

Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy for Dickson House

October 2024



Resident safety is our main priority, which means we want you to be safe and feel safe in your home.

This Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy is a requirement of the Building Safety act and sets out what we do to ensure that residents who live in Dickson House are aware of the measures we put in place to keep them safe from fire and other structural incidents.

It also explains how to get in touch with us to raise any concerns, or to share ideas that you might have.

Our Team is committed to keeping you and your home safe and there are several people who play a role in this. Here's a list of who does what in relation to Building Safety:

Head of Property

Leads on all aspects of building safety management and compliance to ensure your home is safe. This is your Building Safety Manager.

Property Team

Delivers our property services, checking areas of compliance, supporting contractors with the maintenance of buildings, and tackling any concerns around building safety.

Housing Director

Has overall responsibility and works with the Society's Board of Directors to ensure your home is safe and compliant with regulation.

Housing Team

Delivers our tenancy management service, including identifying and supporting concerns around the safety of residents.

Living in a high-rise building doesn't mean you are any more at risk from fire, but it does mean that you need to consider your fire safety and the impact a fire in your home could have on other residents. It is important for your own safety to understand what to do in the event of a fire, whether it's in your apartment or somewhere else in the building.

This Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy is specific to Dickson House and considers all the residents who live in the building and their individual needs. It aims to help you:

- ✓ Feel safe in your home.
- ✓ Know what to do in the event of an incident or fire in the building.
- ✓ Know how to report any safety concerns in the building or your home.
- ✓ Have the relevant information that you need about your building.
- ✓ Understand Stoke on Trent Housing Society's responsibilities as your landlord and your responsibilities as a tenant or leaseholder.
- ✓ Know how you can be involved and influence decisions around the safety of the building you live in and how we respond to your feedback.
- ✓ Know how to make a complaint if you feel that we aren't listening to you or if you have concerns.

About your building and the residents who live there

Stoke on Trent Housing Society is your landlord and therefore responsible for managing the building safety of Dickson House. Here are some facts about the building and the residents who live there:



*If you have a disability that we aren't aware of please let us know so that we can see whether any measures need to be put in place for you in the event of a fire. Email us at info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or call **01782 968566**.*

Keeping you informed

To ensure your safety at Dickson House, Stoke on Trent Housing Society will share information with you about the safety of your building via:

- Letters, Leaflets, and newsletters
- Text messages and email
- Our website and Facebook page - stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk
- The communal noticeboard in the reception area

Any resident that requires communication in a certain format must let us know so that we can provide this. You can also look at our website where there is lots of helpful fire safety information (if you need a printed copy of any information please ask).

Managing Fire safety in Dickson House

Stoke on Trent Housing Society has a legal duty to manage fire safety at Dickson House by adhering to Building Safety Law:

Fire Safety Act 2021

To meet the requirements of the Fire Safety Act our Property Team carry out daily visual fire safety checks of your building, keeping a record of all inspections and raising any repairs identified. We also:

- ✓ Complete **Annual Fire Risk Assessments** to identify any hazards and precautions required in communal areas. These are carried out by an external consultant, who passes any recommendations to our Head of Property to arrange completion.
- ✓ Have an **annual inspection programme** for you **fire door** and a quarterly inspection programme for communal fire doors.

Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act was created to improve the design, construction, and management of higher risk buildings. The Act puts a legal requirement on residents that they must **not**:

- × Do anything that creates a significant risk of causing or spreading fire in your building, such as blocking communal areas which must always remain clear.
- × Damage or remove any of your building's safety measures, such as smoke detectors and fire doors.
- × Do anything that creates a significant risk to your buildings structural safety such as carrying out alterations to walls.

We will make residents aware when a Fire Risk Assessment is due to be carried out in their building so that they can feedback any concerns to us. We will also ensure that a copy of the completed Fire Risk Assessment is displayed on the noticeboard in the building.

Building Safety Features:

Fire doors are in place in the communal areas throughout the building and to the entrance to your home, each door provides 60 minutes of protection against fire and smoke when they are closed. The doors have an automatic closer installed which ensures they close properly. *If the fire door to your home is damaged or the closer isn't working, you must let us know. You must also give us access to complete an annual inspection of your fire door.*

Emergency Lighting is in place to ensure that access ways are lit in the event of loss of power in the building. This lighting is tested monthly and serviced annually.

Dry Risers help the fire service to get water up to your floor in an emergency. There is an outlet on every floor of the building. These are checked and maintained on an annual basis.

A **Secure Information Box** is stored on the ground floor of the building and contains information to assist the fire brigade should they need to attend in an emergency.

Compartmentation is important as it limits the spread of fire and smoke on the building. Your building has been designed so that each apartment has its own "compartment", which means that in the event of an emergency, fire and smoke should stay contained within the apartment where it originates. As part of the annual FRA, the compartmentation within the communal areas is inspected to ensure that it has not been compromised. We also work closely with any contractors carrying out work on your building to ensure they do not breach the compartmentation.

What to do in the event of an emergency

If there is a fire in your apartment, get out and stay out. Close all the doors behind you and only use the stairs to exit the building. Once outside, call the fire service by dialling 999, never assume that someone else has called. Do not go back into the building until the fire service tells you its safe to do so.

Dickson House has a **Stay Put Policy**. This means that it may be safer for you to stay in your apartment if there is a fire in another part of the building. If you feel unsafe at any time, then you must get out and call 999. Also, if a member of the fire service tells you to leave the building, you should do so immediately.

Should there be a major incident we will implement Stoke on Trent Housing Society's Disaster Recovery Plan and staff will be present to provide support and assistance to residents and the fire service.

Fire Action

If the fire breaks out in your home:

- Leave the room where the fire is straightaway and close the door
- Tell everyone in your home and get them to leave
- Close your front door behind you as you 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
- Call the fire service – dial 999 or 112


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


- The building is designed to contain a fire in the apartment where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home if the fire is elsewhere
- You must leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home or if you are told by the fire service to do so
- If there is a lift - do not use it
- If you are in any doubt - get out
- Call the fire service – dial 999 or 112


To call the fire service:


- Dial 999 or 112
- When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for FIRE
- When the fire service reply give the following address - Dickson House, ST1 3BA
- Do not end the call until the fire service has repeated the address correctly


DO NOT!

 Wedge fire doors open. Remove wedges if you find them.

 Leave objects on the landing that could be in the way when you try to escape

 Store gas cylinders, paraffin or other highly flammable liquids in your apartment or store

 Smoke in communal areas including landings and lifts. It is against the law to do so.

 Place candles or tea lights on or near to flammable materials

 Park or block access to the apartments. Access roads and gates are designed to allow fire appliances to get as close as possible to fight a fire

These Fire Action notices are on every floor of your building. They explain what to do in the event of a fire.

Any resident with a disability or vulnerability should have a Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessment (PCFRA) which will identify any individual risks from fire and plan accordingly.

If you have a disability or vulnerability and don't have a PCFRA in place let us know so that we can come and visit you to complete this.

Notice Boards

As well as the Fire Action notices that are on every floor there is also a noticeboard located in the reception area of the lower ground floor. Information that relates to the building and your safety will also be displayed here.

Keep an eye out for updates.

Communication and Engagement

Have your say

Stoke on Trent Housing Society will provide opportunities for you to have your say and feedback on decisions relating to the safety of your building. We will:

- Check your preference for appointments for safety checks works.
- Discuss how we can reduce any disruption when carrying out safety works to your home or the building.
- Get your thoughts and feedback on improving building safety in your building.
- Involve you in any major upgrade works to the building.
- Keep a record of responses for any consultation that we do.
- Send out surveys to residents and hold focus groups where necessary to gain resident feedback.
- Arrange drop-in sessions or complete visits to the building as part of any necessary consultation.

Listening and acting on your feedback

Resident opinions and feedback are collected in a variety of ways:

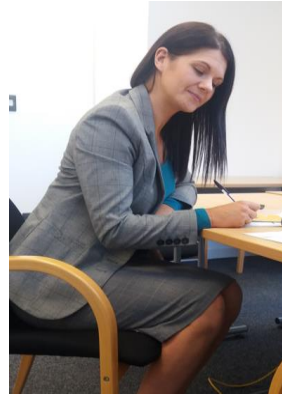
- ✓ Through the feedback that you give to us when you contact us about a service request
- ✓ Through surveys by text message, email, phone, and visits.
- ✓ Via our website, email, social media.
- ✓ During visits to your building and any meetings that we hold.
- ✓ Via our complaints process.

Where we are aware that a customer has any communication requirements these will be accommodated, for example if a resident requires communication in a different format.

You said We did

We will inform you of how your feedback has been used by providing a summary of what residents have told us and what decisions we've made because of that feedback.

This information will be included in our newsletters, on our noticeboards, website, and any relevant communication that we may send out to you.



Consultation

All residents will be informed and consulted for works required for building safety. Otherwise, we will only consult with residents if you will be directly affected by any proposed building works or changes, for example if the work only affects the 5th floor, we will only consult customers on that floor.

Sometimes it may not be possible or appropriate to consult on changes or the way we manage the building, for example if there is new legal requirement to carry out the work. In this instance we would always provide written notice.

Consulting with you during Building Safety Works

Stoke on Trent Housing Society will inform you when building safety works are planned at Dickson House and why we are doing them. The following works are examples where we will consult you.

- Where works are expected to exceed a period of one day to complete and would limit your access to parts of the building or cause a nuisance.
- Works which would change the internal layout of the building.
- Works which would change an escape route within the building.

The information provided will include the start date, working hours, a description of the works, the likely implications to you and its purpose. We will inform you using some or all of the following methods:

- Website.
- Letter.
- Email.
- On the buildings noticeboard.
- Residents invited to an open session, to provide an opportunity to ask questions.
- Text message.
- Signage, where appropriate.
- Individual meetings with tenants, on request.
- Discussion with the Building Resident Champion, if one is in place.

In all communications, we will request customers contact us to provide feedback on the proposed works and how we may mitigate disruption to residents.

When will we consult

We want residents to feel a part of the process and will begin consultation as early as possible and at least 3 weeks before any non-emergency works.

How we consider feedback

When collecting, reviewing and acting on resident's opinions, Stoke on Trent Housing Society, led by the Head of Property and the Housing Director, will follow the Code of Practice for the Remediation of Residential Buildings. This means we will consider all responses received and may request further information to finalise a decision. We will discuss feedback with other relevant people involved with the works, such as, contractors and consultants in pre-start meetings.

We will maintain a dialogue with the Building Resident Champion, and we will always aim to let residents, other relevant people and the Accountable Person, know the outcome of the consultation, in writing, within 28 days and at least one week before works start. The information will be displayed on the buildings notice board.

Our consultation methods process has been developed in accordance with the Building Safety Act 2022 Section 91.

Emergency Building Safety Works

Where works are required as an emergency, we will contact you with information and implications and why we are unable to consult residents.

Record Keeping

We will maintain a record of all feedback on Stoke on Trent Housing IT system, as evidence and for future review, this includes the digitisation of paper documents for storage. Where possible the information will be stored within use the Society's Housing Management System.

We will collect and store information in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Stoke on Trent Housing Society's privacy statement, which is available on our website.

Promoting Resident Engagement

We wish to have a strong relationship with our residents and will promote resident participation through the following.

- A minimum of two newsletters a year.
- An annual visit scheme walkabout, where residents and customers meet to discuss the condition of the scheme.
- Residents will be invited to attend the annual Fire Risk Assessment to raise any concerns with the assessor.
- Through the annual tenancy visit programme.
- A minimum of one open session for residents to meet staff members to discuss any concerns.

Stoke on Trent Housing Society will have a health and safety tenant group that includes a minimum participation of 5% of tenants who live in the building. If this is not achieved this will trigger a meeting of the Housing Director, Head of Property, the Accountable Person and the Building Resident Champion to discuss options and agree actions to help increase participation. Tenant participation is included in the performance indicators discussed in the Health and Safety Subgroup who meet twice a year, led by the Head of Property and reports to the Society's Board.

The Accountable Person will be informed when consultation is required and the outcome.

Complaints about Building Safety

If you feel that Stoke on Trent Housing Society hasn't handled an issue or repair around building safety satisfactorily you have the right to raise a complaint.

Making a Complaint

You can make a complaint about building safety by:

- Emailing info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk
- Calling 01782 968566
- Speaking to a member of staff at the Trevor Jones Office
- Writing to us

If necessary, you can appoint a representative to raise your concerns for you.

Handling your Complaint

Stage 1 - Once we receive your complaint, we will triage it to check whether it may be urgent and affects the immediate health and safety of you or other residents. If it is urgent we will investigate it and respond to you within 24 hours. If it is not urgent the Building Safety Manager will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and will investigate your complaint and provide a written response to you within 10 working days. The response will include details of what investigation has taken place, the outcome, and any necessary actions.

Stage 2 - If you are not happy with the response to your complaint you can request a review. This review will be completed by Stoke on Trent Housing Society's Complaints Officer who will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and will investigate your complaint and provide a written response to you within 20 working days. The response will include details of their investigation, the outcome, and any necessary actions. They will also advise you that this is the final stage of the Building Safety Complaints process and provide you with contact details for the Building Regulator, should you wish to escalate the complaint further.

Escalating a Complaint

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you have the right to escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator. Examples of the types of complaints you may want to escalate include:

- Concerns around the management of building safety risks.
- Fire doors which are not working or missing that may increase the risk of fire spread.
- Failure of the building's structure, such as parts of the building collapsing, cracks, or parts of the building falling off

(Note minor issues, such as rubbish that has been left in a communal area by another resident will not be dealt with as a complaint but a request for service.)

Learning from Complaints

Details of complaints, lessons learnt, and service improvements and changes made as a result, will be published in our newsletters, on our noticeboards, website, and any relevant communication that we may send out to you.

Resident Responsibilities

Residents are also responsible for the safety of the home and building in which they live. They need to work with Stoke on Trent Housing Society to keep the building and those who live and work there safe.

Here's how you can help:

- ✓ Let us know of any safety concerns you might have.
- ✓ Can you understand the messages and communication that we send to you? If not, then let us know.
- ✓ Take responsibility for keeping your own home safe.
- ✓ Check the smoke detectors in your home at least every month and let us know if they aren't working properly.
- ✓ Provide access to your home so that we can inspect and carry out different types of safety inspections (such as fire door inspections). Where access is required from residents, we will give reasonable notice and where access is not provided, we may have to take legal action to gain access.
- ✓ Keep communal areas clear and report any items left in communal areas by others to us. Any items stored in communal areas may be removed and disposed of without notification to the residents concerned.
- ✓ Do not prop open fire doors in communal areas and report any issues that you spot with fire doors, including your own. Fire Doors help to stop the spread of any fire throughout a building and therefore must be always closed.
- ✓ Residents who smoke must ensure they do so in a safe place and fully extinguish their cigarettes afterwards. Barbecues and patio heaters must never be used inside buildings and flammable materials, such as Calor gas, must never be stored in homes.
- ✓ If you are concerned about the actions or vulnerability of your neighbours in relation to building safety contact us.
- ✓ Consider being a Building Safety Resident Champion Volunteer for your building.
- ✓ If you are carrying out DIY works in your home, please let us know so that we can check the compartmentation is not going to be breached.

**To speak to us about any of the above email
info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or telephone 01782 968566.**

Monitoring and Review of this Strategy

To ensure that this strategy remains fit for purpose and continues to meet the needs of residents and legal requirements we will review it:

- Every two years, the next review will be before October 2026, and following consultation held on the strategy.
- Where any legal requirements might change.
- After a mandatory occurrence report (this is the process of reporting any fire safety or structural concerns to the Building Safety Regulator which meets the level of risk set out by the Regulator).
- After the completion of any significant safety works or alterations to the building.

If you are unhappy with this strategy or how we are managing fire safety in your building, please let us know by emailing info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or call us on 01782 968566.

You can also contact the Building Safety Regulator via their website
www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-building-safety-regulator
or Telephone: 0300 790 6787



The Trevor Jones Office,
Hammond House, Ridgway Road,
Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 3AX.

Tel: 01782 968 566.
Email: info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk
Website: www.stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk

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registered under the
Co-operative and
Community Benefit
Societies Act 2014.
No. 17333R