

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Council Housing Management Service

# Building Safety Engagement Strategy

## Joseph Groome Towers – Keeping you and your neighbours safe

At Cheshire West and Chester Council, the safety of our tenants, colleagues, contractors and visitors is our top priority. Whether you live, work in, or visit our buildings, we want everyone to feel confident that everything is well managed and maintained.

If anyone raises any safety concerns, please know they will be taken seriously and acted on. Cheshire West and Chester Council is the Principal Accountable Person for Joseph Groome Towers as defined under the Building Safety Act 2022 and we're committed to making sure our buildings meet all the latest safety standards.

Keeping the building safe is a shared responsibility.

### Safety is shared between:

- Cheshire West and Chester Council as your landlord
- Contractors who work in the building
- All tenants
- Any visitors to the block including emergency services and local authorities

As part of our commitment to consider your safety and ensure access to safety information is available about your building, The Council aims to:

- Be clear on how you can raise any building safety concerns
- Have a dedicated Building Safety team
- Encourage effective communication for those within high-rise buildings
- Develop a culture of building safety across all contractors that work in our high-rise buildings
- Listen, learn and act upon your feedback through our established Building Safety Tenant Forum group
- To ensure you speak to people who have the right knowledge and skills and are committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of building safety
- Promote responsibility of building safety in the block



Cheshire West  
and Chester

# Your Building Safety Team

We are committed to working with you to ensure you feel safe in your home. Our team work hard to ensure blocks are safe and well maintained and our team are always available and approachable should you have any queries or concerns.



**Jacqueline Goring**  
Safe Homes  
Liaison Officer  
Tel: **0788 915208**

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Email: [jacqueline.goring@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:jacqueline.goring@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



**Krystian Fouracre**  
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Manager  
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**John Powell**  
Building Safety  
Officer  
Tel: **07889 156279**

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**Hannah Martin**  
Housing Officer  
Tel: **07889 156220**

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You can find our building safety notice board on the ground floor of Joseph Groome Towers. This displays all useful contact information, ways to get in touch, our safe homes communal compliance certificates information relating to the fire risk assessment and how to join our Building Safety Forum group.

The Council's Handy Persons Team also supports in keeping Joseph Groome Towers safe by carrying out essential tasks including cleaning, managing bin collections and general maintenance of the blocks.

## Get involved

You may have seen our campaign promoting the Building Safety Forum Group, which is an opportunity for you and other tenants to come together to consult, engage, represent, challenge and nurture new ideas.

We will work closely with the forum on all aspects relating to building safety, making sure we set meeting agendas, consult and review information and feedback on anything we discuss. If you would prefer not to meet face to face, you can get involved with the meetings by email, by us contacting you or we can arrange a home visit.

# Safety responsibilities

Cheshire West and Chester Council want to work with you and encourage you to support building safety by;

- Providing key information that relates to building safety, this will include;
  - Providing our annual fire safety and fire door information
  - Keeping the building safety notice boards up to date
  - Tips for tenants to prevent and reduce incidents through our social media campaigns
  - Providing different ways for you to report a building safety concern, raise a complaint or book a repair

**When implementing building safety measures, we will consult you about:**

- Changes to the evacuation strategy of the building
- Any safety concerns that arise from the fire risk assessment
- Planned works including the reasons behind the work, a schedule, timescales, areas of the building affected by the work if it's outside of your home, the contractor carrying out the works and how we will manage the works to ensure minimal disruption
- Any major planned works to the block will include a consultation process with tenants. We will clearly outline how the consultation will be conducted and carefully consider all responses, listening and acting on your feedback

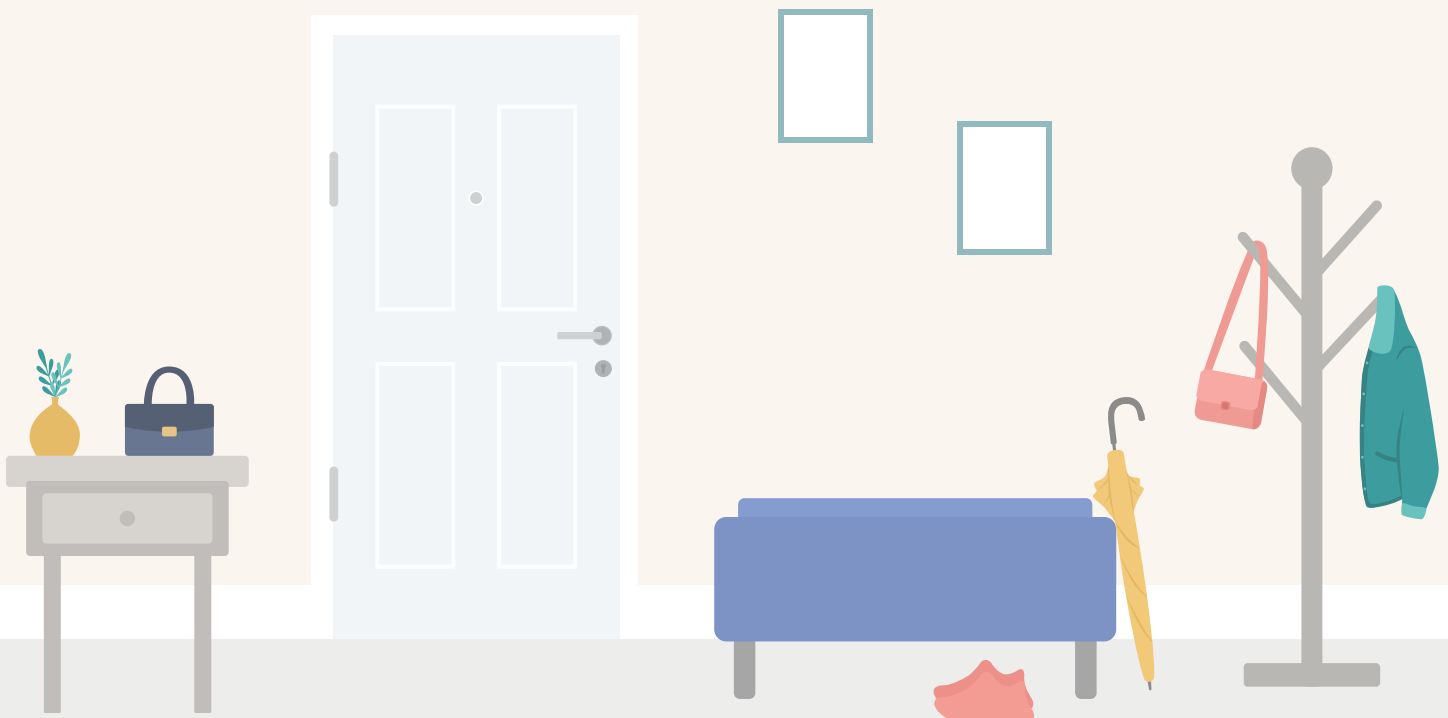
- Through our building safety tenant forum groups, you will have a say in how we consult for reviews of the building safety tenant engagement strategy and other building safety matters.

**We will engage with you through:**

- Our building safety tenants forum group and drop-in sessions
- By post, email, face to face, and through the building safety notice boards
- Ensuring clear signage are placed in the correct locations throughout your building and are visible to all tenants and visitors
- Our website and social media campaigns.

**We'll tailor our communication to your preferences and make sure it's easy to understand.**

To deliver better services to you when we speak, write or visit you, please let us know if your personal information or circumstances change. This will help us to check that our services are fair and equal. We use this to see if there are any differences in experience that we need to better understand, so that we continue to offer an inclusive service for everyone.





## What we're doing to keep you safe

- ✓ Electrical installation condition reports every 5 years
- ✓ Annual safety visits to check your front door
- ✓ Legionella checks to communal water systems
- ✓ Lift inspections and servicing
- ✓ Visual inspections and yearly servicing to communal sprinklers
- ✓ Communal fire door checks
- ✓ Emergency lighting checks
- ✓ Daily block inspections
- ✓ Fire alarm panel checks
- ✓ Dry riser checks
- ✓ Annual gas safety checks to your boiler
- ✓ Cleaning and chlorination of the water tanks

## Performance

We will regularly review this strategy to make sure it meets your needs. To do this, we will:

- Listen to and learn from your feedback, addressing any changes you might have
- Address any challenges or feedback provided by our building safety tenants forum groups
- Evaluate how we respond to building safety concerns raised by you and through our Mandatory Occurrence Reporting system
- Measure how many tenants attend forum groups, drop-in sessions and keep a record through our Key Performance Indicators. We will continue to promote different ways for you to get involved, so you can share your feedback and help us improve.

# Fire safety information

We ask that you get familiar with your block, read any letters or updates we provide in relation to building or fire safety, and that you understand the evacuation strategy for the block and what to do in the event of a fire.

This building is designed that should a fire occur, it is safe to stay in your flat. However, if your flat is affected by fire or you feel unsafe due to a fire somewhere else in the building, you will need to evacuate if it is safe to do so. We will send out annual fire safety information as a reminder on how to stay fire safe and to remind you on the importance of your flat entrance fire door.

If you have any mobility issues, medical conditions, or disabilities that may prevent you evacuating your home without assistance, it is important that you tell us by getting in touch (see 'Ways to get in touch' section).

Don't store or charge e-bikes, electric scooters and mobility scooters on escape routes or in communal areas where they could obstruct escape.

We carry out a fire risk assessment on an annual basis and a copy can be provided on request. If the fire risk assessment was to identify any major concerns that could impact your safety change the fire strategy or identify any hazards then we will ensure we make you aware.

## 1. If fire breaks out in your flat:

- Leave the room where the fire is straight away, then close the door.
- Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave.
- Do not stay behind to put the fire out.
- If there is a lift - do not use it.
- Wait outside, away from the building or if you can't use the stairs, wait by the stairwell door.
- Call the fire service - dial 999 or 111.

## 3. To call the fire service:

- Dial 999 or 111.
- When the operator answers, give your phone number and ask for fire.
- When the fire service reply, give the address where the flat is.
- Do not end the call until the fire service has repeated the address correctly.

## 2. If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building:

- The building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.
- You must also leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home, or if you are told to leave by the fire service.
- If there is a lift - do not use it.
- If you are in doubt - get out.



**Do not use the lifts**



**No smoking. It is against the law to smoke in these communal areas**

## Annual flat entrance fire door inspection

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations made it a legal requirement for us to inspect your home entrance door on an annual basis. We would appreciate your support in allowing access to complete this inspection to ensure we are keeping you, your home, and your neighbours safe.

# Your safety responsibilities

Living in a high-rise block doesn't mean you are more at risk, but it's important to be aware of how your actions can increase risks both to themselves, your family, and your neighbours.

Building safety is a shared responsibility, so to keep your block safe we need your support. Many of the responsibilities for tenants can be found under the 'Care and Conduct' section of your Tenancy Agreement.



## Fire doors

Don't damage, adjust door closers, or paint your own fire door. Keep all communal fire doors closed at all times.



## Heating

Don't use portable gas heaters. Ensure fan heaters don't overheat and are not left on overnight.



## Sprinklers

All properties are fitted with a sprinkler system. Do not tamper or paint over the sprinkler head.



## Fly-tipping

Do not dispose of large items in the bin rooms or communal areas. These are a fire hazard and tenants need to arrange collection from their home.

We have CCTV around the blocks, and will take tenancy action for fly-tipping.



## Smoking and vaping

Smoking and vaping are not allowed in any communal areas. Avoid smoking indoors, especially in bed when you're tired and make sure cigarettes are put out properly.



## In your home

Check your taps are turned off when you go out or during the night. Don't let the bath overflow. Keep the area around your boiler and gas metre clear from clutter.

Riser cupboards should not be accessed. Please keep them shut and do not store any items in them.



## Electrics

Try not to overload sockets. Ensure all electrical equipment is purchased from a reputable company and comply with UK Regulations. Look out for product recalls.



## Smoke alarms

Test your smoke alarm regularly. If your alarm is beeping because of a low battery, contact the service centre and we will replace it.



## Heat detectors

Do not cover your heat detector and if its constantly beeping, let us know and we will replace it.



## Communal areas

Communal areas need to be kept clear from clutter, including mats, decorations, bikes and mobility scooters.



## Escape routes

Keep all escape routes inside your home and in communal areas free from waste and clutter. Don't charge electric scooters or e-bikes in hallways, leave unattended or charge overnight.

## Remember

Before you carry out any large DIY tasks, please speak to your Housing Officer as you may need permission.

Don't use chip pans as these can be a potential fire hazard. Put any waste cooking oil or fats in the bin and not down the sink to prevent blockages.

**Reminder:** We ask that you keep all communal areas clear, including no doormats bikes, scooters or any household items. The Fire Service will enforce this should they visit the block.



Do you know you can arrange a visit from your local Fire Service if you require further advice or support.

# Ways to get in touch

## Raising a Building Safety concern

To ensure we maintain our safety standards, we would like you, our contractors and members of the public to let us know if they identify any potential structural or fire safety concerns in any of our high-rise buildings. You can raise your concern using the contact methods below:

Email: [building.safety@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:building.safety@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Contact tel: **0300 123 7724** or by using our online form

## Out of hours service

Our out of hours service is available when your Building Safety Officer is not available. Our out of hours contractors will attend to remove hazardous items and clean areas of the building that cannot wait until the Building Safety Officer returns. Call our Customer Contact Centre on:

Contact tel: **0300 123 7724**

## Updating your personal information or changes to your health that may impact you evacuating:

Contact your Safe Homes Liaison Officer or tel: **0300 123 7724** or by using our online form

## Other useful contact numbers

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services tel: **01606 868700**

Cheshire West and Chester Council, contact for council tax, pest control, environmental and all other related council issues tel: **0300 123 8123**

If you smell gas, please contact **National Gas**

Emergency Service on tel: **0800 111 999**

This document will be reviewed:

- At least every two years
- Following any changes to the contents of this document
- If there are changes to the building structure, layout or significant material changes
- If there are changes to any relevant legislation
- Following consultations with you through our building safety forum groups, social media campaigns and in writing.

## **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](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)**

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You can also telephone: **0300 123 8 123**  
or textphone: **18001 0300 123 8 123**  
website: **[www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)**

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