



FIRE DOOR INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS

Fire Doors are a vital part of your building's 'passive fire resistance' – this is a blanket term for measures 'built-in' to your home and the building it is situated in that are designed to stop fires from spreading.

What are fire safety doors and their role?

Flat entrance doors form an integral part of a protected box or fire compartment. They are one of the most important features of a building's fire precautions and have two key functions:

- to stop a fire inside a flat spreading to the communal parts of the building and preventing residents from escaping via the corridor or staircase
- to stop a fire in the communal areas of a block spreading into a flat where residents may be sheltering until the fire and rescue service arrives

Fire doors to stairways and lobbies and in communal corridors are designed and positioned to keep communal areas free from fire and smoke. These areas can then be safely used by residents and who might need to leave the building during a fire. They also assist the fire and rescue service during firefighting operations.

Your building operates a "stay put policy." It is therefore especially important that all flat entrance doors can prevent a fire spreading throughout the building.

The Council, as your landlord and building manager, has several statutory duties in connection with fire doors. The two key duties are set out below:

- It must provide information to all residents in connection with fire doors and
- It must undertake routine checks of fire doors to ensure that they are operating correctly and can fulfil their intended purpose.

What the Law Requires

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended) and The Fire Safety Act 2023 requires that there are suitable fire precautions in place to ensure that the common parts are safe to use as a means of escape in the event of fire. The appropriate fire precautions are determined by carrying out a fire risk assessment.

The Council has undertaken Fire Risk Assessments of your building which enables it to deal with and manage all risks identified.

One of the most important measures to safeguard the means of escape from fire are fire doors. Our fire risk assessments have already identified the doors in question and, following a comprehensive door replacement programme, the Council are satisfied that the doors are adequate to resist the spread of fire and smoke into, or within, the common parts.

As with all fire safety measures, fire doors need to be kept in good working order and in good repair. Wear and tear can result in defects. Therefore, the Council must ensure that such defects do not undermine the ability of the doors to prevent fire and smoke spread.

Your responsibilities

Residents have a key role to play in ensuring that, if there is a fire in their flat, the flat entrance door presents as an effective barrier to the spread of fire and smoke into the common parts. You should not interfere with self-closing devices and ensure that any defects in the door receive prompt attention by reporting defects to the Council repairs team online to schedule a repair.

Fire Regulations require the Council as your landlord and building manager to inform you that:

- fire doors should be kept shut when not in use
- residents or their guests should not tamper with self-closing devices; and
- residents should report any fault or damage immediately to the Council's Repairs Service:
 - www.hillingdon.gov.uk/emergencyrepairs
 - www.hillingdon.gov.uk/non-emergencyrepairs
 - 01895 556600

Routine Checking of Fire Doors

The Council is committed to implementing the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry in relation to routine checking of fire doors given their importance in ensuring the safety of residents.

The council will therefore:

- use best endeavours to check all flat entrance doors at least every 12 months. The council will need access to each flat so that the door can be checked on both sides. Arrangements will be made with residents in advance to carry out these checks
- carry out checks of any fire doors in communal areas at least every three months

- keep a record of the steps taken to check flat entrance doors including any case where access to a flat was not granted during any 12-month period. This will include the process of legal action where access is not granted to the Council for the purpose of survey and inspection., the steps you have taken to try to gain access.

Flat Entrance Doors

In relation to flat entrance doors the Council will:

- Check the resident has not replaced a fire-resisting flat entrance door with a new, non-fire-resisting door
- Ensure there is no damage to, or defects in, the door or frame that might affect the ability to resist the spread of fire or smoke
- Ensure there is an effective self-closing device. This is especially important. A fire door that does not close fully into its frame will not adequately hold back fire and smoke. It is important to check that the door will close fully into its frame when opened to any angle and allowed to close under the action of the self-closing device

Doors to stairways and lobbies and doors within corridors

These doors are subject to greater wear and tear and potential for damage compared to flat entrance doors. They must therefore be examined more regularly. While the Fire Safety (England) Regulations require that they be checked every three months, it is a simple matter for them to be monitored by the Council on an ongoing basis when any other checks in the common parts are carried out or the building is visited.

Some corridor and lobby doors might be held open on magnetic door hold-open devices. Such doors are linked to smoke detectors which would cause the door to close on activation.

Fire door checks are vital in making sure your home and the block in which you live is safe for residents. The checks are not a substitute for periodic assessment of fire doors by fire safety specialists. However, the simple fire door checks set out in this guide and the reports which residents raise with the Repairs Service will enable the council to proactively identify defects that prevent a fire door from doing its job and ensure they are swiftly rectified.