



High-Rise Building & Fire Safety

Resident Engagement Strategy

Important document – please read



Fire Action Notice

In the event of a fire in your flat:

- Ensure that everyone evacuates your flat immediately. Close the front door to your flat.
- Make your way out of the building, using the common escape route.
- Once you are outside the building, call the fire and rescue service by dialling 999.

In the event of a fire elsewhere in the building:

- The building is designed to contain a fire and allow you to remain in your flat in relative safety if the fire is in another flat or elsewhere in the building.
- If your flat is not affected by fire, you will be safe to remain in your flat.
- Leave your flat if it becomes affected by fire and smoke or you are directed to leave by the fire and rescue service.

If you are in a common area:

Leave the building immediately - do not go back to your flat.

Do not use the lifts

- Once you are outside the building, call the fire and rescue service by dialling 999.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Where a 'stay safe' Policy is in place, we would emphasise that if you are in any doubt that it is safe to remain in your flat and, provided it is safe to use the common escape routes, then you should leave the building as quickly as possible.

Calling the Fire and Rescue Service:

- Dial 999. When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for FIRE.
- When the fire and rescue service answers, give them your address and the location of the fire.
- Do not end the call until the fire and rescue service have confirmed the address.

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Introduction

At One Vision Housing the safety of residents living in our properties is our number one priority.

The most important message of this Strategy is that if any person has any concerns about building or fire safety in properties owned and managed by One Vision Housing, even if they consider them to be minor issues, they should contact us and let us know at the earliest opportunity.

The contact details for One Vision Housing and for any person that has concerns, requires information, or wants to ask any questions around our provisions for buildings and fire safety in our properties, is as follows:

- 0300 365 1111
- enquiries@ovh.org.uk
- ovh.org.uk
- One Vision Housing, PO Box 891 Orpington, BR6 1LY

Please note: One Vision Housing employees are not available at this address. To speak to us, please use the contact details listed above.

This Strategy, which has been developed in conjunction with involved customers, is aimed specifically at residents who live in One Vision Housing's high-rise accommodation.

A copy of this Strategy will be made available on the One Vision Housing website and to the lead tenant or leaseholder in every high-rise property (in electronic format i.e. sent via email, hard copy where customers do not have access to an email address and in alternative formats on request).

The Strategy will be reviewed:

- every two years
- after every consultation
- after a mandatory occurrence report
- after the completion of significant material alterations to the building

The Strategy may be reviewed sooner if there is a significant change to the building or management arrangements, e.g. any major works that impact on building or fire safety provisions.

Any updates or revisions of the Strategy will be made available to the lead tenant or leaseholder, in a timely fashion.

The Strategy includes the following sections:

- **Roles and responsibilities** – including the 'Accountable Person', 'Principle Accountable Person' and 'Residents Responsibilities'
- **Our consultation commitments** – outlining our consultation promises whenever we are planning or proposing building or fire safety improvement works on high-rise buildings and how this feedback will be taken into consideration when making investment decisions by our Senior Management Team and Board of management
- **Our information commitments** – Setting out the information that we will provide and keep up-to-date in regard to safety matters and how residents can request further information on issues that are important to them

- **How residents can raise issues or make complaints** – Outlining how we will provide a clear and accessible route for residents to make complaints or raise issues about building or fire safety matters and guarantee that all issues raised will be taken seriously. Also, details of how complaints or issues can be escalated to the Housing Ombudsman or the Building Safety Regulator
- **Satisfaction / performance monitoring and reporting** – Detailing how One Vision Housing will gather satisfaction information, how this will be shared with residents, what it will do if any areas of concern are raised



02

Roles and responsibilities

The Building Safety Act which became law in April 2022 sets out new roles and responsibilities for all organisations that own and manage high-rise blocks to ensure the fire and structural safety of the buildings is being properly managed.

The Building Safety Act identifies new 'duty holders' known as 'accountable persons' for residential high-rise buildings. There are two new roles of 'Principle Accountable Persons' and 'Accountable Persons' which can either be an organisation or a named individual within the organisation. In One Vision Housing's case the organisation fulfils both the roles.

One Vision Housing have a duty to take all reasonable steps to:

- prevent a building safety risk happening, with building safety risk defined as 'spread of fire and/or structural failure'
- reduce the seriousness of an incident if one happens

This means that One Vision Housing as an organisation is responsible for:

- Registering our existing high-rise buildings with the Building Safety Regulator
- Preparing a 'Safety Case Report' for each high-rise building showing that all building safety risks have been assessed and One Vision Housing has put reasonable measures in place to control them (where they are identified) and that this continues on an on-going basis

In compiling the Safety Case Report, One Vision Housing will need to record and keep up-to-date various pieces of information relating to each high-rise building's basic design, construction type, services and facilities as well as information relating to fire prevention / protective measures and all maintenance / inspection records.

The Safety Case Report will also require One Vision Housing to keep detailed records of any major refurbishments to the whole building, common areas or individual parts and keep the emergency services informed of this information including any changes.

A vital part of this duty will be keeping up-to-date information relating to the 'resident profile' of each high-rise block (this includes basic information about the people that live in each block on a permanent basis or for considerable periods of time).

This information will be held securely by One Vision Housing and is only required for the purposes of ensuring safety and no other reason. One Vision Housing would not share this information with any other organisation except for the emergency services.

The information helps One Vision Housing to work in partnership with residents and the emergency services to identify anyone who may struggle to evacuate a building without help, should this be required in an emergency or anyone who may require information in alternative formats.

This includes people who may have mobility problems due to age or a disability, it includes people whose first language may not be English, people who have hearing difficulties, visual impairments or any other reason that may create additional risks in the event of an emergency.

One Vision Housing will contact all residents of its high-rise buildings on a regular basis to ensure this information is correct and up to date.

If there are any changes to this information e.g. if somebody new moves into a property or if a person already living there is no longer able to self-evacuate in an emergency (should this be required), residents should inform One Vision Housing of these changes at the earliest opportunity.



Residents can inform One Vision Housing of any significant changes in the following ways:

- By contacting our Customer Services Team on **0300 365 1111** and speaking to one of our Customer Service Advisors
- By accessing the ‘My Account’ facility on the One Vision Housing website and updating the customer profile information section
- By informing their Neighbourhoods Services Officer or Independent Living Officer during routine contacts or visits

By working together with its residents One Vision Housing aims to establish a collaborative approach to buildings and fire safety. Within this approach residents of high-rise buildings also have responsibilities for ensuring the safety of all who live in, visit or work within the blocks, as outlined follows.

Residents responsibilities

In maintaining a safe living environment in One Vision Housing high-rise blocks, all residents (and any visitors to their homes) should:

- **Not act in a way that creates a significant risk of fire or structural failure** (this includes keeping all communal areas and passageways free from personal belongings or items that may cause a fire risk or obstruction in the event of emergency evacuation.

Unless for medical reasons, you must not use, permit to be used or store compressed gas within your home or any communal areas.

If you are required to use and store compressed gas for medical reasons (i.e. oxygen), you must inform the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on 0800 731 5958 who will arrange to carry out a home fire safety check.

Always refer to the manufacturer’s instructions when using or storing compressed gas. Residents should also make themselves familiar and adhere to the advice provided on One Vision Housing’s website – (simply type the term ‘fire safety’ into the search function to reveal numerous information sources at: ovh.org.uk)

- **Not interfere with a relevant safety item** (This includes any fire alarm systems, any safety notices, any safety equipment including smoke alarms, automatic door closers, sprinkler systems etc.)
- **Comply with a request by the Accountable Person (One Vision Housing) for information reasonably required to perform their duties to assess and manage building and fire safety risks** (This includes allowing access to properties to carry out safety works or checking requirements – following reasonable notice [48 hours] and request)

Approach to enforcement

One Vision Housing believes the best approach to ensuring building and fire safety is one of collaboration, built on trust and with joint responsibilities.

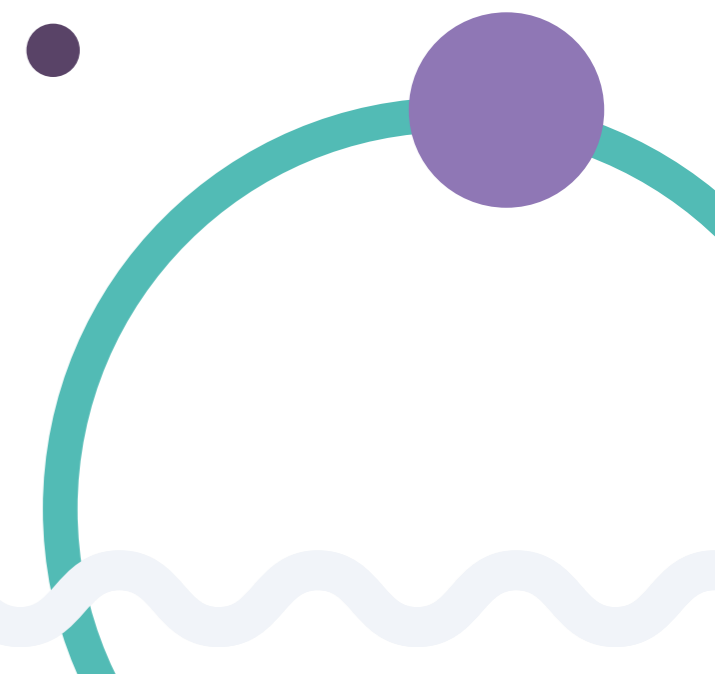
To achieve legal compliance and to do its utmost to promote a sound safety regime it relies on the goodwill and co-operation of the residents of high-rise buildings to allow access to homes periodically, to carry out essential checks and maintenance.

One Vision Housing will always try to achieve this access by working in partnership with its residents, giving reasonable notice periods (not less than 48 hours advance notice), stating clearly why the access is required and by carrying out works at times convenient to customers.



In most cases this arrangement works well, however, there are occasions where access is denied by the customer. When this does occur One Vision Housing will take a graded approach to enforcing its right of access to properties. The graded approach will involve:

- Reasonable attempts at contact with residents to gain access by appointment (including by letter, telephone contact, SMS – Text message and personal visit)
- Issue of warning letters
- As a last resort when all other reasonable attempts at gaining access have failed, One Vision housing may instigate legal action via the Tenancy or Lease agreement (residents should note if this cause of action is required then residents will be liable for One Vision Housing’s costs and could result in eviction)



03 Our consultation commitments

To ensure there are open lines of communication between One Vision Housing and customers who live in high-rise blocks, a 'High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group' has been established.

The Group, which is open to any tenant or leaseholder living in One Vision Housing's high-rise blocks to attend, aims to achieve the following:

A means for One Vision Housing to provide information to customers on all matters that are relevant to the management of building safety in high-rise accommodation. This will include but is not exclusive of:

- Any changes to legislation or regulations impacting One Vision Housing's legal responsibilities and operational practices in regard to building and fire safety
- Any planned or proposed investment works that have implications for building and fire safety
- Any updated advice or guidance that may be issued by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Home and communal area building and fire safety advice
- Response to any buildings / fire safety event or situation

The Group will meet quarterly and One Vision Housing will publicise the dates, times and venues ahead of each meeting via its website. One Vision Housing will also arrange to cover any out-of-pocket expenses for high-rise residents attending the meetings e.g. reasonable travel costs.

The meetings of the High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group will allow residents of high rise blocks an opportunity to ask questions of One Vision Housing on all aspects of building and fire safety performance.

It will also allow high-rise residents an opportunity to raise any concerns they have over buildings and fire safety issues. If One Vision Housing is unable to answer any queries raised satisfactorily at the meeting, it will guarantee to bring a full response to the next scheduled meeting (using non-technical language).

One Vision Housing will endeavour to provide individual responses to queries raised as well as responses to all that attend the meetings, where this is requested and / or is appropriate (being careful not to reveal the identity of individuals who may have raised queries initially).

Whilst an open invite will be in place to attend the meetings for all One Vision Housing's high-rise residents, One Vision Housing will endeavour to inform and invite residents from specific blocks if there are any planned investment works or other matters relating to that block.

One Vision housing will ensure the High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group works closely with its wider resident engagement and 'customer voice' frameworks. Where issues are identified that impact all high-rise residents, they may be subject of investigation and reporting of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and / or Tenant Inspectors.

One Vision Housing will also ensure any collated feedback gathered during these meetings or as a result of specific consultations / surveys is made available to the Executive Management Team and Board to inform their decision-making processes on any planned investment works or changes to services.

To show the results of this customer influence, in 2023 regular feedback reports will be made available via the One Vision Housing website **similar to the 'You Said – We Did' (to show learning from complaints intelligence and customer suggestions) – on key decisions taken by the Board on issues that impact on customer services and investment priorities.**

04

Building and fire safety information

One Vision Housing will ensure that all residents of its high-rise blocks are supplied with information that will help them stay safe during their occupation of the building and be assured that any potential risks are being managed effectively.

This information will be made readily available in a number of ways, including:

- Via clear, prominent and easily understood signage / instructions within the locality of each high-rise building, including 'wayfinding' information (clear floor and property numbering, location of emergency exits, all visible in low-light conditions).
 - Via information provided to new customers when they first sign-up for a property i.e. at the point they receive the keys for a property (including any instruction that is relevant to an individual and their specific personal or household circumstances)
 - Via updated versions of this Strategy
 - Via information made available and updated on the One Vision Housing website
- The signage will also include:**
- instructions relating to the evacuation strategy for the building,
 - instructions as regards how to report a fire to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, and any other instruction that tells residents what they must do in the event of an emergency situation



Information relating to fire doors

Within all high-rise buildings an essential element of the fire safety measures is the provision of effective fire doors and self-closing devices.

In the event of a fire, fire doors help with 'compartmentalisation' (prevention of spread of fire from one area to another), can offer a degree of fire resistance and can prevent smoke and toxic gases entering a property.

As part of its fire safety management arrangements, One Vision Housing will inspect fire doors in communal areas on a quarterly basis (four times a year) and will make best endeavours to inspect flat entrance doors on an annual basis.

Residents can play their part in ensuring all fire doors remain effective and in working order by:

- Allowing One Vision Housing employees or those working on its behalf reasonable access, when requested, to carry out inspections
- Keeping fire doors shut when not in use
- Not tampering or allowing any guests to tamper with self-closing devices
- Reporting any faults or damages to fire doors immediately to One Vision Housing (including any in communal spaces)

Information on other relevant safety items

In addition to the provision of fire doors, One Vision Housing's high-rise blocks also have a number of other building and fire safety controls including smoke detectors, fire alarms, sprinkler systems and specialist equipment for use by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in the event of an emergency.

As with all building and fire safety measures, One Vision Housing has in place a regular inspection and maintenance regime to ensure all items remain in working order and good condition.

Residents can play their part in ensuring these safety measures are effective at all times by reporting any damage at the earliest opportunity and not tampering with or removing anything classed as a relevant safety item.



Information made available to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

One Vision Housing have a close working relationship with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and we are in regular dialogue with them to ensure we are doing everything we can to promote good safety practice in our high-rise blocks.

We keep them informed of any proposals for building and fire safety investment works and any changes that are made to the structure or layout of our blocks.

We provide information in digital format, which is updated in real time but also in hard copy. As per the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, we have installed on all our high-rise buildings secure property information boxes that the Fire and Rescue Service can access in the event of an emergency.

The boxes contain up-to-date information on each building's layout and floor plans, the location of essential firefighting equipment and any properties where the occupants may struggle to self-evacuate in the event of an emergency (e.g. those with mobility, cognitive or sensory impairments) and all other relevant information.

For these reasons, it is essential that high-rise residents or their visitors do not attempt to tamper with the property information boxes in any way and should report any damage they notice immediately.

This is also a good reason for making every effort to keep One Vision Housing informed of any changes to the customer profile information so the Fire and Rescue Service know who may need additional assistance in the event of an emergency.



05

How residents can raise issues or make complaints

As we have stated at the very start of this Strategy, we encourage anyone who has a legitimate concern about any aspect of building or fire safety to contact One Vision Housing so that it can provide a response and where required deal with issues raised.

In an emergency situation e.g. if a customer discovers a fire in or near to a high-rise block, they should follow the instructions provided in the block / to each resident to get themselves and others safe.

With all other non-emergency queries, One Vision Housing will always endeavour to get back to individuals who raise concerns within three working days and if after investigation any action is required, we will keep those raising issues informed of what it will do to put matters right.

If the request is for information and this is already readily available via our website, One Vision Housing will direct enquiries to this source. If the request involves detailed or technical information it may take longer to get

this information together in accessible and easy to understand formats.

One Vision Housing will still endeavour to respond to all queries raised within 10 working days but where this is not possible, we will keep those raising issues informed of the likely timescales involved and the reasons for any potential delay.

Where there is dissatisfaction in any kind with One Vision Housing's response, customers may choose to utilise its Complaints process.

The full details of the of the complaints process are contained within the 'Complaints, Appeals and Feedback Policy',





available to view in full via the One Vision Housing website, on the 'Customer Voice' page at: ovh.org.uk

One Vision Housing operates a two stage internal complaints process. Normally all complaints received will be acknowledged within three working days and a full response provided within ten working days, at both stage one and two.

If for any reason a full response cannot be provided within these timescales, One Vision Housing will endeavour to keep those raising complaints informed of progress and likely timescales for when a full response will be available.

If those raising complaints are still dissatisfied with One Vision Housing's response after the internal complaints process is complete (i.e. Stages One and Two) they may approach the independent Housing Ombudsman for a determination.

The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are as follows:

-  Online form available at: housing-ombudsman.org.uk
-  Via email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
-  Via telephone: **0300 111 3000**
(9.15am - 5.15pm: Monday to Friday)
-  In writing to:
Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ

A new Building Safety Regulator (BSR) was established in 2023 that has responsibility for:

- Overseeing the safety and standards of all buildings
- Helping and encouraging the built environment industry and building control professionals to improve their competence
- Leading implementation of the new regulatory framework for high-rise buildings

Similar to the role played by the Housing Ombudsman, the intention is for the BSR to provide an independent review and determination for those that are dissatisfied with response of building owners and managers on fire and buildings safety issues.

The exact make up and contact routes for this role being established by the BSR are still being determined. When these details are available, One Vision Housing will include them in future revisions of this Strategy and will make them available on its website.

For more details on the role and responsibilities of the new BSR, please visit hse.gov.uk/building-safety/regulator

06

Satisfaction, performance monitoring and reporting



One Vision Housing will work with attendees of the High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group to monitor performance in delivering the aims of this strategy, which include:

- Meeting all legal and regulatory requirements
- Meeting our information provision promises
- Meeting our consultation promises
- Providing updates on any building or fire safety incidents and responses (so that lessons can be learnt and where necessary, processes improved)
- Ensuring our senior management teams and Board are made aware of any customer input / queries / opinion in regard to building and fire safety in high-rise blocks
- Ensuring residents receive feedback of where this information is taken into consideration in decision-making processes and investment priority setting
- Ensuring the complaints process is fair and accessible

Through improvements to the standard agendas for meetings of the High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group, One Vision will ensure the above points are discussed and minutes of meetings made available via its website.

One Vision Housing will provide details of any remedial actions that may be required if performance does not meet expectations in any way, including any investigation by external agencies or any work undertaken by the customer-led Scrutiny or Tenants Inspectors teams.

One Vision Housing will also work with the attendees of the High-Rise Living and Building Safety Group to devise a means of capturing customer satisfaction with its general provisions for building and

fire safety and any individual projects or block improvement schemes.

This may include carrying out targeted surveys and making the results available to all parties via feedback at meetings and via the One Vision Housing website.

If you need assistance understanding the information in this document, please contact us on **0300 365 1111**.

Chinese – 如果您需要幫助了解本文檔中的信息，請致電 0300 365 1111 與我們聯繫。

Lithuanian – Jei norite, kad Jums kas nors padėtų suprasti šiame dokumente pateiktą informaciją, prašome su mumis susisiekti tel 0300 365 1111.

Polish – Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy, by zrozumieć informacje zawarte w tym dokumencie, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem 0300 365 1111.

Portuguese – Caso necessite de assistência para compreender a informação constante neste documento, deverá contactar-nos através do 0300 365 1111.

Russian – Если вам требуется разъяснение информации, содержащейся в данном документе, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с нами по телефону 0300 365 1111.

Turkish – Bu belgede verilen bilgileri anlama konusunda desteğe ihtiyacınız olursa lütfen bize ulaşın 0300 365 1111.

Ukrainian – Якщо вам потрібна допомога в розумінні інформації у цьому документі, зв'яжіться з нами за номером 0300 365 1111.



DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH OUR CUSTOMERS