

**FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT
1-5 THE CHEVRON, BYKER,
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NE6 1RP**

28 FEBRUARY 2020



STORM TEMPEST
PROPERTY CONSULTANCY

Reference: 3660-01-19-IR

Prepared by:

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Version: 2

Prepared for:

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CONTENTS

		Page(s)
1	Introduction	1
2	The Building	4
3	Fire Hazards	6
4	Means of Escape	8
5	Management Procedures	11
Appendix		
1	Fire Risk Assessment	
2	Schedule of Observations	



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Client	Byker Community Trust (BCT)
Instruction	This Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken in accordance with an instruction received from Mark Mulhern, Support Services Team Leader, Karbon Solutions Ltd (KSL).
Responsible Person	Jill Haley, Chief Executive, BCT.
The Property	1-5 The Chevron, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE6 1RP
The Surveyor	The Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by: Ian Robertson BA(Hons) MSc CMIOSH MIFireE.
Survey Date	28 February 2020
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 as well as the Local Government Group (LGG) document 'Fire safety in purpose built blocks of flats'.



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 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 LGG Guide)
- LACORS – Housing – Fire Safety – Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing
- NFCC Guide for 'Fire Safety in Specialised Housing'

The RR(FS)O does not stipulate the required review period for a particular building however; we recommend the review of this building **every 3 years or when a material change is made to the property.**

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 external construction materials of the



building and the area 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.

A Type 3, Common Parts and Flats (non-invasive) Fire Risk Assessment (as detailed in LGG Guidance Document Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats) has been conducted in relation to this property.

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

2.1 The Building

The building is a grade II* listed building with Historic England, designed and constructed circa 1969 as part of the iconic Byker development. The building consists of a moderate apartment block adjoining other properties with private external access and with a community room located on the ground floor to the east while three domestic garages are located upon the ground floor to the west gable (The building also connects to a flat roof arching across to a further row of domestic garages).

The building is constructed in semi-traditional style with external cavity brick load-bearing walls of up to 3 storeys in height with concrete floors and stairs and a timber framed sloping roof with a membrane and steel covering.

The means of escape walls are plain plaster and paint providing a class 0 finish.

The main building is accessed from the communal entrance to the north face which opens into the hall and stairs and consists of 2 floors (the second floor is accessed internally within the apartments).

The stairs give direct access to two apartments with apartment 4 on the ground floor and apartment 5 on the first floor.

The ground floor hall has two entrances which are security controlled and exited by a push button to open facility (we are informed that these fail to safe in a fire situations however; this must be confirmed).

Also located within the ground floor hall is a timber cupboard housing the mains electrical supply and distribution system which could not be accessed?

The building features decorative timber features to the balconies, affixed to the external surface of both the east and west face of the building. The building also benefits from timber framed double glazing which is installed throughout and the property



also benefits from a communal district central heating system which is generated remotely from the building.

Internally, the apartments are constructed of solid brick compartment walls with plaster skim and internal timber stud walls also with plaster skim (Internally, apartment 4 was inspected).

The building benefits from emergency lighting throughout and has automatic fire detection within the private apartments only.

Note; Whilst it is accepted that the building is listed, the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have issued guidance note 14 which states that; external cladding standards on existing buildings must meet EU A2 standard or above or have achieved a BR 135 Class via BS8414 tests.

It is recommended that evidence is provided as to the construction and fire resistance of the external balcony cladding.

2.2 Fire Loss Experience

BCT have not made us aware of any fire related incidents at this housing scheme.



3.0 FIRE HAZARDS

3.1 Sources of Fuel The sources of fuel within the property were assessed as follows:

- Electrical PVC insulation throughout.
- Timber construction materials (in particular on the decorative balconies).
- Combustible items stored within the communal stairs including laundry and furnishings.
- Refuse stored within the wheelie bins within residents' rear gardens (away from the building).
- Mains gas supply to the building as some apartments retain legacy live gas supply pipe work (but no gas appliances) which BCT carryout annual inspections of until Northern Gas Network terminate the supply.

It is accepted that there will be sources of fuel located within the individual apartments associated with domestic living such as; timber and foam furnishings, linen, bedding, clothing and cooking oils and fats within the kitchens.

BCT are in the process of removing all historic and redundant gas supplies to properties in the Byker Estate in partnership with Northern Gas Networks.

3.2 Sources of Ignition

The sources of ignition within the property were assessed as follows:

- Electrical supply and distribution system.
- Potential for arson, in particular, to the wheelie bins stored to the rear of the building within residents' gardens and to the internal refuse store (away from the building).
- Sources of ignition located within individual apartments associated with domestic living such as electrical goods, cooking & heating appliances, and the possibility of smoking materials & candles.



The mains electrical supply and distribution equipment are located within the ground floor hall timber cupboard however; the structure would appear to be constructed of plywood and therefore is unlikely to be fire resistant.

We have been informed that the mains electrical supply and distribution system was subject to a five-year fixed wiring inspection by a competent engineer, is compliant, and recorded within the records held by BCT as 20/07/2016 however; this has not been confirmed in writing.

All electrical installations are required to be tested regularly to the standards defined by the IET Wiring Regulations (BS 7671). The mains electrical supply and distribution installation and wiring (common areas and rented dwellings) should be tested at least every five years by a registered NICEIC contractor to satisfy compliance with the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 in addition to the IET Wiring Regulations BS7671:2018 18th edition.

The communal areas (stairs and landings) of the property are no smoking areas and are accompanied with the appropriate signage.

3.3 Sources of Oxygen

Natural airflow through doors and windows.

3.4 People at Risk

The residents within apartments and communal areas of the building in addition to the potential for visitors, housing staff and trades persons.



4.0 MEANS OF ESCAPE

- 4.1 Escape Routes The means of escape routes are simple in design and consist of a single protected stair case which gives access to both floors (the second floor is internally accessed within the apartments). Two apartments open directly onto the stairs (numbers 4 and 5).

The means of escape are sterile and clear with the exception of the timber electrical cupboard within the ground floor hall and the laundry and furnishings on the first floor landing.

The stairs terminate at the main entrance with access also on the ground floor to the rear fire exit.

The main entrance is opened by a press to open facility (it must be confirmed that these fail to safe in a fire situation) while the rear exit has a thumb turn to open.

All access/egress routes were clear at the time of the inspection with the exception of the items already mentioned and are within the recommended travel distances for this type of premises as detailed with the Building Regulations Approved Document B and DCLG Fire Risk Assessment Guidance.

- 4.2 Fire Doors Within the staircase, all doors would appear to be fire doors however; the apartment doors would also appear to be fire doors (FD30S) complete with intumescent strips and smoke seals however; they are fitted with what appear to be standard letterboxes. Therefore, it should be confirmed that the letterboxes are fitted with intumescent seals? (Note; apartment 4 was inspected).

- 4.3 Fire Compartmentation The means of escape routes within the building are protected by fire resistant walls, ceilings, and doors, which provide 30-minute fire protection. These include solid brick walls with a plaster finish, ceilings with plaster skim, and concrete floors. There were no obvious signs of breaches in compartmentation within the



building.

Windows opening onto the communal stairs open for smoke control.

4.4 Fire Alarm and Detection System There is no fire detection within the communal staircase, which is acceptable for this construction design. The apartments would appear to be fitted with automatic fire detection that appears to be an LD3 grade D system in compliance with BS5839-6.

4.5 Emergency Lighting The premises have a 3-hour non-maintained emergency lighting installed within the means of escape stairs. These were subject to an annual inspection and discharge test during 2019. In addition, a monthly function tests and inspection are undertaken by BCT staff with the last inspection recorded during January 2020. The emergency lighting is required to be tested and maintained in accordance with BS5266 which requires monthly short function tests and annual full discharge tests which should be detailed in a Fire Log Book.

4.6 Fire Fighting Equipment There is no portable firefighting equipment on site in the communal areas and no requirements for such equipment.

4.7 Signage There is adequate fire exit and directional signage fitted within the building conforming to BS5499. "No smoking" notices and general "Fire Action" notices are displayed throughout the means of escape in appropriate locations.

There are no final exit signs fixed to the final exit doors however; as this is a simple layout with both ground floor doors leading to a place of ultimate safety and the residents being familiar with the layout, this is not considered as critical.

All signage should satisfy the requirements of BS 5499-5 and be installed in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5499-4.



- 4.8 Disabled Persons Egress The property is not suitable for disabled access having three floors and no lift access.
- 4.9 Arson The risk of an arson attack is considered low. The premises have secure access and entry is controlled.
- 4.10 Access for Fire appliances Access to the buildings for fire appliances is via the access roads to the west and east in compliance with Building Regulations, Section 16.

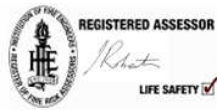


5.0 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 Fire Evacuation Procedures There is a "full simultaneous evacuation" policy for all occupants in a fire situation. When residents are first inducted to the premises, they are given a briefing on what to do in the event of a fire within the building. This is reinforced by the provision of General Fire Action notices.

5.2 Fire Log Book There is no fire log book on site. BCT holds all records of maintenance tests.

Surveyor Ian Robertson BA(Hons) MSc CMIOSH MIFireE



Signed

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On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

Checked Dave Stilling BSc (Hons) MCIQB

Signed

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On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd


**APPENDIX 1
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

(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>There is a timber electrical cupboard located in the ground floor hall of this single staircase means of escape.</p>
Date First Identified:	28/02/2020	<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>Confirm that the electrical cupboard affords a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance or, alternatively, install storage within the ground floor hall (which could affect both fire exits) which does provide a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance.</p>
Rectify Within: (months)	6	
Budget Cost:	No cost if compliant (£500 if not)	

Means of Escape

MEDIUM		2
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>There are combustibile items and potential obstructions stored on the means or escape first floor landing.</p>
Date First Identified:	28/02/2020	<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>All items must be removed from the means of escape landings. Residents must be reminded that all means of escape must be clear at all times.</p>
Rectify Within: (months)	6	
Budget Cost:	No cost	