



Fire safety in your home

This information has been prepared by The Gateshead Housing Company in conjunction with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

Living in a high-rise block does not mean you are more at risk from fire, but it does mean you need to consider your fire safety. It is important to understand what to do in the event of fire, whether it is in your flat or another part of the building.

If a fire breaks out in your flat



- Close the door to the room where the fire is located, if it is safe to do so
- Leave the premises and close the front door behind you
- Call the fire brigade on 999
- Make sure everyone in your home knows about the fire and alert neighbouring flats by banging on the doors on your way out. Set off the fire alarm if there is one
- Make your way down the stairway
- A fire should never break out in corridors or stairs as there should be no combustible materials in these areas
- Remain at the front of the building so that you can direct the fire brigade to the floor with the fire.

If a fire breaks out in your block



- If at any stage you feel threatened or at risk, make your way out of the building
- Check with the duty Caretaker or the Fire Service to find out if it has been reported
- If your flat is linked to the concierge or Housing Care Service, you can use the system to raise the alarm
- The construction of your high-rise flat and the fire safety work we have undertaken is designed to delay the spread of fire.
- The advice is that it is safer to 'Stay put' unless the fire is in your flat or your direct neighbours
- You may receive instructions from the emergency services – if required the Fire Service will carry out a controlled evacuation
- Keep all windows and doors closed.

Remember



- Do not tackle the fire yourself
- Keep door keys accessible
- If there's a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be cleaner
- Before you open each door, check it with the back of your hand. If the door is warm, don't open it - the fire is on the other side
- Do not use the lift. Go down the stairs
- Once you're out of the building, call 999. Never assume that someone else has reported the fire.

Emergency access



- Do not park your vehicle in any area designated for 'emergency vehicles only' or 'fire hydrants'
- Get to know your neighbours. Are they young, elderly or vulnerable? They may need assistance in an emergency. Make sure you know the plan and where the fire escapes and exits are in your building
- If you are unable to follow the escape plan by yourself (for example, because of mobility problems or health issues), please contact us to arrange a free Home Safety Check.

Preventing fires



If something doesn't look right or feel right... report it!

- If you see any vandalism or damage, report it to the caretaker
- Look out for combustible materials or household items that are not disposed of correctly in and around your flat and communal areas. Report it or remove it
- If you need help to dispose of bulky waste, call 0191 433 7000.

If you would like a free Home Safety Check, including fire safety advice and smoke detection, please contact your local Prevention and Education team:

Gateshead and South Tyneside - 0191 444 1400 / 1827.

In an emergency, always call 999.

As a resident, you can help to avoid the risk of fire by:

- Checking smoke alarms regularly
- Not storing flammable materials, like large amounts of paper, in your flat or communal areas
- Not blocking escape routes with bulky items or rubbish
- Not blocking vents and windows
- Not wedging fire doors open – they must remain closed to prevent the spread of smoke and fire
- Not leaving cookers unattended when using the hob
- Not using chip fat frying pans
- Not storing petroleum gas or paraffin.

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