



Fire Safety in Communal Areas

If there was a fire in your building, could you get out safely? Would items left in shared areas become dangerous fire hazards?

Because there are shared areas in your building, you are relying on your neighbours to help keep your building safe. Your neighbours need you to do your bit too.

Why do communal areas need to be kept clear?

It is important to us that you are safe in your home, and we also have a legal duty to make sure you could escape from your building in an emergency. Staircases are the routes for the fire fighters to get in as well as for you and your neighbours to get out.

Items left in a stairwell or corridors could become serious obstacles especially if the area is smoke-filled or dark. They may also cause or worsen a fire especially if they are flammable.

Everyone living in your building has responsibility for keeping communal areas clean and clear of any obstruction. This means that you cannot use communal areas to store your possessions or to dispose of unwanted items. This includes things like:

- Pushchairs and prams
- Bikes
- Children's toys
- Recycling boxes and bags
- Mobility scooters and walking aids
- Furniture

Please tell us if this is difficult for you:

We appreciate that this may be difficult for some people and we will work with you to look at alternative options. However, you may have to store items in your property that you have previously kept in the communal area. Please contact us so that we can help.

If you currently have a mobility aid that is stored in the communal area, please contact us so that we can discuss possible solutions with you.

We will be carrying out regular visits to all communal areas to help make sure that your communal areas are clear and safe, and to make sure that any items are removed as quickly as possible.

Remember to keep yourself and your neighbours safe:

- Keep communal areas clear of all possessions and/ or rubbish.
- Remove any furniture from communal spaces.
- Make sure that communal doors are kept closed and not wedged open.
- Report any holes in fire doors
- Help us to keep areas clear by reporting any items that you find to your Housing Officer.

Get a free home safety check and smoke alarm

Your local fire service provides free home safety checks. In many areas, this includes fitting a free smoke alarm. (Although we provide these for communal areas and inside some homes.)

Fire service staff will be able to help you to spot possible dangers and offer advice on how to make your home safer. They can also help you develop an escape plan. This service can be particularly helpful for older or disabled people.

To ask for a free fire safety visit, just contact your local fire service:

Bristol, Bath, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire

0117 926 2061 www.avonfire.net

Birmingham

0800 389 5525 www.wmfs.net

Gloucestershire

0800 180 41 40 www.glosfire.gov.uk

Neath, Newport, Rhondda

0800 169 1234 www.mawwfire.gov.uk or www.southwales-fire.gov.uk

South Somerset

0800 05 02 999 www.dsfire.gov.uk



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