



PLACES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Housing Resident Safety and Compliance Performance

SLT Lead:

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Policy context:

For information only
The report provide details of our performance against our statutory duty as a landlord in regards to resident safety

SUMMARY

The report is for information only. No decision is required.

The report provides an update to Places OSSC of the position of LBH Housing services resident safety and compliance programmes against its statutory and regulatory duties.

The report also deals with duties under the Building Safety Act 2022.

As agreed by Cabinet on the 16th February 2022 Places OSSC will be provided with regular reports on the Housing compliance performance as part of the internal governance approach, performance is also scrutinised monthly by both the Compliance board and the Asset Management Sub Steering Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members note the report

REPORT DETAIL

LBH owns and manages circa 9,400 homes and circa 2,500 leasehold properties including circa 14 tower blocks (including the new tower, Riverbank Court at Park Rise) and plus 1,000 medium and low rise blocks.

LBH has a duty to ensure each of these properties are safe and meet all relevant statutory duties around testing and servicing equipment and meets the relevant consumer standards of the Regulator for Social Housing and the requirements of the Building Safety Act monitored by the new Building Safety Regulator.

We consider Resident Safety around the big compliance areas:

- Gas Safety – all gas appliances should be inspected annually and a Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) provided.
- Electrical Safety – all social rented properties must have an electrical inspection (EICR) every 10 years, although recent regulation changes require private landlords to have 5 year inspections and this is considered best practice in social rented properties and the approach we have adopted.
- Lift Safety – Monthly inspections and planned maintenance regimes and an annual certificate provided by our insurer.
- Water Safety – all relevant water systems must be checked for legionella risk, this is based on a risk based approach which can be a cyclical programme every 2 years. All actions flowing from the legionella inspection must be completed within prescribed timescales.
- Fire Safety – All relevant properties must have a valid Fire risk assessment (FRA) undertaken on a risk based approach which can be on a cyclical programme between 1 and 3 years. All actions flowing from the FRA must be completed within prescribed timescales.
- Asbestos – under the asbestos regulations all communal areas must have a valid management level asbestos survey which must be held on a relevant asbestos register. In addition, we are completing a survey programme of all domestic properties to ensure we manage all risk appropriately, this is not however a statutory requirement under the asbestos regulations.
- Fire Door Checks – We carry out flat entrance door checks in all our tower blocks. We have commenced monitoring these since June 2023 as part of the new requirements under the 2022 Building Safety Act. In addition, we are completing fire door checks in all our blocks with communal heating to ensure we manage all risks appropriately. These additional checks are not a statutory requirement under the new Building Safety Act.

Alongside the main compliance areas we also have a duty to ensure compliance across a number of other associated areas such as PAT testing, lightening protection testing, Dry Riser testing and Fire alarm testing and as we bring new properties on stream we will also need to ensure areas such as sprinkler and communal extract systems are included in compliance programmes.

Given the seriousness of resident safety all KPIs are set at 100% as shown in Appendix 1. These figures are for the month of October 2023, which is the latest available at the time needed to submit this report.

After a significant programme of work, we have been able to complete most programmes and to ensure we have the relevant evidence to support this position.

We have a small number of EICRs to complete since regular testing began in 2019. These are our hard to reach properties and we are working through approaches to resolve these. We have exhausted all approaches on a number of properties and plan to go down the legal route to obtain injunctions. We have had some success in combining EICRS and asbestos surveys and continue to work with the tenancy teams to gain access to the remaining 66 properties. In addition, we continue to work on fully populating our asbestos register for domestic properties.

The Committee will note that we have now included a full section on compliance of our Private Sector Housing (PSH), homes which we rent from private landlords and place residents.

Whilst we are not the landlord in these properties, (but possibly the freeholder in the blocks these homes are in), and therefore have no legal obligation to undertake compliance programmes, we do have a duty of care to our residents, and are taking a much more robust approach to monitoring compliance by landlords and dealing with those who fail to provide relevant information.

We have progressed to synergise the same systems to collate and monitor these figures; these figures are included so the Committee can see the continuing progress of our monitoring and reporting approaches. Most of the data reflects current compliance and is reflective of the information we directly hold. There is some more progress to be achieved to complete this project over the coming months.

We have also seen some new legislation introduced which flowed from the Grenfell Enquiry, The Fire Safety Regulations 2022. We have already introduced some additional monitoring regimes to ensure compliance such as communal doors checked every 3 months and flat front entrance doors checked every 12 months. These have now been included in the report.

The legislation also introduced some additional requirements around way finding signage requirements, floor plans, lifts and essential firefighting equipment and are working to ensure we comply with these.

To help achieve this we have looked at a tool which has allowed us to 3D model each high rise building. We are now able to identify all relevant equipment, isolation of services and other relevant information. We are still populating this tool and are now sharing some sections with the LFB. We will also progress to share relevant sections with residents as part of our engagement strategy. This will also be the core methodology for providing information to the new Building Safety Regulator as part of the building safety case file.

We are still developing documents for the appropriate procurement across all areas of compliance to ensure we have contracts that deliver a high level of performance whilst meeting the upcoming changes in technology. We are in the final stages of completing the main heating contract and we will be bringing this strategy to cabinet ahead of procurement exercises commencing later this year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Housing Compliance Performance Report

Appendix 2 – Building Safety Act 2022 Presentation

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: None for this report.

Legal implications and risks: These are sufficiently covered in Appendix 2 to this report, particularly regarding the implementation of the Building Safety Act 2022.

Human Resources implications and risks: None for this report.

Equalities implications and risks: None for this report.