safety risk.

This is because they can:

- cause a fire
- make a fire more serious or spread more quickly
- get in the way of people trying to escape from a fire, and
- make it harder for fire crews.

In 2013-14, more than 500 fires started in communal areas.

Our **zero tolerance policy** means

you must immediately remove any furniture, bikes, buggies, laundry, doormats, plant pots or other items. If you don't, we will remove them, hold them for up to 14 days, then dispose of them. We will pass on any costs for storage.

From now on, we will also lock all utility meter cupboards.

Please do not leave rubbish outside your door either – take it straight down to the communal bin store.

We have been advised to issue an important new fire safety rule: **You must not keep barbecues or other**



combustible materials on any balcony.

We are also required to tell you to ensure that you have smoke alarms in your flat and that they are working properly.

Fire safety tips from London Fire Brigade

Keep your home safe

- Fit good quality smoke alarms and check them at least monthly.
- A heat alarm in the kitchen will detect a fire, without being set off by normal cooking.
- If you must, smoke outside and put out cigarettes carefully. Never smoke in bed.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Don't leave lit candles unattended.
- Don't sit too close to a fire.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Don't cook when you're over-tired or if you've been drinking alcohol.
- Never leave pans unattended.
- If a pan catches fire, turn off the heat if you can. Don't throw water onto it – you might accidentally create a fireball.
- Check everything is safe before you go to bed. Close doors, switch off electrical items that don't need to be on at night.
- Avoid charging phones overnight.
- **The source of the fire at Grenfell Tower may have been a faulty fridge. Before buying, make sure secondhand electrical items have been safety checked. Replace or repair appliances as soon as they are faulty.**

Be prepared

- Make an escape plan and have your family practise it.
- Keep door and window keys to hand.

In a fire

- If your own home is affected by smoke or fire, don't try to put it out. Get out and close the door if you can. Call 999.
- If you can't get out, go to the safest room and use towels to block any gaps.
- If the fire is elsewhere and you live in a block, you are usually safer staying put and calling 999 for advice.
- But if you are in a communal area when a fire starts, get out of the building straight away.
- Never use the lift in a fire.



No smoking in communal areas

Smoking in communal areas is against the law. So is removing 'No smoking' notices.

Please stop smoking in communal areas and please stop throwing cigarette butts out of windows too.

We regularly clear up cigarette butts in these areas. It is unpleasant for your neighbours, but it is also **dangerous**.

