



FAO Directors

Shropshire Town and Rural Housing Limited
(STAR Housing)
The Spruce Building
Sitka Drive
Shrewsbury Business Park
Shrewsbury
SY2 6LG

13 August 2021

@shropshirefire.gov.uk

01743 /

FSE03340

Dear Sir

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

**Premises: Greenfields Court Sheltered Scheme, Greenfields Drive,
Bridgnorth, WV16 4JS**

An audit of the above premises was carried out on 5 August 2021 to determine your compliance with the above legislation. Following the audit, the Fire Authority is of the opinion that you are not fully complying with the requirements placed upon you by the legislation.

The areas of non-compliance are set out below. A follow up audit will be carried out on **5 August 2021 at 11:00 hours** to confirm that all matters are satisfactory.

Areas of Non-Compliance

Deficiency from Article 9 - Fire Risk Assessment

At the time of the audit a Fire Risk Assessment had been carried out in 2019. The requirements of that Fire Risk Assessment had not yet been carried out. It is noted that COVID has made getting contractors to site for quotes and provisional work dates difficult. However, a letter was sent to _____, from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, stating the failures and requirements under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

You must action and prioritise the works laid out in your current Fire Risk Assessment.

Due to the time period that has passed, and that _____ approached SFRS for advice, I will not be issuing an Enforcement Notice at this point, but listing the deficiencies identified that need to be carried out to reach compliance.

Deficiency from Article 8 - General Fire Precautions

Action Required

Sufficient general fire precautions should be implemented to ensure the safety of relevant people, you should give specific consideration to the following areas:

- reducing the risk and spread of fire;
- ensuring the escape routes can be safely and effectively used.

With respect to all designated fire doors, including individual flat entrance doors, which are required to provide structural fire protection to the means of escape and to help limit fire spread throughout the premises, I am unable to determine whether the structural integrity of these doors would meet the minimum requirement of 30 minutes fire resistance in accordance with current British Standard or equivalent.

Several doors incorporate an intumescent strip and flexible edge cold smoke seals had been painted over, there were no self-closers, and some of the tenants were wedging their flat front doors open. This means that the doors may not be able to stop the spread of smoke and fire.

A survey of all doors is required to be carried out by a competent person and doors replaced or upgraded as appropriate, identifying the most important areas to protect first such as room who is bed bound.

In the previous letter, my colleague wrote:

“A common problem encountered with fire separation is fire-resisting partitions which do not extend above false ceilings to true ceiling height. This may result in unseen fire spread and a loss of vital protection to the escape routes. It is important therefore to carefully check all such partitions have been installed correctly. Confirmation is required that the roof void is appropriately divided up by fire resisting construction”.

At the time of my inspection, the Fire Risk Assessment did state that there were dampers within the roof voids. The above statement should be confirmed as previously requested and recorded in your Fire Risk Assessment.

Deficiency from Article 10 - Principles of Prevention

Action Required

A long-term workable and effective strategy should be implemented to reduce the risk of a fire starting. You should consider:

- housekeeping; (cupboards with combustible items in)
- dried flowers on the walls in the means of escape need to be removed. Means of escape should remain sterile, pictures behind glazing is acceptable;
- storage; (room - hoarding).

Article 11 - Fire Safety Arrangements

Action Required

An effective fire safety management strategy has been implemented since our previous letter. This must remain.

Arrangements should continue be made for the planning, organising, controlling, and monitoring of your fire precautions. To achieve this you must have a fire safety management policy that includes:

- allocating control and supervision of specific tasks;
- plans for staff training;
- systems for communicating fire safety information to staff and visitors;
- procedures for testing and maintenance of fire safety measures, such as fire doors, fire alarms, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers;
- reporting defects;
- where necessary, the arrangements should be recorded.

Deficiency from Article 13 - Fire Detection and Warning

Although there is a provision of automatic fire detection throughout many communal areas of the building, it would appear that the level of coverage does not appear to meet the recommended standard. The existing system should be extended / upgraded and recertified by a competent person in accordance with the current version of BS 5839-1: 2002, to **achieve L2 coverage (not L3 as in your report)**, throughout the communal areas. This would include the provision of automatic fire detection in all rooms opening onto the means of escape including, for example, offices, storerooms, and meter cupboards that are not already detected. Upon completion of this work, all records should be kept as best practice, including all testing and maintenance records.

With respect to the individual private dwelling flats, in order for me to get a complete overview of the premises you offered me the opportunity to look at a vacant flat. With respect to the provision of automatic fire detection within this particular flat, I was concerned that what appeared to be the only smoke detector head was located within a room off the entrance hall. For individual dwellings, the minimum acceptable standard would be to install appropriate automatic fire detection to provide an early warning of a fire in the primary means of escape, i.e. the hallway and a heat detector within the kitchens. My concern is that a fire in any other room than that in which the detector is sited would potentially go undetected for some time, and by the time the occupant received a warning of a fire the only means of escape is likely to have been seriously compromised.

I would therefore recommend a review of the provision and siting of automatic fire detection within all individual dwelling flats.

Deficiency from Article 14 - Emergency Routes and Exits

Action Required

A review of the means of escape arrangements should be undertaken to ensure everyone in your premises is able to escape to a place of total safety unaided, without the help of the fire and rescue service. You should give specific consideration to the following areas:

- Exit routes and the exits must lead as directly as possible to a place of safety.
- It must be possible for persons to evacuate the premises as quickly and safely as possible:
 - At present most flat front doors are being left open. As discussed, to ensure the safety of all residents/tenants, door 'hold open' devices must be installed and linked into the communal fire alarm system. This should also extend to the kitchen and communal doors and post room.
 - Confirm if the Georgian wired glazing is also fire resistant to the same standard of fire resistance as the compartment fire door, i.e. 30 minutes or 60 minutes.

Deficiency from Article 15 - Procedures for Serious and Imminent Danger and for Danger Areas

Action Required

A review of your emergency procedures should be undertaken to ensure they are suitable for the premises and occupancy to ensure, in the event of the fire, there is a safe evacuation. Specific consideration should be given to the following areas:

- There are sufficient competent persons nominated, available and trained to implement the emergency procedures and evacuation.
- Arrangements in place for any necessary liaison with external emergency services regarding firefighting, rescues, first aid, and emergency medical care.

It is my understanding that the current emergency procedures for this premises adopts a 'stay put' policy.

Given the apparent lack of possible structural fire compartmentation, unprotected means of escape throughout the building I would suggest that, unless this can be upgraded to meet the minimum required standards, in the event of an emergency due to a fire you should adopt a simultaneous or phased evacuation of all residents on activation of the fire alarm. The fire detection and warning system for the premises is monitored by 'Careline'. It would however be prudent for you to clarify the exact protocol regarding this arrangement, as you do have 1 resident (room) that is bed bound.

If a 'Stay Put' strategy cannot be achieved, you will need to reassess and implement procedures/personnel to assist with evacuations.

We did agree that I would inform the local crews, systems, and Fire Control, of the vulnerable tenants in rooms & , and (hoarding = higher fire loading) so that we can put plans in place to effect recue and/or firefighting procedures.

Deficiency from Article 17 - Maintenance

Action Required

You should ensure the premises and any facilities, equipment and devices are provided subject to a suitable system of maintenance; and maintained in efficient working order. Details of these activities should be recorded. Particular consideration should be given to the following areas:

- Fire doors.

It was noted that self-closing devices did not appear to be fully and effectively closing fire doors into their respective frames. These devices require to be appropriately adjusted by a competent person.

For technical details and guidance you are advised to purchase the Fire Safety Risk guide for Sleeping Accommodation (ISBN 9 781 85112 8174) which is also available free at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>. You are also advised to purchase the Lacors: Housing - Fire Safety Guide (ISBN978-1-84049-638-3) which you can also find on www.lacors.gov.uk.

When purchasing or installing equipment, compliance with the relevant British or European Standard is normally taken as being adequate.

If you are in any doubt as to your responsibilities under the legislation, please contact the officer named above.

Yours faithfully

for **Chief Fire Officer**

cc

Fire Safety Officer
STAR Housing
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Sitka Drive
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Shrewsbury
SY2 6LG