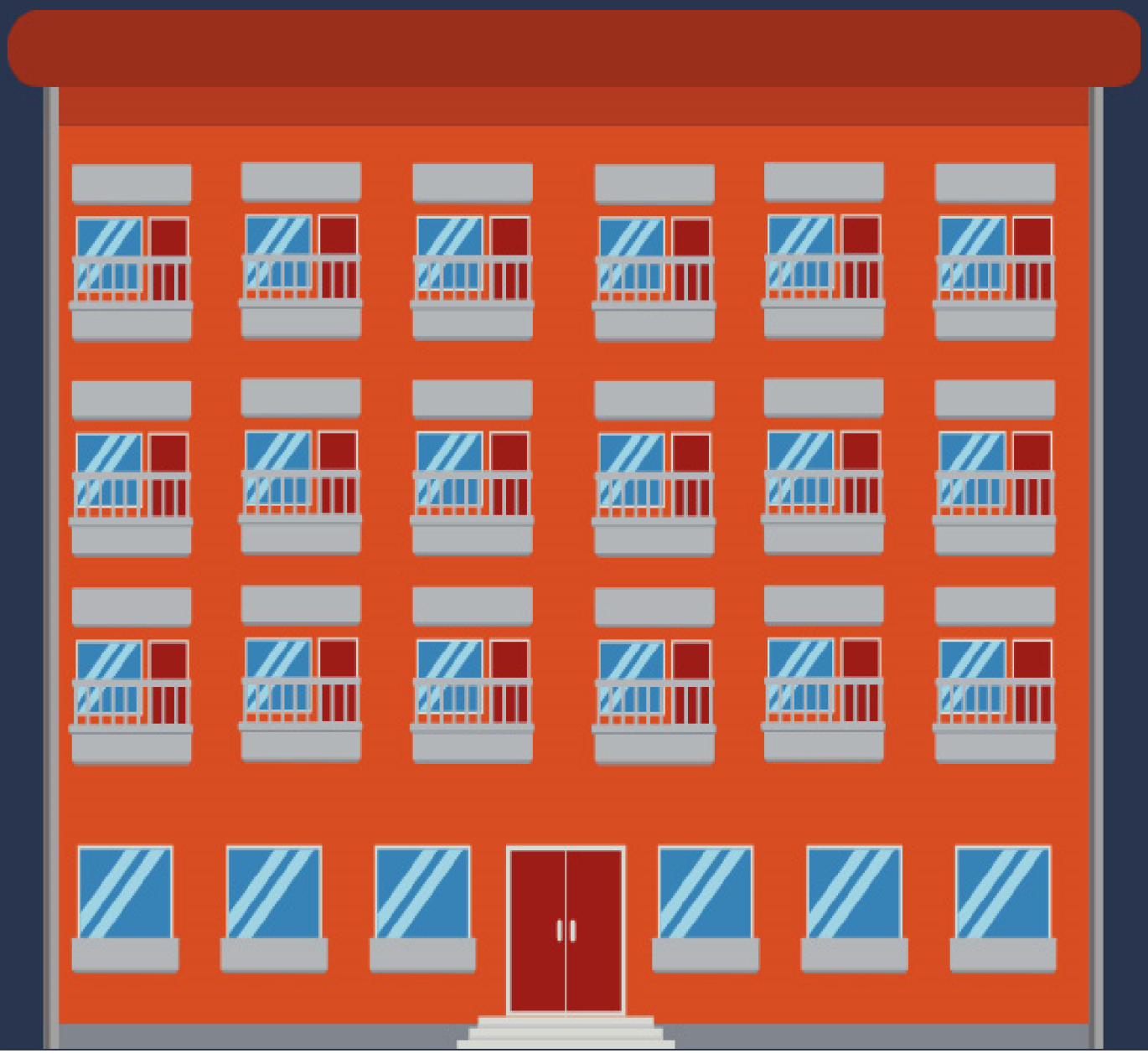




Fire Safety in your Home

Managing Safety



Fire Safety Information for Residents

It is important you are aware of the fire safety measures in place in your building and know how to keep you and your neighbours safe. Your home has been designed to building regulations current at time of build, and designed so that you can escape easily should a fire occur. This is achieved by using robust building construction, building products of limited combustibility and carefully planned means of escape.

If you live in a flat it has been designed to contain fire within a flat and maintain a guaranteed safe, smoke free escape route via the internal stairway. This is achieved by protecting the flats and communal stairs with fire resisting structure and fire-resistant doors.

Other fire safety measures may be in place, which could include, emergency lighting and where necessary automatic smoke ventilation. Ground and first floor levels will likely also have fire escape windows provided.

Evacuation Procedures

Saffron blocks of flats operate either a **Stay Put** or **Simultaneous** evacuation procedure, please make sure you know which procedure applies to your block.

Evacuation procedures will be displayed in the communal areas of your block, please read this information and ensure you and your family have a plan should a fire occur.

Saffron large independent living schemes have a mixed procedure, inside flats it is a **Stay Put** policy, in the common areas such as corridors, laundry rooms, seating areas, canteens it is a **Simultaneous** evacuation policy.

Houses and Bungalows will operate a simultaneous evacuation policy.

Fire safety information including evacuation procedures is also available on Saffron tenant portal.

If you have any doubt over the procedure for where you live, then please contact Saffron by emailing info@saffronhousing.co.uk or calling 01508 532000.

Importance of fire doors

Fire doors and frames are installed as sets and must never be modified or tampered with. It is critical to building safety that every flat entrance door is fitted with an operational self-closing device, capable of closing the door fully without restriction in less than 25 seconds.

Most entrance doors to flats are fire rated and should be kept closed when not in use. They should have a self-closing device which must not be tampered with. Flat entrance doors should not be propped open as this compromise's safety of you and your neighbours, they should remain closed at all times.

Flat entrance doors must not have anything attached to the door, if the face of the door is pierced or damaged for example by screws or pins, then they will not function as intended and may fail during a fire.

If there are any faults or damage to the doors, door frames or the self-closing device, it must be reported as soon as possible to info@saffronhousing.co.uk.

Protected Stairs

The stairwells and common areas in flats must remain clear, removing the risk of fire starting within them, spreading from a flat or restricting safe emergency evacuation. Having space gives firefighters the access and room they need to operate.

We carry out regular testing of all fire safety measures in the communal areas. We also carry out regular fire risk assessments on our flat blocks and action any recommendations.

Your responsibilities as a resident

Your landlord and managing agent have a duty to take steps to prevent fires breaking out in the communal areas, but there are a few things you can do to help:

- Don't obstruct the communal areas, stairs, corridors and landings, these often form the fire escape routes for the building.
- Don't prop open fire doors in communal areas.
- Don't store prams, bicycles or mobility scooters in communal areas, these areas must remain sterile for your and your neighbour's safety.
- If you see anything in the communal areas that doesn't belong there, check who it belongs to please contact Saffron by emailing asbreport@saffronhousing.co.uk, or call 01508 532000.
- Manage your home contents – don't store anything that might catch fire or burn in cupboards that have electrical equipment (especially items such as consumer units/fuse boards) unless they have been specifically designed for safe storage.
- You must allow Saffron staff access for essential maintenance.
- You should report to Saffron any damage to the building structure that could compromise fire safety (e.g fire doors).
- Many blocks of flats are built to resist fire spreading between individual flats and communal areas – this is called compartmentation. To protect the compartmentation, report any damage to the Saffron.
- Before doing any DIY, check with Saffron that this will not affect any of the fire safety features in your home. If you do not request work, you may be asked to remove it or be charged for any making good.
- There may be facilities in the common areas that are installed to help fire and rescue services in an emergency, such as dry and wet risers, opening vents and evacuation alert systems. These should be protected to prevent unauthorised access.

Your responsibilities as a leaseholder

- When carrying out changes to your flat, you should ensure that any material building alterations are agreed and checked by local building control to ensure they comply with the Building Regulations.
- If you wish to remove, replace or change your flat entrance doors in any way (including the self-closing mechanism), you should always consult your landlord or local building control body before making any such changes.

Fire and rescue services – Home fire safety visit

- Your local fire and rescue service can also offer advice on fire safety in your flat and may be able to carry out a home fire safety visit.
- The visits are completely free, and you may be eligible for free smoke alarms.

The visits focus on three key areas:

1. Identify and be aware of the potential fire risks within your home.

2. Know what to do in order to reduce or prevent these risks.
3. Put together an escape plan in case a fire does break out and ensure you have working smoke alarms.

You can arrange this by contacting your local fire and rescue service or look on the National Fire Chief Council website www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Fire-and-Rescue-Services

Smoke alarms save lives

- Landlords must provide smoke alarms within your flat but you, the tenant, are personally responsible for making sure they continue to work while you're living there.

Test that your smoke alarms work

- Test your smoke alarms weekly by pressing the button on them.
- Make sure you have smoke alarms on every floor and that they can be heard throughout your home.
- If you press the button and there is no sound contact Saffron and we can arrange a replacement.
- If your smoke alarm goes off by mistake just wait for it to stop.
- Smoke alarms usually need replacing after ten years. Saffron will check the date during gas or electrical visits and arrange a replacement when needed.
- If you hear a neighbour's smoke alarm, don't ignore it but alert the resident. If they don't respond, call 999 and ask for the fire and rescue service.

Preventing fires in your home

In the kitchen:

Cooking safely

- Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.
- Avoid cooking under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach.
- Keep tea towels and clothes away from the cooker and hob.
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking.



Take care with electrics

- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water.
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls.
- Don't put anything metal in the microwave unless its designed to take them.



Deep fat frying

- Make sure your food is dry before putting it in hot oil.
- If the oil starts to smoke – it's too hot. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool.
- Do not use a chip pan. Use a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer. They can't overheat.



**Keep out
of reach**

What to do if a pan catches fire

- Don't take any risks. Never move the pan. Never throw water over it.
- Turn off the heat if it's safe to do so.
- Don't tackle the fire yourself.
- Close the door to the kitchen if possible
- Get out. Stay out. Call 999.



**GET OUT
STAY OUT
AND CALL
999**



Electrics

Be extra careful with electrics

- Always use appliances in line with manufacturers' instructions.
- Overloading electrical sockets, extension or adaptors is dangerous and increases the risk of fire.
- Certain appliances, such as washing machines or electric heaters that use a lot of electricity, should not be plugged into leads or adaptors.
- Unplug appliances when you're not using them, they are fully charged, or when you go to bed.
- Always check that electrical items, especially white goods, are registered (this can be done at registermyappliance.org.uk) so that you can be informed if there is a safety issue. If you are gifted or inherit electrical items, check that they are not subject to a safety recall (this can be done at productrecall.campaign.gov.uk/)
- Look out for signs of loose wiring, faulty plugs, sockets or fuses, such as scorch marks or flickering lights.
- Inform Saffron immediately if you're concerned about the electrics in your home – this includes damage such as broken switches or sockets.
- Don't fix faulty electrics yourself, inform Saffron or call a qualified electrician.



Top tip:
Don't overload



Know the limit!
5+5+3=13 (AMP)

Portable heaters

- Try to locate heaters away from foot traffic, such as near to walls, to prevent accidental contact or stop them from being knocked over. Don't use heaters for drying clothes. Sitting too close to heaters can lead to a risk of burns, particularly for vulnerable people.
- Keep them clear from curtains and furniture.
- Use an oil filled heater where possible and always avoid higher risk heaters such as radiant bar or gas heaters.
- Plug heaters directly into the wall socket, never use extension leads.

Using electric blankets

- Unplug the blanket before you get into bed unless it has thermostatic controls for safe all-night use.
- Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded.
- Avoid buying second hand electric blankets.
- Check regularly for wear and tear, and always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Check cables and plugs for signs of damage, do not use if signs of damage or fault are apparent.

Be careful with cigarettes

- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly after you have finished with them.
- Smoke outdoors and put cigarettes right out – this is safer than smoking indoors. Smoking is not allowed in the communal areas.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Use a proper ashtray – never a waste paper bag or other unsafe item.
- Make sure your ashtray cannot trip over and is made of a material that won't burn.
- Don't leave a lit cigarette, cigar, or pipe lying around. They can easily fall over and start a fire.
- Take extra care if you smoke when you are tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you have been drinking. You might fall asleep and set your bed or sofa on fire.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Only buy child resistant lighters and match boxes.
- Never smoke illegally manufactured cigarettes.



E-cigarettes (vapes)

- E-cigarettes, also called vapes, can help you stop smoking but still need to be used safely.
- Only buy products from well-known shops.
- Only use the charger that came with the product.
- Stay in the same room whilst charging the product.
- Don't charge products overnight while you sleep, only do so while awake.
- Charge on a hard flat surface.

Be safe with candles

- Be extra careful if you have been drinking alcohol or are taking medication.
- Be careful with candles and tea lights. Avoid placing them where they can be easily knocked over, or on or near materials that could burn or catch fire, like curtains.
- Put out candles when you leave the room, and make sure they are out completely at night. Do not leave children alone with candles.



Balcony Safety

- Never use barbecues, including disposable ones on your balcony. They pose a fire and carbon monoxide risk.
- Fire pits, patio heaters and chimineas should also not be used on balconies.
- Never store flammable or hazardous materials (i.e. gas cylinders) on balconies.

- Keep balconies clutter free. They should not be used for storage. Balconies can be an important escape route for residents or access point for firefighters.
- White goods (e.g. washing machines) should not be stored or used on balconies.
- Do not modify your balcony or install combustible screening/ awnings.
- Avoid smoking on your balcony. If you do smoke on a balcony, do not discard cigarettes or smoking materials on or over the balcony. Use a sturdy ashtray with a small amount of water in it to ensure materials are extinguished.

Hoarding

- If you store lots of stuff in your home it could make fire spread faster.
- It could stop you getting out safely.
- If you find it hard to manage all the stuff you have, you can get help.
- Ask your neighbourhood officer for help.

Mobility scooter/ E-bike

- Never store or charge mobility scooter/ E-Bike in an escape route, both in your home or in communal areas.
- Always store scooters in scooter stores if they are available. Keep e-bikes in a external bike store or shed. If not then keep them in the lounge, never in hallways or escape routes.
- Always plug them directly into a wall socket to charge , never use extension leads.
- Always charge the scooter/ bike when you are awake, never leave them on when you are asleep. Always use the correct charger for that device.
- Keep them in a well-ventilated area and away from drapes, curtains and furniture.
- Ask your neighbourhood officer for help.

At bedtime

- If you can, close internal doors. This will stop smoke and fire spreading.
- Switch off electrical appliances except for ones which have to stay on like fridges and freezers.
- Don't use tumble dryers and washing machines while you or your family are asleep.
- Don't leave devices charging like phones, tablets, laptops or e-cigarettes. Turn them off and charge them only while awake.
- Turn off any portable heaters you may have used.
- Make sure you have put out any candles, oil burners and incense sticks. Make sure any cigarettes are well extinguished, pour water in the ashtray.
- Make sure any window keys, or door keys if needed are available. Most flat front doors should have a thumb turn type lock fitted meaning no key is required. If this is not the case please raise with Saffron and we will fit one for you.

What to do if there's a fire or smoke in your home

- Never tackle a fire yourself. Leave it to the fire and rescue service.
- Keep calm but act quickly, get everyone out.
- Children may need to be woken up as they may not hear the sound of the alarm.
- Don't waste time investigating what's happened or rescuing valuables.
- If there's smoke, keep low to the floor where the air is clearer.
- Before you open a door check if it's warm. If it is, don't open it - fire is on the other side.
- Close the doors on the way out.
- Alert any neighbours who might be at risk from the fire, without putting yourself in danger.
- Use the stairs and never use the lifts, even if you are high up.
- Call 999 as soon as you're clear of the building – 999 calls are free.

Remember – Get out. Stay out. Call 999

What if you cannot get out?

- If your escape route is blocked by fire or smoke, stay inside the safest room with a window that opens and call the fire and rescue service by calling 999. This will also help firefighters know where you are, and you can get help over the phone.
- Keep the door closed and use towels or bedding at the bottom of the door to block the smoke, then open the window and shout "HELP FIRE". Wait to be rescued by a firefighter.

What to do if you are high up

- In the event of a fire, you should not use the lifts.
- If you can, go down the stairs.
- If you're on the ground or second floor only, you may be able to escape through a window.
- Use bedding to cushion your fall and lower yourself down carefully. Don't jump.
- If you can't open the window break the glass in the bottom corner. Make jagged edges safe as possible with a towel or blanket.

If your clothes are on fire

- Do not run about, it will make the fire worse.
- Lie down and roll around. The fire will get smaller. Use a coat to put out the rest of the fire.

If there is a fire in another part of the building

- Blocks of flats are normally built in a way to prevent fires spreading from one flat to another, or to the communal areas. Therefore, if there is a fire in another part of your block it is usually best to stay in your flat. This is known as 'stay put'.
- Leaving the flat when you're not affected by smoke or the fire can place you in greater danger and can hamper the fire and rescue service response.

- Ask Saffron what evacuation strategy applies to your block so you know what to do should a fire occur in someone else's flat – it may be that 'stay put' is not suitable for your block.
- The fire and rescue service may trigger a full evacuation, in which case you'll need to get out and stay out.
- If you feel unsafe, or your flat is affected by heat or smoke, then get out, stay out and call 999.
- If your escape route is blocked or full of smoke or fire, return to your flat and call 999 so firefighters know where you are and can give you help over the phone.

Plan an escape route

Think in advance of what you would do if there was a fire in your flat or elsewhere in your building where you may need to evacuate:

- Establish where the fire exits and alarms are.
- It is easy to get confused in smoke, so it's important to know how many doors you need to go through to reach the stairs.
- Your own flat may have more than one escape route, for example doors leading to a different access corridor, or the use of a common balcony which leads to an escape route.
- Find out from your landlord if this is the case and make sure that it remains easy to use and does not become blocked by rubbish or anything else. Remember, you will not have time to clear your escape route when a fire happens.
- Talk through your 'escape plan' with everyone who lives in your home.
- Make sure everyone knows where to find door and window keys.



If you have any questions regarding fire safety, please contact us on:

Email: info@saffronhousing.co.uk

Telephone: 01508 532000

Saffron Housing Trust Ltd.
Saffron Barn, Swan Lane, Long Stratton
NR15 2XP.
www.saffronhousing.co.uk