

Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy for Dickson House



Introduction

Stoke on Trent Housing Society (the Society) believes that residents have a role to play in ensuring that the building and home in which they live is safe and managed properly.

This document reinforces our commitment to Building Safety and sets out our plan on how we intend to engage with residents and sets out how we plan to provide opportunities to be involved with the Society on Building Safety issues.

It applies to all residents of Dickson House, including tenants, leaseholders, their household members and visitors.

Strategy Aims

Placing residents at the heart of building safety is a key area of the Building Safety Act. This strategy aims to:

- Ensure residents are empowered to play an effective role in ensuring that their building is safe.
- Set out the ways residents can get involved and the benefits of engaging on building safety.
- Identify the building safety information residents need and how it is provided to them.
- Explain what building safety decisions residents we will be asking residents about.
- Describe what information we will provide about these decisions.
- Ensure residents understand how to complain or raise concerns around building safety.
- Establish how we can improve the way we engage with residents in relation to the safety of their home.
- Clarify our responsibilities and residents' responsibilities to ensure their homes remain safe.
- Ensure that the Society is compliant with the Building Safety Act 2022 and meets its requirements.
- Help the Society to know it's residents.

It explains what residents can expect in terms of communication from us and how they can get involved and raise concerns.

Consultation on This Strategy and Building Safety Decisions

All residents of Dickson House, alongside the Accountable Person (the Society Board) and the Building Safety Manager have been consulted on this strategy and any Building Safety Decisions:

- Consultation has taken place on this strategy at its first time of issue and when any changes are made to it.
- It will be issued to all residents via their preferred communication method (email, letter or text). A consultation questionnaire (online and paper version) will also be provided.
- Each consultation period will last 3 weeks, with any feedback shared with residents within 1 month of the end of the 3-week consultation period.
- We will review and carefully consider feedback and make any necessary amendments.
- Any changes we make to the strategy based on resident feedback will be shared via our website and newsletter.
- We will ensure that any personal data we gather is handled in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Information We Will Provide

All residents will be provided with the information they need to help them understand the protections that are in place to keep their building safe. This information will be clear and in a leaflet format that can be understood by residents. On request, information will be provided in other formats. Our information plan includes:

	Displayed within the building	During Sign up	New Tenancy Visit	Annual Tenancy Visit	Within Customer Newsletter	Request/ As Required	Website	Customer Portal
Fire Action Notice	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Building Safety Information Leaflet		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Letter advising Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) to take place	✓					✓		
FRA outcome letter including any actions	✓					✓		
Personal Evacuation Plan						✓		✓
Detailed Building Safety Information						✓		
Update on any communal works to be carried out	✓					✓		
How to reduce risks					✓		✓	

Further, and more detailed information about the safety measures in Dickson House, can be requested by residents and could include:

- Current and historical fire risk assessments
- Outcomes of building safety inspection checks
- How assets in the building are managed and maintained, for example lift or dry riser servicing
- Fire protection measures in place
- Information available on the maintenance of fire safety systems
- The fire strategy for the building
- Structural assessments, where available

We will aim to provide any requested information within 20 working days:

- Vulnerable Residents or those requiring support will be able to nominate an advocate, carer or representative who can request more detailed information on their behalf.
- At the start of every tenancy, we will provide a fire action notice and discuss the importance of Building Safety with the incoming tenant.
- On our new tenant visit, that takes place within 6 weeks of a tenancy starting, we will discuss building safety and will answer any queries a resident may have at that point.
- All Annual Tenancy Visits will include a fire safety inspection and discuss the importance of fire safety, inspect any fire doors and smoke alarms, identify potential fire risks, provide a copy of the Fire Action Notice for that building and where required make a referral to Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service for a “Safe and Well” visit.

In addition, the Society also has a text messaging and email campaign manager service available which will be used to send out any urgent updates to residents in respect of Building Safety.

How We Will Collect and Use Your Feedback and Tell You About Building Management Changes

We will use a range of methods to collect your opinions and to tell you about building management changes, ensuring where possible to cater for the diverse needs of our residents. Building management changes could include such things as the temporary closure of an exit whilst works are completed or more permanent changes such as a change in an evacuation strategy, any change to key personnel of the Society such as the Accountable Person or Building Safety Manager, or any changes to the day to day, ownership or strategic management arrangements for the Society.



Satisfaction Surveys –will help us to gather feedback in relation to any building safety projects and our general management of building safety.

FRA Walkabouts – residents will be invited to join our annual Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) to provide feedback and helping them to better understand the importance of building safety.

Building Safety Events –will provide residents with useful information around building safety. Meetings would be held where possible in conjunction with the Fire Service on topical building safety issues and provide opportunity for residents to feedback.

Fire Door Inspections – during our annual home fire door inspections, residents will have the opportunity to engage with the assessing officer and provide feedback.

Building Safety Champion – this will be a volunteer opportunity for residents from each building to learn about building safety through training and support so that they are enabled to promote building safety through their own actions.

Customer Portal - we will use our interactive Customer Portal to highlight any current building safety issues to residents.

Noticeboards – your building will have a noticeboard in the reception area specifically for building safety information.

FRA outcome reports – the outcomes of the FRAs carried out on your building will be made available for all residents.

Digital communication – we will use a range of digital communication to liaise with residents, e.g. website.

Tenancy Visits – during our Tenancy Visit programme, staff will complete a fire safety review and request service feedback.

Letters and Leaflets – we will have a range of leaflets and letters to help residents better understand Building Safety and to inform on any building safety management changes.

Sign-ups – new tenants will be provided with a range of information in relation to building safety. This meeting will also provide the opportunity to highlight any support issues.

Newsletter – all residents will receive a Newsletter at least three times a year that includes a spotlight on building safety.



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

If there is any change to the principle or accountable person, we will inform you using our range of communication methods. Any proposed changes to the ownership of the building will be subject to a full consultation period with the residents with a minimum of 30 days as the consultation period.

How We Consider Feedback

Where we use any of our communication methods to gather your opinions on building safety issues, we will always give you a reasonable timescale to submit your feedback, which will usually be a minimum of 3 weeks.

We know how important it is that we show that we have listened to you and will refer to this as **You Said We did**, providing a summary of what residents have told us and what decisions we have made because of that feedback. This information will be shared with our Principle Accountable Person and Accountable Person for scrutiny and will be included in our newsletters, on the noticeboard in your building, on our website and any other relevant communication that we may need to send out to you.

What We Will Ask

As well as informing residents of the purpose of Building Safety works, there are a range of decisions in respect of Building Safety and Building Safety works which we will ask residents for their opinions and feedback on.

These may include:

- Who may be disrupted by the works?
- When would be the best time to undertake works or safety checks within your home or communal areas?
- How could disruption be kept to a minimum?
- How to improve building safety
- Best way to distribute information.
- Further opportunities for building communication methods
- Any changes to the engagement strategy
- Specific safety information about the building when changes are needed.

How we consult will be determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the complexity of the situation or works. For example, if work is needed to repair a faulty fire door, asking about the work may not be necessary, however, we may ask those that are disrupted by the work when would be the best time to do the repair, and how disruption could be minimised. Decisions residents may not be asked about (but we will still inform you) include:

- Where legislation dictates, we must take emergency actions to keep you safe
- Where life safety emergency repairs need to be undertaken
- Where the current evacuation strategy needs to change due to the findings of a safety investigation
- Where structural issues have been noted in your property or surrounding areas

Requesting a Communication Method

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and accessibility for all our residents and we will consider requests to make information available in different formats such as a different language or large text. Contact us info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or call 01782 968560

Measuring Resident Engagement

We will regularly monitor and review how we engage with you about building safety decisions. Some of the ways we will measure our engagement methods is by recording and monitoring:

- Response rates, including attendance at events and responses to surveys.
- Whether you feel safe in your building.
- The effectiveness of our engagement methods by asking you questions in a survey.
- The number of issues raised by residents regarding the safety of their building.
- Complaints analysis

We will review this data to understand our successes and what we need to improve to engage effectively with you. Resident engagement will be discussed in our regular Health and Safety Subgroup meetings, and we will report the progress of our engagement to residents and to our Board annually.

Promoting Resident Engagement

Resident participation will be promoted in a variety of ways including:

- Via our newsletters.
- During our annual scheme walkabouts
- Invitation to attend the annual Fire Risk Assessment.
- Through the annual tenancy visit programme.

We will aim for our Resident Panel to include a minimum 5% of tenants who live in Dickson House. If this is not achieved the Director, the Accountable Person and the Building Resident Champion will meet to agree actions to help increase participation. Tenant participation is also discussed by our Health and Safety Subgroup.

Responsibilities

Building safety is the responsibility of both the Society and its residents, and both need to work together to keep the building and those who live and work there safe.

Stoke on Trent Housing Society has:

- **Principle Accountable Person** (Chair of the Board) and the **Accountable Person** (the Board) – have a legal obligation to the safety of our buildings.
- **Building Safety Manager** (Head of Property) - works with the Society's Board to ensure homes are safe and compliant with regulation and is responsible for looking after the day-to-day management of our buildings. They are also a point of contact for Residents.
- **Director** – works with the Society's Board to ensure homes are safe and compliant with regulation.
- **Property Team** – members of this team are responsible for checking areas of compliance, supporting contractors with the safety of buildings and tackling any concerns around building safety.
- **Housing Team** – members of this team deliver our tenancy management service, which includes identifying, supporting and feeding back any concerns around the safety of residents.

Residents must:

- Let the Society know of any safety concerns they have and take responsibility for safety at home.
- Be able to understand building safety communication and let us know of if they don't.
- Provide access to their homes for us to carry out different types of safety inspections, e.g. fire door inspections. Reasonable notice will be given and where access is denied, we may take legal action.
- Keep communal areas clear and report any items left in communal areas by others to the Society. Any items stored in communal areas may be removed and disposed of without notification.
- Not prop open fire doors in communal areas and report any issues with fire doors to the Society.
- Smoke in a safe place and fully extinguish their cigarettes afterwards.
- Never use or store barbecues, patio heaters or flammable materials inside their home or the building.

Where residents are concerned about the actions or vulnerability of their neighbours in relation to building safety, or have a concern in general about building safety, they must contact our Building Safety Manager, Hadrian Noble on 01782 968566 or email info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk.

Mandatory Occurrence Reporting System

Residents are encouraged to report building safety incident and risks, which should be reported to the Society in the first place. These are incidents and risks which if not remedied are likely to cause the death or serious injury to an individual or significant number of people.

Building safety incidents can involve structural failure of the building and or the spread of fire in the building. Examples of a building safety incidents are.

- defective building work.
- fire safety issues likely to result in the spread of fire.
- inappropriate or incorrect installation of construction products.
- product failure against specification and claimed performance.
- failure of a construction component, such as debris falling from the structure or a fire door not closing

We will investigate any reports and ensure urgent works are carried out as quickly as possible. If the report meets the requirements of a Mandatory Occurrence Report as defined by the Building Safety Regulator a report will be submitted.

When reporting a building safety incident or risk, you will need to provide.

- where the incident or risk has been identified.
- the date the incident or risk was identified.
- a brief description of the incident or risk.
- if possible, provide any pictures or other information to help with the investigation.

We will acknowledge your report within 24 hours and ensure you are kept updated with the actions taken until the completion of any remedial works or changes to the management of the building.

Record Keeping

We will maintain a record of all feedback as evidence and for future review, this includes the digitisation of paper documents for storage. Where possible the information will be stored within the Society's Housing Management System. We will collect and store information in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Society's privacy statement, which is available on our website.

Strategy Reviews

This strategy will be reviewed:

- every 2 years
- after we submit a mandatory occurrence report to the Building Safety Regulator
- after the completion of significant material alterations to the building
- as per changes of legislation or regulation, or to respond to priorities identified by the Building Regulator.

Each review will be recorded, whether any changes are made to the strategy.

Disputes

Any opinions received from residents about the strategy will be reviewed and taken into consideration however this strategy will not be amended if the resident's opinion is not appropriate.

A resident can make a complaint about the strategy however if the resident is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they can contact the Building Safety Regulator.

Complaints

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 by:

- Emailing
- Calling 01782 968566
- Speaking to a member of staff at the Trevor Jones Office

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

Stage 1 – If your complaint is urgent and affects the immediate health and safety of you or other residents we will investigate and respond to you within 24 hours. If it is not urgent, we will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and will investigate and provide a written response to you within 10 working days.

Stage 2- If you are not happy with the response to your complaint you can request a review. This review will be completed by our 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.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you have the right to escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator (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.)

Details of complaints, lessons learnt, and service improvements 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.

Equal Opportunities

Stoke on Trent Housing Society is committed to making sure its policies and services reflect the community it serves and that they support equal opportunities. Our aim is to ensure that Building Safety is understood and is relevant to all our customers in line with the Equality Act 2010

We will take reasonable steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments a resident may have to enable them to understand Building Safety and to live in a safe home.

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.



Contact the Building Safety Regulator via www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-building-safety-regulator or Telephone: 0300 790 6787