



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.

This report provides an update to the Places' Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee (OSSC) on the current status of LBH Housing Services' resident safety and compliance programs. The report specifically focuses on performance against statutory and regulatory obligations, including those outlined in the Building Safety Act 2022.

As per the Cabinet's directive on 16th February 2022, the OSSC will receive regular updates on Housing compliance performance as part of the internal governance process. This performance is also reviewed monthly by the Compliance Board and the Asset Management Sub-Steering Group.

The report outlines the progress made in key compliance areas such as gas, electrical, lift, water, fire, and asbestos safety, along with the monitoring of fire doors in high-rise buildings. The report also highlights ongoing efforts to complete Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) and asbestos surveys in hard-to-reach properties, as well as the development of compliance monitoring for Private Sector Housing (PSH).

Overall, the report emphasises the importance of achieving 100% compliance in all key performance indicators and outlines future strategies for maintaining and enhancing resident safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members note the report

REPORT DETAIL

LBH owns and manages approximately 9,400 homes and 2,500 leasehold properties, including around 15 tower blocks and over 1,000 medium- and low-rise blocks.

As a landlord, LBH has a statutory duty to ensure that each of these properties is safe and meets all relevant statutory requirements. This includes regular testing and servicing of equipment, adherence to consumer standards set by the Regulator for Social Housing, and compliance with the Building Safety Act as monitored by the new Building Safety Regulator.

Key Compliance Areas in Resident Safety:

Gas Safety: All gas appliances must undergo an annual inspection, resulting in the issuance of a Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR).

Electrical Safety: Social rented properties require an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every 10 years. However, recent regulatory changes mandate 5-year inspections for private landlords, a practice LBH has adopted for its social rented properties to align with best practices.

Lift Safety: Monthly inspections are conducted along with planned maintenance regimes. An annual certification is provided by our insurer to ensure compliance.

Water Safety: All relevant water systems are checked for legionella risk based on a cyclical, risk-based approach, typically every 2 years. All actions resulting from these inspections must be completed within prescribed timescales.

Fire Safety: Properties must have a valid Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) conducted on a risk-based cycle, typically between 1 to 3 years. All actions arising from the FRA are required to be completed within specified deadlines.

Asbestos Management: Under asbestos regulations, all communal areas must have a valid management-level asbestos survey recorded in the appropriate asbestos register. Additionally, we are conducting a comprehensive survey of all domestic properties to ensure appropriate risk management, though this is not a statutory requirement under current asbestos regulations.

Fire Door Checks: As of June 2023, in compliance with the 2022 Building Safety Act, we have initiated fire door checks for our tall buildings. We also checked buildings where we had communal gas boilers serving individual dwellings. Since 1/6/2024 we have included dwellings in all our buildings exceeding 11 metres after following the guidance of our responsibilities under the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

Additional Compliance Areas:

In addition to the primary compliance areas, LBH is responsible for ensuring safety in several associated areas, including PAT testing, lightning protection testing, dry riser testing, and fire alarm testing. As we introduce new properties, we will also incorporate areas such as sprinkler systems and communal extract systems into our compliance programs.

Given the critical importance of resident safety, all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set at 100%, as outlined in **Appendix 1**. The figures provided are for July 2024, the most recent data available at the time of this report's submission.

Following a comprehensive program of work, we have successfully completed the majority of our compliance initiatives and have gathered the necessary evidence to substantiate this progress.

However, a small number of Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) remain outstanding, particularly for properties classified as hard to reach since regular testing commenced in 2019. We continue to explore various strategies to address these challenges. For properties where all conventional methods have been exhausted, we have pursued legal avenues, including obtaining injunctions. We have also seen success in combining EICRs with asbestos surveys and are actively collaborating with the tenancy teams to gain access to the remaining 12 properties. Additionally, ongoing efforts are being made to fully populate our asbestos register for domestic properties.

The Committee will also observe the inclusion of a dedicated section on the compliance status of our Private Sector Housing (PSH) properties—homes rented from private landlords and occupied by our residents.

While LBH is not the legal landlord of these properties (although we may be the freeholder of the blocks in which these homes are located), we nevertheless have a duty of care to our residents. Consequently, we are adopting a more rigorous approach to monitoring landlord compliance and addressing instances where landlords fail to provide the requisite information.

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Significant progress has been made in aligning our systems to effectively collect and monitor this data. The figures presented in this report enable the Committee to track the ongoing improvements in our monitoring and reporting practices. While most of the current data reflects direct compliance with the information we have, there is still work to be done to finalize this project in the coming months.

In response to new legislation introduced following the Grenfell Inquiry, specifically the Fire Safety Regulations 2022, we have implemented additional monitoring regimes to ensure compliance. These include quarterly inspections of communal doors and annual checks of flat entrance doors, which are now reported on in this document.

The legislation has also introduced new requirements concerning wayfinding signage, floor plans, lifts, and essential firefighting equipment. We are actively working to meet these mandates.

To facilitate this, we have adopted an advanced tool that enables us to create 3D models of each high-rise building. This tool allows us to identify all relevant equipment, service isolation points, and other critical information. We have successfully populated this tool and have shared the pertinent details with the Building Safety Regulator as part of the building safety cases we have submitted. Additionally, we share relevant information with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) concerning any mandatory occurrence reports. As part of our engagement strategy, we will extend access to relevant sections of this information to residents.

In May 2024, the Building Safety Regulator requested that we provide safety cases for five of our tall buildings. We have successfully submitted all of these cases and are currently awaiting their outcomes.

We are also in the process of developing procurement documents to ensure that all compliance areas are supported by contracts that deliver high performance while accommodating emerging technological advancements. Having completed the main heating contract, our focus will now shift to procuring our lapsed electrical compliance contract.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Housing Compliance Performance Report

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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Financial implications and risks: None for this report (information only)

Legal implications and risks: None for this report (information only)

Human Resources implications and risks: None for this report (information only)

Equalities implications and risks: None for this report (information only)