

Fire safety in your home

Houses converted into flats
(with communal area fire alarms)

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



01

Introduction

We know nothing is more important than keeping you and your family safe which is why you need to know what to do in the event of a fire no matter where you happen to be in the building.

02

Fire detection and early warning

Emergency access

Never block or restrict any Emergency Exits as you and others may need to use these in the event of a fire. The Fire and Rescue Service may also use them to fight a fire or to evacuate the building.

Safety systems

Fire detection systems are installed throughout the communal areas and extend into the hallway of your flat. When activated anywhere in the building it will sound the alarm in your own flat and you should immediately evacuate. Once you have reached a safe external location ring the Fire and Rescue Services on **999** and One Vision Housing (OVH) on **0300 365 1111**.

If you suspect this system is not working or has been damaged then please contact OVH immediately.



03

Smoke alarms

As your landlord we have a legal duty to ensure at least one heat/smoke detector is equipped on each storey of your home where there is a room used as living accommodation.

Heat/smoke detectors

To reduce your chances of being injured or even killed in a fire at home, you should ensure that you have at least one working smoke detector in your property. If you do not have a smoke detector, you should contact us. You can also contact Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on **0800 731 5958** to arrange a home fire safety check.

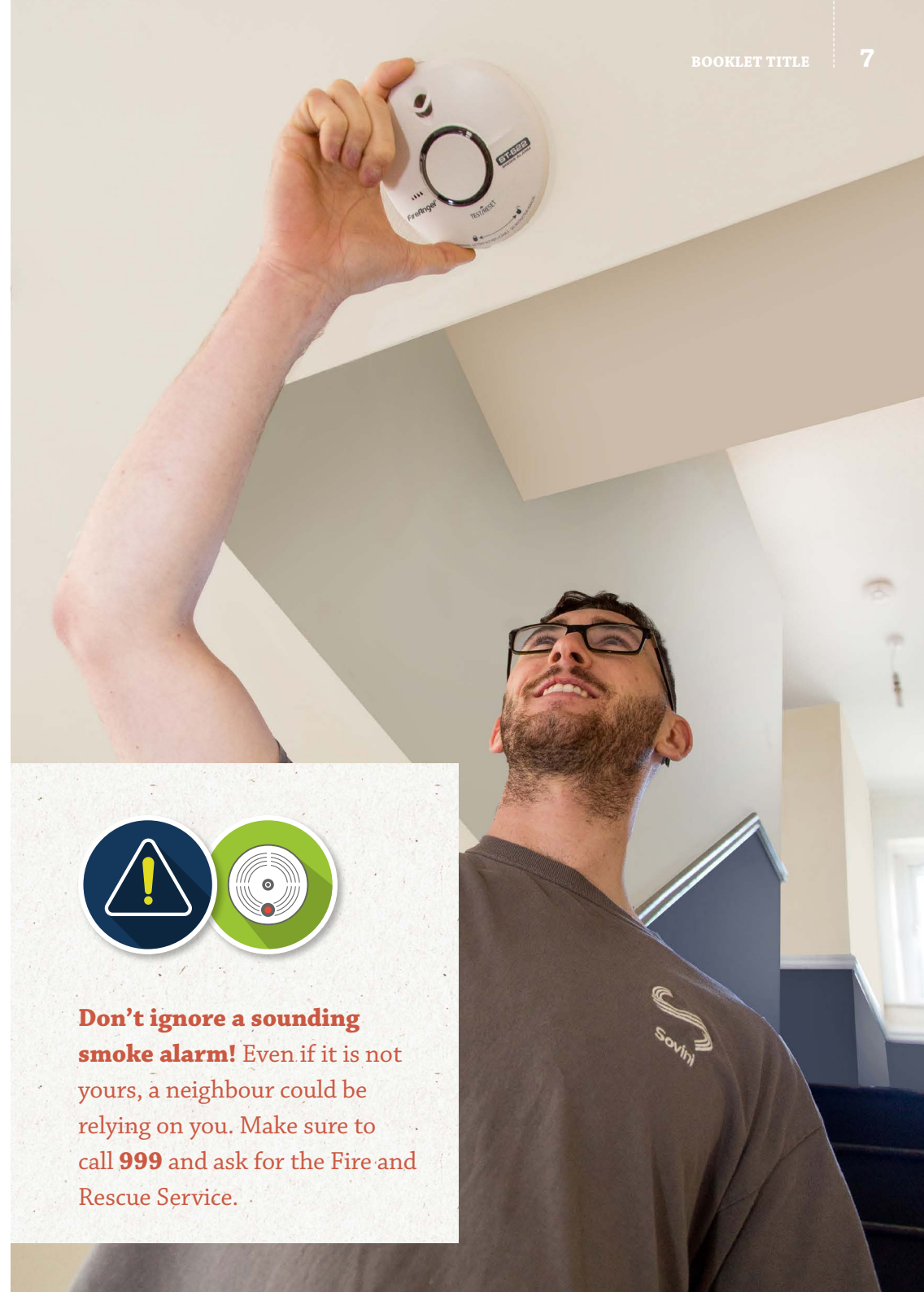
You should test your heat/smoke detector weekly to make sure it is working properly, if it does not work, you may need to replace the battery.

Standard battery operated detectors will need batteries replacing every year. If your detector is faulty, you should contact us, so we can repair or replace it. If your heat/smoke detector starts to bleep on a regular basis, you need to replace the battery immediately.

Never disconnect or take the batteries out of your heat/smoke detector. If fitting your own detector, install a heat detector in your kitchen and smoke detectors elsewhere in your property. Avoid bathrooms where steam can set them off by accident.

The ideal position is on the ceiling, in the middle of the room, and on the landing or hallway.

Heat/smoke detectors designed specifically for people who are deaf or hard of hearing are available, contact the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on **0800 731 5958** to discuss your options.



Don't ignore a sounding smoke alarm! Even if it is not yours, a neighbour could be relying on you. Make sure to call **999** and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service.

04

Fire safety in your home

Smoking

Smoking is the most common cause of fatal fires, which is why the safest option is to not smoke. But if you do, please make sure you:

- Once finished, safely extinguish all cigarettes.
- Never discard cigarette butts out of your windows or from a balcony. For safe disposal, wet the stub and place in your bin.
- Do not smoke in bed or anywhere you may fall asleep.
- Never leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended.
- Use proper ashtrays and never throw hot ash into the bin.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.

If you need any help or advice quitting please contact Smokefree National Helpline on **0300 123 1044**.

If you are now vaping as an alternative, remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Always use the correct charger and never use an e-cigarette if it is damaged in any way.

If our staff identify any concerns relating to your own fire safety awareness, we will refer you to the Fire and Rescue Service who may want to carry out a home visit to discuss with you how best to personally manage fire safety in your home. You can also contact the Fire and Rescue Service direct on **0800 731 5958** to request a home visit.

Cooking

- Never leave pans unattended when cooking, especially chip pans and deep fat fryers.
- Don't cook if you are tired, have been drinking alcohol or taking medication that might make you drowsy.

If your pan catches fire:

- Don't tackle the fire yourself or try to move the pan.
- Never throw water on to the fire as this can create a fireball.
- Follow the Fire Action Notice, which includes leave the room and close the door. Shout to warn others to get out, stay out and call **999**.
- If safe to do so, turn off the heat.

Appliances

Always check the plugs and leads of any appliances and if they look frayed, scorched or damaged then do not use them.

If you have a tumble dryer, keep the lint tray and drum clear of any build up of fluff and debris as this can ignite if left unattended.

It's also important that you review the safety guidance for the make and model of your appliances as some are known to contain defects which can lead to fires.

Gas cannisters

To reduce the risks of fire you should not use, permit to be used and/or store compressed gas within your home or any communal areas. If you are required to use and/or store compressed gas for medical reasons (e.g. oxygen), you must notify OVH immediately.

Electrics

- Never overload electrical sockets or leave items unattended.
- Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order.
- Only leave essential appliances switched on, such as the fridge or freezer. Turn all other electrical items off when they are not in use.

Lithium batteries, e-bikes and e-scooters

Lithium-ion batteries are used in e-bikes, e-scooters, mobility devices and many other rechargeable products. If a battery is damaged, faulty or charged incorrectly, it can cause a rapidly developing fire and produce toxic smoke.

To keep you, your family and neighbours safe:

Always use the charger supplied or approved by the manufacturer and follow the manufacturer's charging instructions.

Never leave batteries charging unattended, while you are out or while you are asleep. Unplug the charger when charging is complete.

Never charge or store e-bikes, e-scooters or their batteries on an escape route or in communal areas, including hallways, corridors, stairwells and landings.

When charging a removable battery, place it on a hard, flat surface away from combustible materials and do not cover the battery or charger.

Do not use or charge a damaged battery. Stop using it if it becomes unusually hot, swollen, leaks, makes hissing or cracking noises, gives off an unusual smell, smokes or does not charge normally.

Buy e-bikes, batteries and chargers from reputable retailers and use compatible, manufacturer-approved components. Take particular care with second-hand, refurbished or converted e-bikes.

Protect batteries from damage and extreme temperatures and follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance and storage.

If a battery starts smoking or catches fire:

Get out, stay out and call **999**. Do not attempt to tackle the fire yourself.

Candles and tea lights

- Please avoid the use of candles or similar items with a naked flame wherever possible, but if you do use them, any candles should only be placed in stable, heat resistant holders.
- Keep them away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, papers and clothes.



05

Communal areas

Everyone is responsible for fire safety in their own home and within the building, including any communal areas (i.e. communal hallways, bin rooms, shared stairways etc.).

Please follow these tips to keep your communal areas fire safe.

**Smoking**

Do not smoke in any communal area.

As per the Smoke Free Regulations 2006 it is illegal to smoke in any public internal communal areas.

Smoking will activate the communal fire detection systems.

If we confirm you or a visitor to your home is responsible for a false fire alarm we will recharge you for the cost of our engineers and the Fire Service to attend.

**Rubbish**

Do not leave rubbish, bikes, mobility scooters, prams, items of furniture, carpets or any other items in any communal areas.

All of these items are a fire risk and could prevent easy passage along the escape routes should you and others need to evacuate the block.

**Fire doors**

Fire doors in communal areas should be kept closed when not in use. They are there to stop fires from spreading. OVH may need to periodically inspect your own flat entrance door to ensure it is operating and fitting correctly.

Please report to us straight away if you notice:

- A fire door is damaged or not fitting fully into its frame.
- Fire doors being wedged open.
- A fire door is not closing correctly.

IMPORTANT: You must never disconnect the self closing device to any fire doors in the building, including those on your flat door.

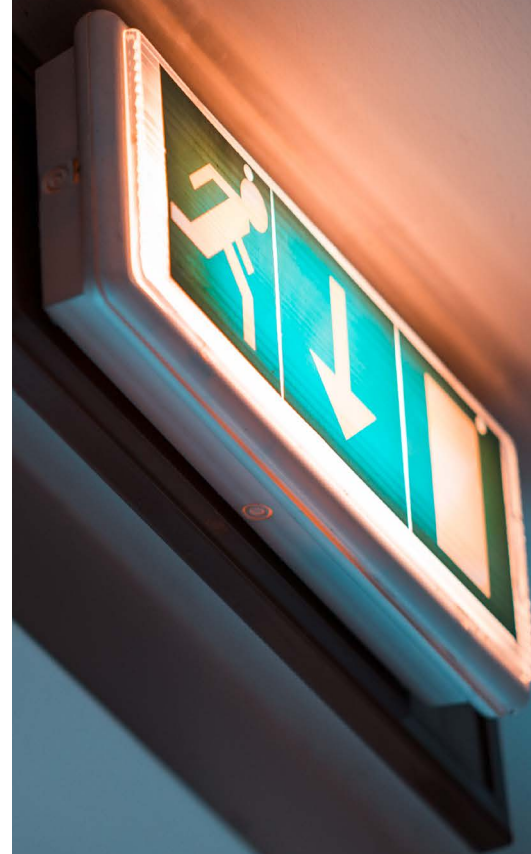
**Emergency lighting**

If you notice any damage to light fittings throughout the building or if they are not working properly, please contact us immediately.

**Bin areas**

Where a communal bin area is provided, please avoid leaving bundles of newspapers, cardboard or other easily combustible materials outside of bins.

If you need to dispose of any large items (i.e. mattresses, furniture etc), please call your local council to discuss removal options, or where possible, take them to your local recycling centre.



06

Gas safety

We are also responsible for ensuring a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).

To do this we must carry out an annual gas safety check or gas service using registered Gas Safe engineers.

The annual gas safety check will include testing of all required gas appliances, pipe work, flues and checking of heat/smoke and CO alarms in your home.

We will provide you with a copy of your gas safety certificate within 28 days of the check being completed.

We will notify you in writing around two months before your gas safety check is due to expire and we will arrange an appointment to complete the gas safety check.

What to do if you smell gas or suspect carbon monoxide?

If you smell gas, or suspect there is a gas leak you should:

- Turn off the appliance.
- Turn off the gas supply at the meter (unless the meter is located in a cellar or basement, in which case you should evacuate immediately).
- Not use or switch any electrical appliances on or off.
- Call Cadent immediately on **0800 111 999**
- Open doors and windows to allow the gas to disperse.
- Check to see if a gas tap has been accidentally left on or if a pilot light has gone out.

- If you have a faulty gas appliance, it can be dangerous and produce carbon monoxide gas.
- Not use matches or anything that has a naked flame.
- Not smoke.
- Not use a mobile phone anywhere near the leak.

Any one of the following could be a sign that there is carbon monoxide in your home:

- The flame on your cooker should be crisp and blue. Lazy yellow or orange flames mean you need to get your cooker checked.
- Dark staining on or around gas appliances.
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out.
- Increased condensation inside windows.

Anyone suffering from headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness or who collapses or loses consciousness where gas is present, should seek medical advice immediately.

Your responsibilities

You should test your carbon monoxide alarm weekly to make sure it is working properly. If your carbon monoxide alarm is faulty, you should contact us so we can repair or replace it.

You must allow us access to your home to complete your annual gas safety check. If you do not allow us access you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement and we will take legal action, this may result in you losing your home.

If you employ anyone to carry out gas work in your home, you must ensure they are a Gas Safety Registered engineer.

You must never attempt to do any gas related work or repairs yourself. Not only could you be breaking the law, but any work you carry out could be life threatening for you and your neighbours.

What if you have gas but no gas appliances?

If you have a gas supply meter fitted in your property or just a gas main standpipe with no meter, but do not have any gas appliances, we still need to inspect the pipework inside your home.

What if an appliance fails the safety check?

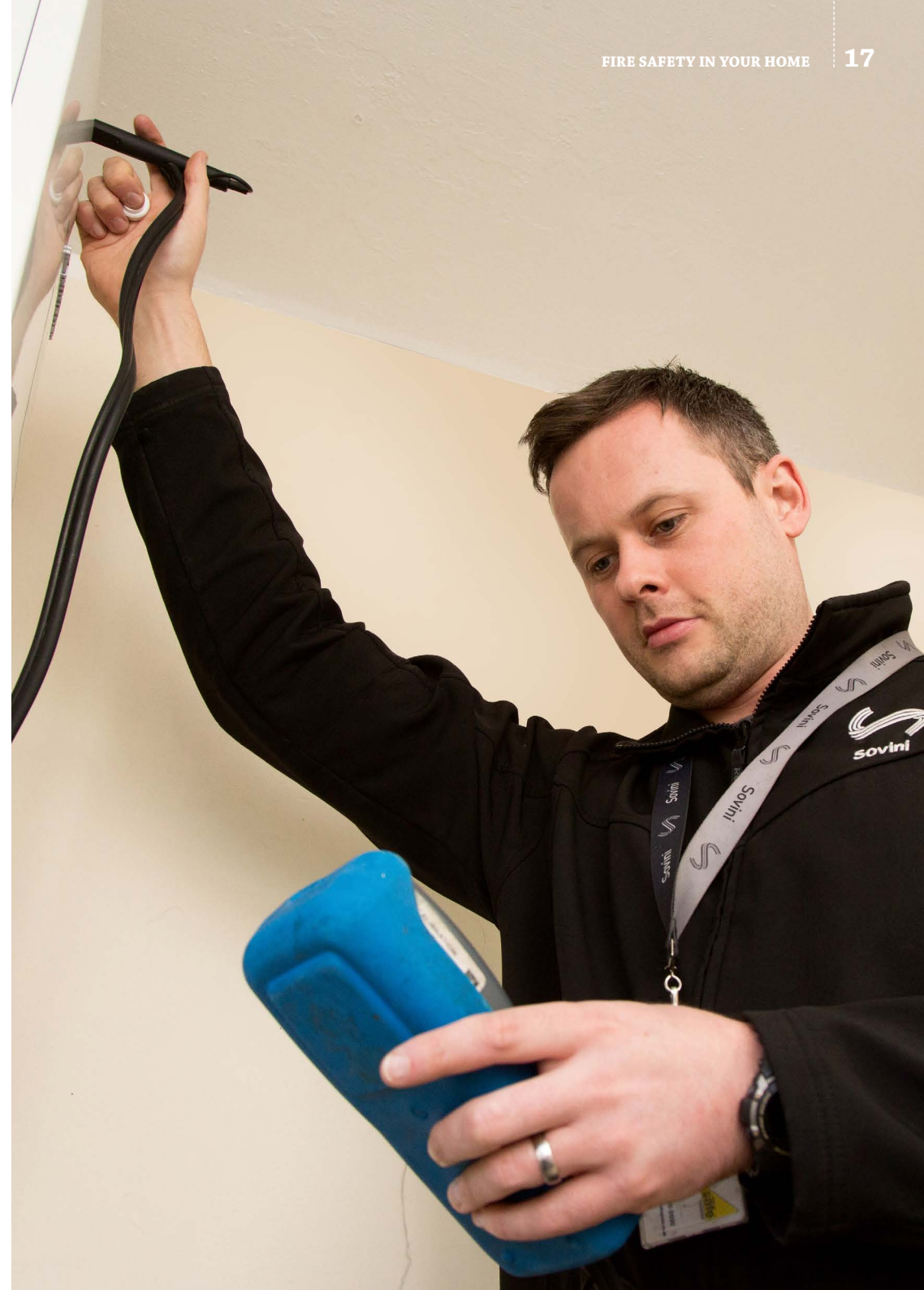
The Gas Safety Record will contain details of any problems found at the time of the inspection, and any action that has been taken.

If an appliance fails the safety check, it may be necessary to disconnect it. Our engineer will make the appliance safe whilst on site in this circumstance. We will then contact you to discuss and agree any further actions and when we will do them.

If one of the appliances that you own is faulty we will disconnect it and advise you to seek help from a qualified Gas Safe Registered engineer.

Gas safety tips

- Make sure you know where your gas meter is located and how to turn off the gas supply in the event of an emergency.
- Never cover an appliance such as a boiler or gas fire or block the air vents.
- Never block or obstruct any fixed ventilation grilles or airbricks.
- Never block or cover outside flues.
- Never fit draught exclusion strips to doors of a room that contains a gas appliance.
- Never use a gas appliance if you think it's not working properly and never cover gas appliances.



07

Escape route - have a plan!

Step 1

In the event of a fire in your flat, it's always best to be prepared. Make sure you identify possible escape routes from every room and have an arranged meeting place outside so you're sure everyone in your flat has escaped.

Step 2

Stay calm and gather all the members of your family and make your way out together through the nearest exit. If a door feels hot do not open it.

If you are trapped in a room by smoke or fire, you need to stop smoke getting into the room. Close the door and block any gaps around the door with spare clothing, towels or blankets.

If you can access a window in the room open it and shout to let others know you are trapped and what your flat number is.

Remain as calm as you can and await the emergency services to attend.



Step 3

Once onto the communal landing please use the escape stairwell to make your way to the ground floor.

Step 4

When outside call **999** for the Fire and Rescue Service so they are aware of the fire. Stay out of the building until the Fire Service tells you it's safe and call OVH immediately on **0300 365 1111**.



Smoke can be deadly, but if you have to get through it, crawl under it.

08

Make a bedtime checklist

- ✓ Close inside doors at night to stop a fire from spreading.
- ✓ Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on (i.e. your fridge).
- ✓ Don't leave washing machines or dryers on overnight.
- ✓ Check your cooker is turned off.
- ✓ Put candles and cigarettes out properly.
- ✓ Make sure exit routes from your flat are kept clear.
- ✓ Make sure you turn off any mains powered fairy lights.

Knowing how to react in a fire will always give you and your family the best opportunity of remaining safe, so please ensure everyone in your home is familiar with the content of this guide and they adopt the helpful tips provided.



Fire Action Notice

In the event of a fire in your flat OR elsewhere in the building:

- **Evacuate the building immediately!**
- If you are in your flat, ensure that everyone evacuates. Close the front door on your way out.
- Make your way out of the building using the common escape route.
- Operate the nearest fire alarm call point on your way out of the building.
- Once you are outside the building, call the fire and rescue service by dialling **999**.

If you are in a common area:

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

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.

Notes

Get in touch



The information inside this leaflet was correct at time of publication. For the most up-to-date information, please visit ovh.org.uk.



One Vision Housing is part of The Sovini Group



ovh.org.uk



0300 365 1111*



enquiries@ovh.org.uk



facebook.com/ovhousing



@onevisionhousing



One Vision Housing

**8am - 6pm, Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays.*

Emergency repairs, 24 hours, 7 days a week

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**.