



Building Safety Resident Engagement Framework

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Lead Officer: Building Compliance Manager

<u>Version No.</u>	<u>Purpose/Changes</u>	<u>Approval Date</u>	<u>Approved By</u>	<u>Suggested Review Date</u>
1.0	New Framework		Group Common Board	

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ongo Homes is a registered provider of social housing regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). Ongo Homes is responsible for the management and maintenance of all its social housing stock and holds full responsibility for the safety of residents in the homes it owns.
- 1.2 This Framework details Ongo Homes' approach to resident engagement in building safety, focussing on high-risk residential buildings¹, in response to the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022 (The Act) which apply to such buildings following the tragic event of the Grenfell Tower fire.
- 1.3 High-risk buildings identified within Ongo Homes stock:
 - High-rise residential buildings (Crosby House, Princess House, Sutton House, Trent View House)
 - Retirement schemes
 - Myos House
- 1.4 This framework details what we will do to ensure residents who live in Ongo Homes' identified high-risk buildings are engaged and able to participate in building safety decisions. It details what we will do to engage and communicate with residents about building safety for new and existing buildings and any decisions required to be made under The Act by Ongo Homes in relation to the high-risk buildings.
- 1.5 This framework sets out our approach to meaningful engagement with residents on the safety of their homes.

2. Internal and external context

- 2.1 There is a diverse range of tenants who live in the high-risk buildings, including older people, people with disabilities, families and single people.
- 2.2 None of the high-risk residential buildings are clad in dangerous materials and the high-rise blocks have been fitted with sprinkler systems.
- 2.3 Following Grenfell, the Government commissioned the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, namely *The Hackitt Review*. This review was published in May 2018 and in December of the same year, the Government accepted all 53 of the recommendations proposed.
- 2.4 In 2019, the Government published a consultation document setting out the plans for the overhaul of the system for high-rise residential buildings through:
 - Clearer responsibilities for those building or managing buildings
 - A stronger voice in the system and better information for residents
 - Greater oversight by regulators

¹ A high-risk residential building is a building where the impact of a fire can be catastrophic

- Tougher enforcement when things go wrong
- 2.5 Following this consultation and various publications, including the publication of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 1 Report in October 2019, the Building Safety Act 2022 (The Act) received Royal Assent and was passed into law in April 2022. The Act contains *provisions intended to secure the safety of people in or about buildings and to improve the standard of buildings.*
- 2.6 Alongside The Act, the Social Housing White Paper, *The Charter for Social Housing Residents* was published which detailed plans for new regulation, a strengthened Housing Ombudsman to speed up resolving complaints and a commitment to a new set of tenant satisfaction measures that all social landlords will have to report against from April 2023.
- 2.7 These fundamental changes will improve building and fire safety ensuring residents are and feel safer in their homes. Alongside the Government, Ongo Homes are committed to learning the lessons of the Grenfell tragedy and have already begun to take significant actions, including but not limited to:
- Reviewed all fire risk assessments for the high-risk buildings and resolved actions identified, these are reviewed annually and monitored throughout the year
 - Reviewed and revised all fire procedures associated with the high-risk buildings and implemented a Fire Management Strategic Framework. These documents are reviewed on an annual cycle
 - Worked with Humberside Fire and Rescue to familiarise them with the high rise buildings
 - Installed enhanced fire safety measures in all our high-rise buildings, which includes the fitting of sprinkler systems and new 60 minute fire doors
 - Created a Resident Building Safety Group, which includes members who are residents in our high-risk buildings, to work with Ongo Homes to raise and action their concerns, issues and feedback in relation to the safety of their home / building
 - The Resident Building Safety Group received awareness training and monitor Health and Safety action plans for the high-risk buildings
 - Installed new Wayfinder signage in the high rise buildings
 - Provided fire door information and evacuation instructions to residents

3. It applies to...

- 3.1 This framework applies to our identified high-risk buildings and residents who live in these homes:
- High-rise residential buildings (Crosby House, Princess House, Sutton House, Trent View House)
 - Retirement schemes
 - Myos House

3.2 Many of the principles of this framework will also apply to other buildings managed by Ongo but, under the legislation, we are not required to include those buildings within this framework.

3.3 This framework does not include specific building safety information about individual homes or building security information.

4. Because we want to...

4.1 The aims of this framework are to ensure that:

- Residents play an active and effective role in ensuring their building is, and continues to be safe
- Residents know how they can get involved and what the benefits are to them by participating in engagement on building safety
- Ongo Homes understands what building safety information residents wish to be provided with and ensure it is provided in the way they want to receive it
- Ongo Homes improves its approach to engaging with residents in relation to the safety of their home
- Ongo Homes engages its employees with regards to residents' rights to have a say in relation to their homes
- The responsibilities of Ongo Homes and residents are clear to ensure homes remain safe

5. Principles of the framework

5.1 This framework details Ongo Homes' approach to engaging and involving residents in relation to building safety in our high-risk residential buildings. There will be individual strategic plans bespoke to the individual buildings concerned detailing how the framework will work in practice for each.

5.2 Ongo Homes has worked with residents of the high-risk buildings and other involved tenants on developing this framework to ensure it addresses their needs and requirements. It is based around three main themes:

- Information and understanding
- Resident and Landlord responsibilities
- Action to take in the event of a fire

5.3 Information and understanding

5.3.1 Resident involvement and engagement is a key priority at Ongo Homes. We use a wide range of ways to communicate with residents to address their diverse needs and preferences:

- Digitally (including social media, website, text, MyHome App, e-mail)
- Face to face
- Over the phone
- Resident meetings / focus groups
- Letter drops

- Notice boards in communal areas
 - Neighbourhood events
- 5.3.2 Building safety information will be provided through a variety of means to residents living in the high-risk buildings, making sure the diverse needs and requirements are taken into account. Where there is a need, all the information relating to building safety can be shared with residents' family / advocates.
- 5.3.3 Where a significant issue is identified, affecting the safety of residents, Ongo Homes will make sure this is communicated effectively with all residents and appropriate updates provided when required as to the resolution of the issue. This may be in the form of a resident meeting, a letter-drop, information being made available through social media channels, our website or direct texts or e-mails to residents. Specifics are detailed in the supplementary strategic plans for each building.
- 5.3.4 Each building will have a *fire action notice* in place. This explains the fire evacuations strategy that is in place for that particular building in the event of a fire.
- 5.3.5 Ongo Homes will be pro-active in providing information relating to building safety to residents to ensure they understand the protective measures that are in place to keep their building safe.
- 5.3.6 All information provided will be relevant and in a format that can be understood by residents. This could mean providing the information in different formats, for example for those who do not speak English or who have visual impairments.
- 5.3.7 As standard across Ongo Homes' high-risk residential buildings, we will provide:
- Fire Evacuation Notices
 - Information on Fire Doors
- 5.3.8 Residents can request additional and / or more detailed information about the safety measures in their building if they wish. We will implement a process for requests for information in line with legislation and regulation as guidance becomes available. The request for information may include (but is not limited to):
- Full, current and historical fire risk assessments
 - Outcome of building safety inspection checks
 - Inspection and testing information (for lifts, alarm systems, sprinkler systems)
 - Details of preventative measures in place
 - Fire protection measures in place
 - Information on the maintenance of fire safety systems
 - Structural assessments of the building (where available)
- 5.3.9 Safety information will be provided when residents move into their homes and annually thereafter. All relevant information will be provided to the resident at sign-up. This includes fire evacuation information and fire door information.

5.3.10 If residents have concerns about the safety of the building, they should contact Ongo Homes in their usual way and the issue will be responded to in the appropriate way.

5.4 **Resident and landlord responsibilities**

5.4.1 As a registered provider of social housing, Ongo Homes has the ultimate responsibility to keep residents safe living in homes it owns. To ensure this, Ongo Homes will:

- Comply fully with the Building Safety Act 2022 and all other relevant legislation and regulation
- Seek to meet obligations in advance of statutory requirements where possible and always promote a culture of safety
- Produce individual resident engagement plans for all high-risk residential buildings
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for residents who are unable to evacuate safely without assistance – it is the responsibility of the tenant to advise Ongo Homes of any changes to their ability to self-evacuate so a PEEP can be put in place. Ongo will however at least annually aim to capture this information.
- Ensure homes within all our high-risk residential buildings are fitted with smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarms as required
- Keep all fire risk assessments up to date and publicly available on our website
- Ensure relevant, up to date policies and procedures for building and fire safety are in place for all identified high-risk buildings
- In line with the Inspection and Testing Policy and Plan, ensure all appropriate testing is 100% complete
- Prioritise all customer contacts which may have a building safety implication
- Work with the local fire and rescue services and provide information to them that they require in an effective, efficient way

5.4.2 Where necessary, Ongo Homes will complete person-centred risk assessments to evaluate the needs of individual residents to ensure specific measures can be put in place that minimise risks to the individual.

5.4.3 Ongo Homes will work with residents to ensure they are involved in decisions about their building's safety and, where possible, provide them with reasonable information on works due to be carried out to their property or building.

5.4.4 Although Ongo Homes holds ultimate responsibility for keeping residents safe in their homes. At Ongo Homes, residents are encouraged and empowered to play an effective role in making sure the building they live in is safe. This includes identifying and reporting hazards that may impact on the safety of the building and meeting their responsibilities to ensure their own safety and that of their households and neighbours.

- 5.4.5 Ongo Homes expects residents to provide reasonable access to allow us to carry out necessary works / inspections to ensure their safety in their homes. Ongo Homes will always provide reasonable notice (unless in an emergency situation) where access to the home is required or information is needed from the resident. Where access is not provided, we may need to resort to legal action and / or forced entry. Costs may be recovered from the resident in these cases.
- 5.4.6 Residents must ensure they understand the evacuation / emergency action plan specific to their building so they know what they should do in the event of an emergency.
- 5.4.7 Residents must not prop any communal doors open and they must not store anything in communal areas as this can impede an escape route in the event of an emergency. Smoking should only take place in a safe place and not inside the communal areas of the buildings. All cigarettes should be fully extinguished afterwards. Barbecues and patio heaters should never be used inside buildings, on balconies or near any flammable material.
- 5.4.8 Where residents see something that suggests their neighbours have not understood or remembered building safety information, they should remind them of it as a matter of priority. If residents are not comfortable in doing this, they should contact Ongo Homes to report as a building safety concern.
- 5.5 **Action to take in the event of a fire**
- 5.5.1 There is a fire evacuation plan for each high-risk residential building with specific details of what residents should take in the event of a fire. This information is contained in a Fire Action Notice, which are displayed in communal areas of each high-risk building.
- 5.5.2 All Ongo Homes buildings are designed to keep residents safe. Buildings are compartmented, which means they are built in such a way to contain fire in a single room or multiple rooms. This limits the spread of fire, smoke and flue gases.
- 5.5.3 Our building evacuation plan is “**Simultaneous Evacuation**”, meaning that all residents must leave the building and go to the assembly point for the building in the case of an emergency.
- 5.5.4 Any residents required to evacuate their homes should go to the **next place of safety**. This means moving away from the building to a place of safety from a fire or any falling debris.
- 5.5.5 Where residents are required to evacuate their home:
- They must go to the safest and closest exit and / or stairway
 - They must close any fire doors behind them where possible
 - They must never use a lift to exit during a fire alarm activation
 - Once outside the building, residents must move away from the building and go to the nearest safest place. This means away from the building, not obstructing access to the fire and / or other emergency services

- Residents must not re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so

6. Making sure we do what we say...

- 6.1 Each high-risk residential building will have its own action plan to ensure appropriate engagement with residents who live in those buildings. These plans will be reviewed annually.
- 6.2 Regular progress reports against the action plans will be provided to Ongo Homes' Leadership team, the Resident Building Safety Group and Community Voice.

7. Other things to bear in mind...

- 7.1 This policy also links to our:
- Individual building safety action plans for each high-risk residential building
 - Fire Risk Assessments for each high-risk residential building
 - Fire Management Strategic Framework
 - Fire Management Procedures for each individual high-risk residential building
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Lettings Policy & Lettings Criteria
 - Tenancy Management Policy
 - Customer Engagement Framework
- 7.2 The main pieces of legislation and regulation relevant to this policy include:
- Building Safety Act 2022
 - Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
 - Fire Safety Act 2021
 - Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - Regulator for Social Housing – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
 - Social Housing White Paper – The Charter for Social Housing Residents

8. We'll look at this again...

- 8.1 This framework will be reviewed every 3 years, the strategic action plans will be reviewed annually. The framework will be reviewed and revised if necessary earlier if there is a requirement under any relevant legislation and / or regulation.