

Fire alarms

All tenanted flats are fitted with in-flat fire alarms, which will alert you to a fire in your home.

If you are a leaseholder, you are responsible for providing a fire alarm in your property. You can contact London Fire Brigade and request a home fire safety visit during which the crew will fit free fire alarms for you. If you sublet your flat you are legally required to have both fire and carbon monoxide alarms inside your property.

Purpose-built blocks, or tower blocks, are not fitted with communal fire alarm systems. Unless your flat is being affected by fire or smoke, the current guidance is that you are safe to stay put, as the fire protection provided in the building should protect you for at least 60 minutes. This has been the case for many decades and, although fires in flats unfortunately occur throughout the country every day, the fire usually only affects the flat on fire.

Testing your fire alarm

We test in-flat fire alarms in tenanted properties every year. We also recommend that you test your alarm weekly by pressing the 'test' button. If the detector does not sound for a few seconds or starts to beep intermittently this shows there is a fault. If you are a tenant, please let us know by calling 0800 358 3783.

Sprinklers

We are confident our buildings across Westminster are safe but we want to make them safer. Westminster Council has announced that sprinklers will be fitted in all existing buildings above 30 metres, managed by CityWest Homes, across the city (this is typically blocks of over twelve storeys). This includes the six Little Venice towers. A detailed report is now required to consider what the different options could be. Once this has been completed, we will consult with you on the recommendations, and will also be looking for independent endorsement of any plans.

Cladding at Little Venice tower blocks

The results of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)'s so called 'end to end' or 'whole system test' indicate that the cladding system at Little Venice Towers and other local authority areas, do not meet the government's current interpretation of building regulation requirements. However, residents do not have to

evacuate their blocks. This is because of the additional fire safety measures we have put in place.

CityWest Homes have been working to identify ways to make buildings safer. In particular we have looked at how we could replace the outer ACM cladding layer rather than the whole cladding system. This could be done much more quickly and at less inconvenience to residents and would retain the fireproof Rockwool insulation in place.

CityWest Homes are working with an independent cladding specialist to look at the current structure. The feedback is that it could support the highest rated cladding panel, with some minor additional works. The final report from the specialist is due back later in August.

CityWest Homes have already started the process of purchasing replacement cladding. This cladding is of the highest safety specification (with Rockwool) having been tested already, and passed, by the government's testing agency. The current cladding will be removed and replaced as quickly as possible and we will confirm the timescales the details have been finalised. The replacement of cladding will be at no cost to leaseholders.

Housekeeping

Items in communal areas

You are permitted to keep only a door mat in your corridor.

Please keep corridors free of any obstruction. We will remove all items in stairwells, including at the bottom of staircases, during our regular checks.

If you see personal items being kept in communal areas or are concerned about any obstruction including rubbish or fly-tipping please call us on 0800 358 3783.

Items on balconies

Our housekeeping policy does not cover private balconies or gardens but we ask that you consider the fire and safety risks posed by storing items on balconies.

BBQs on balconies

Please do not use BBQs on roofs, balconies (including private balconies) and in communal gardens as this is strictly prohibited.

If you see someone using a BBQ on their balcony please call us on 0800 358 3783.

Smoking on balconies

Smoking on private balconies is not prohibited but we strongly advise against it. If you do smoke on your balcony, make sure all smoking materials are fully put out before disposing of it in a safe manner. Please do not throw any cigarettes or smoking materials off the balcony.



Smoking in communal areas of blocks is prohibited and also a breach of current UK legislation.

We strongly advise that you smoke outside of your building and dispose of all smoking materials carefully.

Emergency lighting

Emergency lighting is installed in your block and is checked monthly.

Fire safety advice

Guidance from London Fire Brigade is to 'stay put', unless your flat is being affected by fire or smoke. This has been the case for many decades and, although fires in flats unfortunately occur throughout the country every day, the fire usually only affects the flat on fire.

There is a Fire Action Notice in your building adjacent to the lifts. The notice lets you know what you should do in the unlikely event of a fire.

If your flat or maisonette is being affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear:

- Get everyone out, close the door and walk calmly out of the building.
- Do not use the lift.
- Call 999, give your address, the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

If there is a fire in another part of the building:

- You are usually safer staying put and calling 999.
- Tell the fire brigade where you are and the best way to reach you.
- If you are within the common parts of the building, leave and call 999.

Purpose-built maisonettes or blocks of flats are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors can hold back flames and smoke for 30 to 60 minutes.

Fire drills

We do not have fire drills in your building, in line with London Fire Brigade guidance to 'stay put' unless your flat is being affected by fire or smoke.

In the event of an emergency which requires the phased evacuation of a block of flats, London Fire Brigade would manage and direct the evacuation.





Fire extinguishers

We have fire extinguishers in 'high risk' areas such as boiler rooms, electrical and gas intake rooms and service cupboards. These appliances are for the use of contractors undertaking maintenance work on service equipment and who have received the appropriate training.

In the Kitchen

Many fires begin in kitchens. You can do the following to help prevent them:

- never leave pans unattended when cooking
- don't cook if you are tired, have been drinking alcohol or taking medication that might make you drowsy.

If the pan does catch fire:

- don't tackle the fire yourself or try to move the pan
- never throw water onto it as this can create a fireball
- if you can do so safely – turn off the heat.

Candles and electrical fires

Candles, incense and oil burners are one of the biggest causes of fire within the home. You should never leave them unattended in order to keep you and your home safe. London Fire Brigade advises that you:

- always use a heat resistant holder on a stable surface, which won't be knocked over
- keep these items away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, clothes and hair
- make sure you put out any candles, incense and oil burners when you leave the room and especially before bed
- keep out of reach of children and pets.

Many electrical fires can be avoided by some simple actions:

- don't use imitation electrical chargers as they may be unsafe
- make sure electrical appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy them
- keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order
- unplugging appliances and chargers when you are not using them or when you go to bed helps reduce the risk of fire
- hair straighteners can get extremely hot. Always switch them off and leave them to cool on a heatproof surface
- for plugs that do not come fitted to the appliance, always check you're using the right fuse





- keep to one plug per socket
- remember: scorch marks, flickering lights, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reasons could be signs of loose or dangerous wiring
- carry out a visual check of your electrics such as an appliance lead near a hot surface or an overloaded socket
- never use water on an electrical fire

Electrical product recalls

You can check the safety of electrical products by visiting [the Government's product recall site](https://www.productrecall.gov.uk) at [productrecall.campaign.gov.uk](https://www.productrecall.gov.uk) which lists which white goods have been recalled due to fire risk.

You can also visit [electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls](https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls), the electrical safety charity, to search for electrical products that have been recalled since 2007.

Always ensure new electrical items are registered, so manufacturers can contact you in the event of any problems. Go to [registermyappliance.org.uk](https://www.registermyappliance.org.uk) for more information and to register your electric products.

If you are concerned about a product that doesn't appear on the recall list, stop using it immediately and make your concern known to the retailer, manufacturer or local Trading Standards office.

Further information on fire safety at home is available at [london-fire.gov.uk/SafetyAtHome](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/SafetyAtHome)

Leaseholder responsibilities around fire safety

If you are a leaseholder, you have a vital role to play in fire safety, including ensuring the entrance door to your property meets building regulation requirements.

If you would like further guidance on door standards, you can download our information leaflet at [cwh.org.uk/leasehold-fire-safety](https://www.cwh.org.uk/leasehold-fire-safety) or pick up a copy from the Little Venice estate office. Information about your responsibilities as a leaseholder is also included in your leaseholder handbook and available at [cwh.org.uk/leaseholder-handbook](https://www.cwh.org.uk/leaseholder-handbook)

Leaseholders are required to apply for Building Control and CityWest Homes consent before you make any changes to your property including changing your flat entrance door. As part of our fire risk assessment process we will identify any doors that do not meet the required standards.

If you are a leaseholder and you sublet your property, you are required to comply with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations to ensure your property is fitted with a working carbon monoxide detector and a working fire alarm on every habitable floor of the property.





CITYWEST HOMES

You must ensure you have undertaken a gas safety inspection of any gas appliances fitted and provided a copy of this to your tenant.

If we identify that your flat or secondary means of escape doors through the risk assessment process appear to not meet the required standard then we will write to you asking for any evidence that demonstrates the replacement door does meet the standards.

