

Council Housing Management Service
Fire Safety Information
**for tenants living in homes with
an evacuation strategy**

It's important to us that you and your community are safe. We do this with fire prevention, protection and response activities.

We're working closely with local fire services with your safety in mind. In line with current regulations, we will be sharing information with you to raise awareness of fire safety and how to stay safe in you home, plus the support that is available to you.



This information sheet contains important information about fire safety including:

- What to do if you have a fire or become aware of a fire
- Fire safety advice in your home
- Fire doors and why they are important
- What you can do to help keep your home safe



For your own safety, it is important to understand what to do in the event of a fire, whether it's in your home or somewhere else in the building.



Your building and home has an evacuation strategy in place

This means that if there is a fire somewhere else in the building, you must evacuate even if your home does not seem to be affected.

Failure to evacuate the building upon hearing the fire alarm puts you and firefighters at serious risk in the event of a fire.

If the fire alarm sounds, you must take the following actions:

- Get everyone in your home outside to a fire assembly point
- Make sure your entrance door closes behind you
- Leave the building using the emergency exit routes and stairs provided **(DO NOT use the lift)**
- Get out, stay out and call **999**

What to do when you are outside the building

You should move away from the building and go to the assembly point whilst waiting for firefighters to arrive. Please do not leave before the firefighters arrive – it is important that they know how many people have evacuated the building and you may be asked for details about where you live. If the fire was in your home, tell them where the fire started and what is on fire.

What to do if you cannot leave your home or the building

If you hear the fire alarm and you cannot leave your home, move to a room where you think you will be safe and call 999. Keep the door to the room closed and use towels or bedding at the bottom of the door to stop any smoke getting in.

When you phone **999** you should tell the Control Operator that you cannot leave your home and the reason why – this information will be passed to firefighters.



What to do when phoning 999

- If you become aware of a fire in your home or somewhere else in the building, dial **999** into your phone and select the fire option
- Listen to the operator, try to stay calm, and answer as many questions as you can to help prepare the fire fighters
- Stay on the call until the Control Operator hangs up the phone

If you have a fire or there is smoke in your home

DO

- ✓ Alert anyone else in your apartment
- ✓ Close the door to the room where the fire is
- ✓ Get out of your home – make sure the entrance door closes behind you
- ✓ Call **999** and ask for 'fire'

DON'T

- ✗ Try and fight the fire - you could be injured
- ✗ Stop to collect belongings
- ✗ Go back into your home
- ✗ Re-enter the building until told it is safe

Fire Doors – protect you and your neighbours

Fire doors in homes are vital to protect everyone if there is a fire. In a block of apartments a lot of the doors will be fire doors – this includes your front door, doors in communal corridors, landings and on the staircases.

Fire doors are designed to stop fire and smoke spreading. They are essential for the evacuation strategy in your building.

Front doors

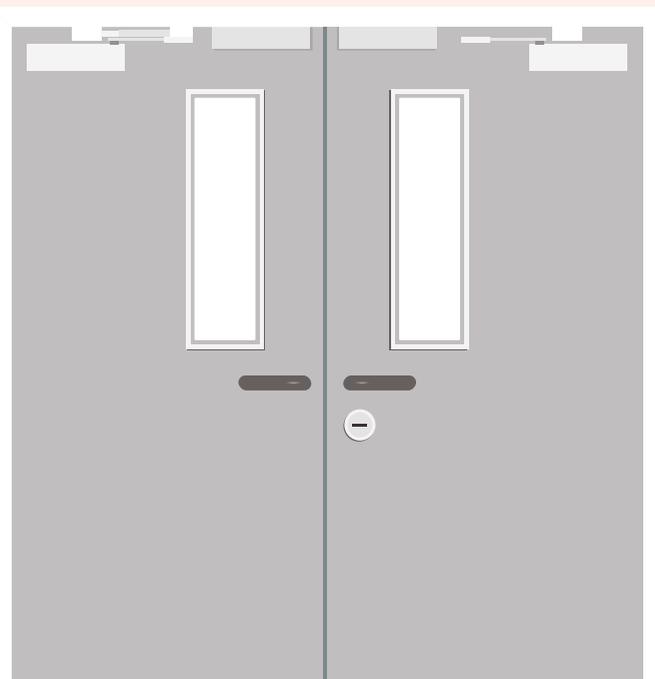
The front door to your home is a fire door and it is there to make sure that if you do have a fire, the smoke won't spread into the corridor and surrounding building. New laws require us to carry out checks on fire doors to make sure they are not damaged.

Your front door should:

- Close on its own – fire doors are fitted with self-closing devices which can be fitted to the top of the door or be fitted within the frame
- Not have big gaps between the door and the door frame

You must not:

- ✗ Change your front door without permission
- ✗ Remove or damage the self-closing device on your door
- ✗ Paint your door or any strips and seals around it
- ✗ Drill any holes in the door – for example to fit a spy hole, change the letterbox or fit a new doorbell



Fire doors in communal areas

There will be fire doors in other areas of the building, and this includes doors in communal spaces and landings, the doors into the staircases and doors which provide access to bin stalls and plant rooms.

Fire doors in communal areas will:

- Be marked as fire doors – normally a blue circle that says 'Fire door. Keep shut'
- Close behind you
- Not have big gaps between the door and the frame
- Be in good condition with minimal visible damage

You must not:

- ✗ Wedge open fire doors. If you see a fire door wedged open, please close it and if you spot damage to a fire door please report it to us as soon as possible
- ✗ Damage the door, the door frame or the self-closing device – you could be committing a crime if you do

How you can help keep your home and building safe

The best way to stay safe is by taking steps to prevent a fire happening in your home.

To protect you, your family, and your home you can take some simple steps to reduce the risk of a fire starting. Most fires in homes are caused by cooking or smoking.

How to prevent a fire

DO

- ✓ Keep tea towels and textiles away from the cooker and hob
- ✓ Keep matches, lighters and candles out of reach of children
- ✓ Unplug appliances when you're not using them, they are fully charged, or when you go to bed
- ✓ Be careful with candles and tea lights – don't put them near material that can catch fire or where they can be knocked over
- ✓ Always put cigarettes out properly in an ashtray and never smoke in bed

DON'T

- ✗ Leave cooking unattended
- ✗ Overload plug sockets or extension leads
- ✗ Leave appliances on when sleeping or when you go out – this includes washing machines, dryers and dishwashers
- ✗ Leave candles unattended



Keeping your building safe

DO

- ✓ Check before doing any work in your home that it won't affect fire safety standards of the building
- ✓ Report damage to fire doors

DON'T

- ✗ Obstruct the communal areas, halls and stairs with personal items such as prams and bikes as these will be escape routes for the building

Do you have an electric bike or mobility scooter?

Battery powered electric bikes and mobility scooters can be hazardous if stored or used incorrectly. To keep you and your neighbours safe:

- Don't store or charge e-bikes and scooters on escape routes or in communal areas where they could make it difficult to escape the building in case of a fire.
- Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.
- Check the battery regularly for signs of damage. If you think it's been damaged, replace it immediately. When a battery is damaged, it can overheat and catch fire without warning.
- Purchase from a reputable retailer. Items which don't meet British or European standards pose a fire risk.





If you are concerned about fire safety in your home, you can complete an online fire safety check by visiting your local Fire and Rescue Service website who will offer advice or arrange a home visit.

You can also get more information and advice about fire safety in your home on our website.

Visit: **cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats. If you would like information in another format or language, including British Sign Language, please email us at: **equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**

You can also telephone: **0300 123 8 123**
or textphone: **18001 0300 123 8 123**
website: **www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**



Contact us on tel: **0300 123 7724**