

**FIRE SAFETY MATTERS**  
Together we can all be safe



# Resident Obligations for Fire Safety



**Be Responsible, Be Careful and  
Be Safe with THCH**





## 1. Why this document is important

In order to ensure THCH achieve compliance with the legal and regulatory frameworks in relation to fire safety, this Addendum to the Fire Safety Policy provides details of the requirements THCH expect certain residents to comply with to ensure fire safety is not compromised within their building.

This Addendum applies to the following THCH properties:

- Flats including those occupied by both tenants and leaseholders
- Commercial units situated below residential flats



## 2. What are our objectives?

To reduce the risk of fire

To ensure THCH residents (tenants and leaseholders) are protected from smoke and fire spread in the event of a fire

To ensure residents are aware their obligations in relation to fire safety in their block

To ensure THCH meet their obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

To review and monitoring fire safety compliance

To ensure residents have considered beforehand the action they should take in the event of a fire



## 3. Resident's Obligations

Further to the obligations contained with their tenancy agreements or leases, THCH require residents to which this Addendum applies to comply with the following obligations:

### 3.1 General

- Comply with requests to maintain the fire integrity of building.
- Inform THCH of any contractors e.g. Sky or BT completing work in communal areas / riser cupboards.
- Not to use or store in their home, store shed or garage LPG cylinders or appliances, petrol, diesel, fuel, paraffin nor any other highly inflammable materials.
- Inform THCH of any equipment or substance that is highly combustible and stored within the flat e.g. oxygen aids. Consent must be sought for such items.
- Ensure that all members of the household and their visitors comply with the obligations listed in this fire safety policy and cooperate with THCH in improving and achieving fire safety.
- Keep service riser, meter cupboards and other cupboards locked shut where they have access to the same.
- Keep bin stores locked shut and do not leave rubbish outside the same.
- Ensure all members of the household have discussed fire safety and have a plan in the event of a fire that follows the Fire Action Notice advice displayed on the communal noticeboard.
- Encouraged to view the London Fire Brigade website for the latest fire safety advice and tips.



- j. Do not tamper with and encouraged to regularly test smoke and or heat detectors.
- k. No smoking within the internal communal areas and on communal roof balconies.
- l. Provide access to their property upon reasonable notice from THCH in order to allow THCH to complete fire safety inspections and/or improvements.
- m. Immediately report any fire safety related incident or defect to the Customer Service team at THCH.



### 3.2 Structural Alterations

- a. Do not alter or install items that affect the doors, windows and walls of their property without the prior written consent of THCH. Doing so could put the 30 - 60 minute fire compartmentation at risk.
- b. Do not remove or damage anything within the property and/or communal areas of the building that impacts on fire safety, e.g. smoke alarms, heat detectors, internal door to kitchen, door closers.
- c. Inform THCH of any damage to anything within their property and/or the communal areas of the building that impacts on fire safety, e.g. smoke alarms, heat detectors, internal door to kitchen, door closers.
- d. Ensure any external door or locks fitted must have thumb turn or latch locks on the inside only. No lock should require the use of a key internally.
- e. Do not alter walls or drill holes through walls, e.g. to install cables.
- f. Do not install cat flaps, letterboxes or similar to external doors without the prior written consent of THCH consent. A cat flap will impair the 30-minute fire resistance.
- g. Do not install a new entrance door without our consent.
- h. Do not install any gates, doors, grilles or other fixtures to the communal areas of a building.



### 3.3 Communal Areas and Personal Possessions

- i. Residents' personal possessions that are being kept or stored within a building's communal area will be assessed by THCH in relation to the fire risk they present. The risk factor for each building will be based principally on the height of a building. THCH use the following categories when assessing the height of a building:

	– <b>High Rise:</b>	7 Storeys or more
	– <b>Medium Rise A:</b>	3-6 Storeys with enclosed communal staircase
	– <b>Medium Rise B:</b>	3-6 Storeys with open communal balcony providing a communal walkway
	– <b>Low Rise:</b>	Up to 2 Storey

The risk rating for each block may change dependent on varying factors. THCH apply the following conditions in relation to each category:

#### High Rise

Zero Tolerance – NO personal possessions are permitted within the internal communal areas of the building. Entrance mats for individual properties must be placed inside the flat.

#### Medium Rise A

Managed Policy – The only personal item allowed within the communal area of the building is an Entrance Mat (providing it is fire resistant and not a trip hazard).





### Medium Rise B

Managed Policy – The only personal items allowed within the communal area of a building are:

- Entrance Mat
  - purpose designed
  - fire resistant and is not a trip hazard
- Maximum 2x pot plants or equivalent with 'live' plants subject to the following conditions:
  - The plant is planted in a ceramic or metal pot
  - A minimum 1 metre clear passage between the balcony wall and the plant is available
  - The plant does not cause an obstruction
  - The plant is not attached to the fabric of the building



### Low Rise

Managed Policy – The only personal items allowed within the communal area of a building are:

- Entrance Mat
    - purpose designed
    - fire resistant and is not a trip hazard
  - Maximum 2x pot plants or equivalent with 'live' plants subject to the following conditions:
    - The plant is planted in a ceramic or metal pot
    - A minimum 1 metre clear passage between the balcony wall and the plant is available
    - The plant does not cause an obstruction
    - The plant is not attached to the fabric of the building
- j. Within the communal areas of buildings, residents are not permitted to:
- a. Dump or leave rubbish awaiting disposal
  - b. Park temporarily or permanently a bicycle or similar
  - c. Park temporarily or permanently a pram or similar
  - d. Park temporarily or permanently a mobility scooter or similar
  - e. Park temporarily or permanently a moped or similar
  - f. Charge electrical appliances or batteries
  - g. Leave furniture either temporarily or permanently
  - h. Use door wedges
  - i. Store any type of fuel
  - j. Leave shoes, umbrellas or similar
  - k. Fit a gate to restrict movement of dogs or other pets
  - l. Block communal vents



### 3.4 Service Riser Cupboards

- a. No personal possessions to be stored in service riser cupboards.



### 3.5 Communal Cupboards with No Services (e.g. gas, electric, water, heating)

- a. Possessions stored in these cupboards must be clearly labelled with the flat number that they belong to.
- b. No electrical items plugged in or used e.g. tumble dryer.
- c. No possessions stored that maybe a source of ignition.
- d. No highly combustible items e.g. petrol, gas.
- e. No excessive amount of possessions that prevent or restrict access or identification of contents.



### 3.6 Removal of Dangerous Items from Communal Area

- a. For the safety of other residents, THCH cannot tolerate dangerous items within the communal areas. When a dangerous item in a communal area has been identified or otherwise brought to THCH's attention, THCH will try and contact the owner if they can be identified and ask them to remove it immediately.
- b. If the owner cannot be contacted and/or immediate removal is not possible, THCH will immediately remove the dangerous item and re-charge the costs of doing so to the owner.
- c. Dangerous items include, but are not limited highly combustible substances and items blocking primary access routes.
- d. If it is safe to do so, items will be stored by THCH for 28 days and the owner will be contacted and informed of how they can collect the item.
- e. If the item is uncollected after 28 days, it will be disposed of.
- f. Other combustible items must be removed within 24 hours of notice being given to the owner to do so. If the item is not removed, THCH will remove and re-charge the owner the costs of removal. Such items will be kept for 28 days before being disposed of unless collected.
- g. THCH manages common areas with shared occupancy with other landlords. If possessions have to be removed as above that are identified as belonging to a resident of another landlord, the landlord will be recharged the costs of removing the item.



### 3.7 BBQs

- a. Gas, charcoal or briquette BBQs are not permitted in any communal areas including, but not limited to on balconies, or roof garden/spaces.



### 3.8 Security Gates/Grilles

- a. Tenants and leaseholders must not fit any metal security gate or grille to their home.
- b. Tenants and leaseholders with existing metal security gates or grilles will be asked to remove them. If reasonable requests to remove are not complied with, THCH will remove the security grille. The grille will be kept for 3 months and if not claimed will be disposed of.

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#### Important Note

The previous THCH policy on "Door Gates & Security Grilles" dated 9th February 2012 is now superseded by this policy. THCH acknowledge consent may have previously been given for a security grille or door. That consent is now withdrawn to enable THCH to maintain a clear and safe escape route for you and your neighbours safe in the event of a fire.

### *Why have these changes been made?*

- Security gates hinder emergency services gaining access to a fire.
- Security gates hinder your escape from a fire.
- Security gates opening into the communal area create a hazard for residents escaping a fire or emergency services attending an incident.
- Majority of security gates and grilles are fitted (without consent) to the structure owned by the landlord (THCH).
- May prevent flat entrance doors closing properly.



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### 3.9 Balconies

- A balcony for the purpose of this section is a private balcony enclosed within the demise of the premises (i.e. excludes balconies along a communal walkway).
- Balconies provide residents with a usable outside amenity area to enjoy. Balconies should not be used as an additional storage space for personal possessions. It is important to ensure materials stored on a balcony do not contribute to the possible spread of fire from one property to another.
- THCH recommends balconies only contain:-
  - A small patio table and chairs
  - A small quantity of plants in a ceramic or metal containers
- THCH prohibits storage of the following on balconies:-
  - Excessive numbers of items
  - Combustible items
  - Bicycles
- Reed fencing or other combustible screening.
- THCH prohibits the discarding of cigarette butts over the edge of any balcony. Cigarettes are to be disposed of in a suitable designed metal container.



### 4. Enforcement:

- THCH will take appropriate enforcement action against any tenant or leaseholder who fails to comply with the obligations laid out in this Addendum when requested to do so by THCH. When considering what, if any, enforcement action is appropriate, THCH will consider the risk rating for the building (as defined at 3(i) above) and be proportionate but will have overriding consideration to the safety of all residents in the building. Such enforcement could include an application for an Injunction compelling the resident to comply with the relevant request and/or possession proceedings.



### 5. Vulnerability

As requested by the London Fire Brigade (LFB), THCH will inform LFB of any known or suspected vulnerability of residents with their buildings to which this Addendum applied. This may include details of hoarding, mobility impairment, mental health illness and drug or alcohol addiction.

THCH may keep this information within a secure Premises Information Box located on the outside of the relevant building in order to assist LFB in an emergency situation.



## 6. Related procedures

- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety
- Tenancy Enforcement
- Gas Safety
- Estate inspections
- Hoarding
- Service Charge



## 7. Monitoring and Scrutiny

THCH Board

Senior Management Team

Leadership Group

- Regular management reports on FRA compliance
- Individual officers reporting issues impacting on assurance
- Internal Audit conducted by external auditors every 3 years
- Review of contractor performance

THCH FRA documentation is not publicly available. A summary of actions is available on request.

Addendum to Fire Safety Policy. Approved August 2017

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