

**FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT
1-3 BRINKBURN CLOSE,
BYKER, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,
TYNE & WEAR**

NOVEMBER 2016



STORM TEMPEST
PROPERTY CONSULTANCY

Reference: JR – 3159-10-16

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Version: 2 (Sept 2018)

Prepared for:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Client	Isos Housing Limited
Instruction	This Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken in accordance with an instruction received from Andy Kennedy, Isos Complete Support Service Manager, Isos Housing Limited.
Responsible Person	Jill Haley, Chief Executive, Byker Community Trust.
The Property	1-3 Brinkburn Close, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2HW.
The Surveyor	The Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by Simon Scurfield BSc (Hons) MRICS and Joseph Reed BSc (Hons).
Survey Date	17 November 2016
Scope and Purpose of the Fire Risk Assessment	The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [RR(FS)O] applies to all non-domestic premises, including any voluntary sector and self-employed people with premises separate from their homes.

A fire risk assessment is an organised and methodical look at your premises. The fire risk assessment procedure identifies the activities carried out at the premises and assesses the likelihood of a fire starting. The aim of a fire risk assessment is to:

- Identify the hazards.
- Reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable.
- Decide what physical fire precautions and management policies are necessary to ensure the safety of people in your premises if a fire does start.

The fire risk assessment was carried out in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 'sleeping accommodation' guidance document.

This building has been audited to highlight to the Client, any non-compliant issues with regard to relevant aspects of UK fire safety legislation and best practice. The principal documents relevant to residential buildings being:



- The Building Regulations 2012 Approved Document B – Fire Safety
- BS9999 2008 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings
- BS9991 2011 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings – Code of practice
- Local Government Group - Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (hereafter referred to as the LLG Guide)
- LACORS – Housing – Fire Safety – Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing

Limitations of the
Fire Risk
Assessment

The RR(FS)O places a burden of responsibility firmly on the head of a 'responsible person' with regard to the fire safety of the occupants of the premises to which they have been assigned. The responsible person is required to co-ordinate all fire safety related issues including the carrying out of a fire risk assessment and production of associated documentation.

The responsible person may nominate a 'competent person' to assist in the implementation of any measures deemed necessary to ensure the fire safety of the occupants of the premises.

There are many factors that impact upon what may constitute adequate measures to assess the fire safety of the occupants. Storm Tempest Ltd are not the responsible person and are unable to determine, on behalf of the organisation, the steps it should or must take to comply with its duties under the RR(FS)O. The fire risk assessment will cover all of the areas within the property. We will also comment upon the areas surrounding the building.

This report is for the use of the party to whom it is addressed and should be used within the context of instruction under which it has been prepared.

No opening up of any part of the structure was carried out nor were any operational electrical or mechanical systems tested. All comments and recommendations are based on a visual inspection only.



Prioritisation of Recommendations To assist in the development of a strategy and action plan for addressing recommendations in the fire risk assessment report, a priority rating is attached to each recommendation. The following is an explanation of each rating:

High Priority: Immediate action required to prevent risk to the health and safety of relevant persons.

Medium Priority: Planned action to improve fire safety within the premises.

Low Priority: Features that comply with current regulations but which the responsible person may consider upgrading.

Identified costs of Recommendations The report will give a budget costing for recommendations covered in the fire risk assessment for alterations or improvements to physical features to assist the client in developing an Action Plan and improvement programme.



2.0 THE BUILDING

1-3 Brinkburn Close is a 3 storey purpose built block of maisonette flats, believed to have been built in the early 1970s. The block is built from concrete frame, concrete blockwork and metric modular brick. The building forms part of the Byker Wall and is Grade II* listed.

The block comprises of 3 flats located on the 1st and 2nd floors, the ground floor consists of an open plan store area enclosed with mesh fencing. The 3 maisonettes share an external stairwell and balcony walkway which is semi-enclosed with a corrugated PVCu roof.

This Fire Risk Assessment is for communal areas only. The building is owned by the Byker Community Trust, the repairs, maintenance and facilities management of the building is the responsibility of Isos Housing Group Ltd.



3.0 FIRE HAZARDS

3.1 Sources of Fuel The building has been designed on the assumption that the balcony and stairwell is kept free from sources of fuel.

The following sources of fuel were noted in communal areas:

- Hanging baskets
- Timber benches
- Plant posts
- Discarded soft furniture in undercroft

The flats themselves are likely have typical sources of fuels such as furniture, fixtures and fittings; these are however out of the landlords control.

At the time of the survey the external wheelie bins were being stored up against the stairwell lobby area's walls. We recommend the bins are relocated away from the buildings elevations.

At the time of the survey we were unable to gain access into the ground floor undercroft area. We noted discarded household furniture in the undercroft. We recommend the items in the undercroft are identified and tenants are instructed to keep flammable and easily combustible items away from the perimeter of the undercroft to reduce the risk of arson.

3.2 Sources of Ignition

At the time of the survey no sources of ignition were noted in the communal areas of the scheme.

The flats themselves are likely have typical household sources of ignition; these are however out of the landlords control.

At the time of the survey we were unable to gain access into cupboards located under the external communal staircase. We believe the cupboards are likely to contain the electric meters and therefore should be kept free from stored goods. We recommend the under stairs cupboards are inspected and cleared of any stored sources of fuel.



3.3 Sources of Oxygen

Natural airflow. No chemicals with oxidising agents noted being used. At the time of the survey no residents were known to be using oxygen bottles for medical reasons. The Client should ensure the Fire and Rescue Service are informed if any residents require oxygen bottles in the future as oxygen enriched environments are a serious potential hazard for Fire and Rescue Officers in a live fire situation.

3.4 People at Risk

Residents, visitors and contractors.

At the time of the survey no residents were believed to be un-able to gain access into their flats unaided and be classed as vulnerable persons under the RR(FS)O.



4.0 MEANS OF ESCAPE

4.1 Escape Routes The building is believed to have been purpose built in early 1970's and should have been designed in accordance with the Building Regulations at the time. The travel distances within buildings are within current recommended limits.

At the time of the survey timber benches, plant pots and hanging baskets were being stored on the semi enclosed balcony. Due to the size and layout of the block we believe the items pose minimal concern in impeding the escape route. We recommend tenants are instructed keep escape routes clear and free from items which could impede escape. We recommend escape routes are kept sterile and free from items which could impede escape.

The escape route is of simple layout. At the time of the survey no emergency escape signs were present in communal areas. We do not deem escape signs necessary for this scheme due to its size and layout. The final exit door at the bottom of the semi enclosed external staircase is fitted with a suitable quick release mechanism.

4.2 Fire Doors The flat entrance doors to the property are off the 1st floor semi enclosed balcony. At the time of the survey we were able to gain access into Flat 1 to inspect the specification of its entrance door. The entrance doors are good quality timber doors. The flat entrance has a timber clad side panel and timber window. We do not believe the doors are fire doors as there were no intumescent seals; however, the doors did have a self-closing mechanism. The entrance lobby to the maisonette have good quality internal doors. We are of the opinion that the flat entrance doors and timber screen and window are of a suitable specification taking into account the other fire safety measures within the flat with regards to mains operated smoke alarms.

4.3 Fire
Compartmentation Due to building's construction we believe the fire compartmentation is generally sufficient. The communal balcony is semi-enclosed, windows opening onto the balcony/walkway do not appear to have fire rated glazed units. Under normal circumstances, it would be advised to upgrade the kitchen windows to provide 60-minute fire resistance. However, as these windows are softwood



framed, openable and are part of the Listed Building status, it would require a complete redesign of the windows and connecting to the fire alarm with an automatic closer fitted. We believe that it is not reasonably practicable to upgrade these windows.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 4.4 Fire Alarm and Detection System | The communal areas of the block have no provision for fire alarm and detection. There is no requirement to provide fire alarm or detection to the communal areas. The flats have their own provision for fire detection, detectors in flats are believed to be mains operated and provided to the hallway, landing and kitchen. |
| 4.5 Emergency Lighting | The communal walkway and stairwell are covered by several wall mounted bulk head light units. At the time of the survey we were unable to identify if the bulk head light units were emergency lights. We believe the walkway receives sufficient borrowed street light and therefore do not deem emergency lighting necessary. |
| 4.6 Fire Fighting Equipment | No firefighting equipment is present in the communal areas. Firefighting equipment is not recommended to be installed in un-staffed general needs properties where residents are not trained in their use. |
| 4.7 Lightning Protection | The building is not believed to have lightning protection. We do not believe lightning protection is necessary for this building. |
| 4.8 Signage | The property has no provision for fire safety signage. Due to the size and layout of the property we do not believe most fire signage necessary. |
| 4.9 Disabled Persons Egress | At the time of the survey no residents were known to be considered disabled persons. It is the Responsible Person's duty to ensure suitable provision is made for disabled persons within the property to ensure that they can escape in the event of a fire. |
| 4.10 Arson | The risk of an arson attack is considered medium to high. The access door to the communal area is fitted with a suitable lock. As noted in Item 3.1 we recommend the external waste wheelie bins are located away from the final exit door. We recommend that the undercroft does not have any stored furniture. |



5.0 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 Fire Evacuation Procedures At the time of the survey no records or signs were present to confirm the buildings fire evacuation policy. We assume building currently has a simultaneous fire evacuation procedure in place.

5.2 Fire Log Book At the time of the survey no fire log book was kept on site. We recommend the client holds a records in a central location.

5.3 Training No staff present to require training.

Surveyor Joseph Reed, BSc (Hons)

Signed

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On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

Checked Simon Scurfield BSc (Hons) MRICS

Signed

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On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

APPENDIX 1
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Likelihood of fire occurring	<i>Potential consequences of fire</i>		
		<i>Slight Harm (1)</i>	<i>Moderate harm (2)</i>
Low (1)	Trivial Risk	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk
Medium (2)	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk
High (3)	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk	Intolerable Risk

Taking into account the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the hazard from fire (likelihood of fire) at these premises is:

Low

Medium

High

Low: Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition.

Medium: Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).

High: Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant increase in likelihood of fire.

Taking into account the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this fire risk assessment, it is considered that the consequences for life safety in the event of fire would be:

Slight harm

Moderate harm

Extreme harm

In this context, a definition of the above terms is as follows:

Slight harm: Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).

Moderate harm: Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.

Extreme harm: Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.

Accordingly, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is:

Tolerable Risk

(Note that, although the purpose of this section is to place the fire risk in context, the above approach to fire risk assessment is subjective and for guidance only. All hazards and deficiencies identified in this report should be addressed by implementing all recommendations contained in the following action plan. The fire risk assessment should be reviewed regularly.)

Risk level	Action and timescale
Trivial	No action is required and no detailed records need be kept.
Tolerable	No major additional fire precautions required. However, there might be a need or reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
Moderate	<p>It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures, which should take cost into account, should be implemented within a defined time period.</p> <p>Where moderate risk is associated with consequences that constitute extreme harm, further assessment might be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures.</p>
Substantial	Considerable resources might have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the premises are unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the risk has been reduced. If the premises are occupied, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	Premises (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.

APPENDIX 2
SCHEDULE OF OBSERVATIONS

Fire Hazards

MEDIUM		1
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>At the time of the survey the external wheelie bins were being stored up against the stairwell lobby area's walls.</p>
<p>Date of FRA: 17/11/2016</p> <p>Action by: 6 Months</p>		<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>We recommend the external wheelie bins are relocated away from the buildings elevations.</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Actioned by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Review:</p> <p>Reviewed by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Date:</p>		
LOW		2
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>At the time of the survey we were unable to gain access into the ground floor storage area. We noted stored household goods in the undercroft.</p>
<p>Date of FRA: 17/11/2016</p> <p>Action by: 12 Months</p>		<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>Flammable and easily combustible items should not be stored close to the perimeter of the store. We recommend the items in the undercroft are identified and tenants are instructed to keep flammable and easily combustible items away from the perimeter of the undercroft to reduce the risk of arson.</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Actioned by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Review:</p> <p>Reviewed by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Date:</p>		

LOW	3	
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>At the time of the survey we were unable to gain access into cupboards located under the external communal staircase. We believe the cupboards are likely to contain the electric meters and therefore should be kept free from stored goods.</p>
<p>Date of FRA: 17/11/2016</p> <p>Action by: 12 Months</p>		<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>We recommend the under stairs cupboards are inspected and cleared of any stored sources of fuel.</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Actioned by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Review:</p> <p>Reviewed by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		

Means of Escape

LOW	4	
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>The communal balcony is semi-enclosed, windows opening onto the balcony/walkway do not appear to be fire rated.</p>
<p>Date of FRA: 17/11/2016</p> <p>Action by: None</p>		<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>Under normal circumstances, it would be advised to upgrade the kitchen windows to provide 60-minute fire resistance. However, as these windows are softwood framed, openable and are part of the Listed Building status, it would require a complete redesign of the windows and connecting to the fire alarm with an automatic closer fitted. We believe that it is not reasonably practicable to upgrade these windows.</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Actioned by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		
<p>Review:</p> <p>Reviewed by:</p> <p>Date:</p>		

APPENDIX 3
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS / ACTION PLAN

Summary of Findings / Action Plan

No	Deficiency/Rectification	Priority	Date to be Rectified	Date Rectified	Estimated Costs £
Fire Hazards					
1	<p>At the time of the survey the external wheelie bins were being stored up against the stairwell lobby area's walls.</p> <p>We recommend the external wheelie bins are relocated away from the buildings elevations.</p>	Low	12 Months		Management Cost
2	<p>Flammable and easily combustible items should not be stored close to the perimeter of the undercroft.</p> <p>We recommend the items stored in the undercroft are identified and tenants are instructed to not store combustible materials in the undercroft.</p>	Low	12 Months		Management Cost
3	<p>At the time of the survey we were unable to gain access into cupboards located under the external communal staircase. We recommend the under stairs cupboards are inspected and cleared of any stored sources of fuel.</p>	Low	12 Months		Management Cost
TOTAL:					£0.00