

Building Safety Strategy – Fire Safety Policy Update 2026

Committee name	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee
Officer reporting	Gary Penticost – Residents Services Glen Martin – Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A: London Borough of Hillingdon Fire Safety Policy – 2026 Update Appendix B: Q3 Update on the 'Delivery Plan for Occupied Higher Risk Buildings
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This report presents the London Borough of Hillingdon's updated Fire Safety Policy (2026) for Housing, operational and commercial buildings.

The policy reflects significant legislative and regulatory changes since 2024, including new duties arising from the Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025, Awaab's Law, and the ongoing implementation of the Building Safety Act 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the content and purpose of the updated Fire Safety Policy (2026);**
- 2. Supports the strategic approach adopted by the Council to manage and mitigate fire risk in line with new legislative requirements; and**
- 3. Endorses the continued development of performance reporting and resident engagement arrangements arising from the policy.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

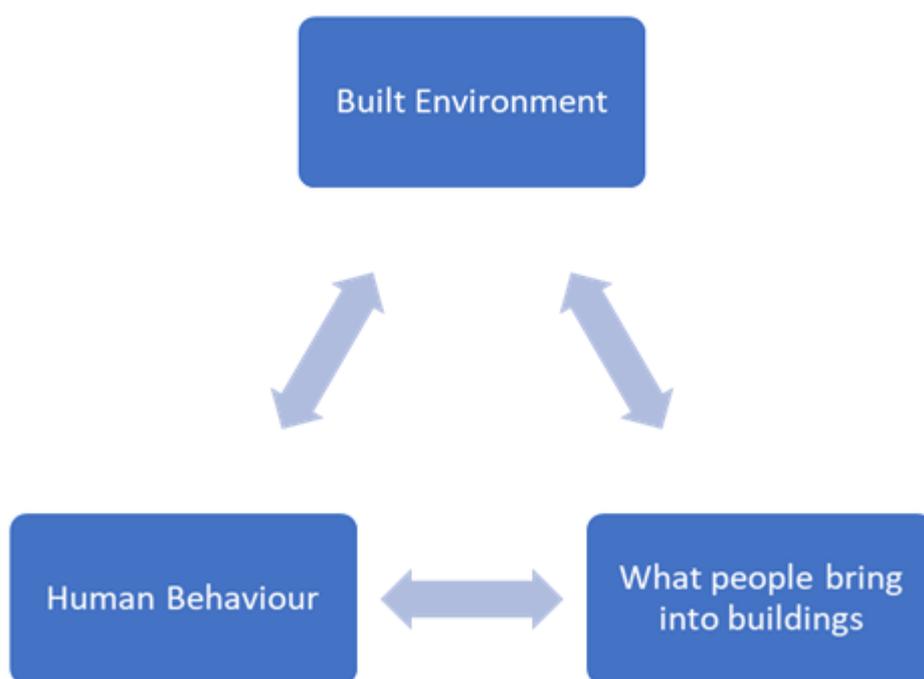
The London Borough of Hillingdon has statutory responsibilities for fire safety under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended) and related legislation. The Council is the Responsible Person for premises within its ownership or management.

The Fire Safety Policy was last substantively updated in 2024. Since that time, there have been

material changes in legislation, regulatory expectations and guidance, requiring a comprehensive policy update.

The Landlord Service continues to strengthen its fire safety arrangements across the Council's managed housing portfolio through a deliberate twin-tracking of people and property-based interventions. This approach aligns with the requirements and intent of the Building Safety Act 2022, Fire Safety Act 2021, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, alongside the enhanced consumer and safety expectations introduced by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

Recognising the interdependence between the built environment, resident behavior and the management of communal spaces has been fundamental to shaping the Council's fire safety framework. This has enabled the development of integrated strategic and operational measures that address both physical building risks and human factors, ensuring a proportionate, resident-focused and risk-led approach to fire safety across the housing stock.



The Landlord Service has embedded a whole-organisation approach to the management of fire safety risk, ensuring that both people and property are effectively managed and that resident safety remains paramount. Twin-tracking operational practices across people and property necessitates proactive management that takes account of how communal spaces are used, what is introduced into buildings, and how residents behave within them.

This approach strengthens strategic and operational fire safety arrangements by recognising that behavioral risks cannot always be fully controlled. Accordingly, compliant and well-managed buildings are treated as the critical safety net that protects residents where behavioral mitigation

alone is insufficient.

2. Purpose of the 2026 Update

The revised policy:

- Provides a clear and defensible framework for fire safety compliance;
- Reflects updates to national legislation, standards and guidance between November 2024 and January 2026;
- Clarifies governance, assurance and escalation arrangements; and
- Aligns fire safety management with wider building safety and resident safety objectives.

3. Key Legislative and Regulatory Changes

The 2026 policy incorporates:

- The Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025, effective from 6 April 2026, introducing duties to identify residents requiring evacuation assistance, undertake person-centred fire risk assessments, and prepare emergency evacuation information where applicable.
- Awaab's Law (Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025), introducing statutory response times for emergency hazards and damp and mould, with phased expansion to other serious hazards, including fire-related risks.
- Ongoing obligations under the Fire Safety Act 2021, Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, and the Building Safety Act 2022, alongside compliance with updated national guidance and British Standards.

4. Scope and Application

The policy applies to:

- Housing Revenue Account properties and associated communal areas;
- Sheltered and supported housing schemes;
- Council-owned commercial and operational buildings; and
- Depots and offices managed by the Council.

Adherence to the policy is mandatory for all relevant staff, contractors and stakeholders.

5. Governance and Assurance

Fire safety governance is overseen through:

- Monthly performance reporting to Senior Management Team;
- Monthly reporting into the Landlord Service governance structure, which includes reporting to and engagement with tenants who are members of the Building & Fire Safety Panel [Added by RS]
- Quarterly reporting to Cabinet; and
- Independent audit and quality assurance arrangements, including external audits of fire risk assessments.

The policy confirms roles and responsibilities across Cabinet, SMT, the Director of Place and operational fire safety management.

PERFORMANCE DATA

Headline performance information relating to fire safety is monitored and reported, including:

- Percentage of applicable buildings with a current Fire Risk Assessment;
- Completion of fire risk assessment actions by priority;
- Compliance with statutory fire door inspection and servicing regimes;
- Incidents, enforcement activity and emerging trends; and
- From April 2026, compliance metrics relating to Residential Evacuation Plans where applicable.

Select Committees receive performance reporting covering their remit.

RESIDENT BENEFIT

The updated Fire Safety Policy:

- Strengthens protection for residents in Council-owned and managed buildings;
- Improves identification and support for residents who may require assistance to evacuate safely;
- Enhances transparency and access to fire safety information; and
- Supports safer homes through proactive risk management, faster response to serious hazards, and increased regulatory oversight.

As a regulated service, the Council is required, in its capacity as a landlord, to demonstrate to the Regulator of Social Housing that it is complying with the Regulator's Consumer Standards, which have statutory force. In this context, the most relevant standards are the Safety and Quality Standard, which focuses on ensuring that tenants are fire safe and fire aware, and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, which requires that tenants are treated fairly, can meaningfully influence services, and are able to hold their landlord to account in relation to fire safety.

The Council's twin-tracked focus on both people and property is therefore directly aligned with the Regulator's expectations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This is a non-decision report. The policy sets out how the Council will fulfil existing and new statutory duties.

Associated delivery costs are managed through existing housing, compliance and capital programmes and are monitored as part of routine budget and performance reporting.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy reflects and supports compliance with relevant legislation, including but not limited to:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended);
- Fire Safety Act 2021.
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- Building Safety Act 2022.
- Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025; and
- Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025.

As a non-decision report, no specific legal decision is required

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

APPENDICES

Appendix A: London Borough of Hillingdon Fire Safety Policy – 2026 Update
Classification: Public

Appendix B: Q3 Update on the 'Delivery Plan for Occupied Higher Risk Buildings