

# **High Rise Fire Safety Leaflet 2019/20 - Evaluation Report July 2020**

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## Background

The Scottish Government established the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017. This set up a Review of the Fire Safety Regime in Scotland for High Rise Domestic Buildings (The Review) to focus on the fire safety regime and regulatory framework. The Review report can be found here <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-fire-safety-regime-final-review/>.

One of the recommendations from The Review was to develop and deliver fire safety information to residents of high rise buildings to strengthen knowledge around fire safety in high rise flats, by communicating simple actions that can prevent fires starting and reduce the impact of those fires that do happen in their homes or those of their neighbours.

There was a public consultation and three engagement events and the findings informed the design and delivery of a leaflet on fire safety for distribution to all residents of high rise buildings across Scotland.

The leaflet was sent with a cover letter to all householders in high rise buildings across Scotland. Leaflets were sent to around 44,000 homes in December 2019, and to around 4,000 homes late January/early February 2020.

## Leaflet development and delivery

The leaflet was developed to include specific messages around fire safety including:

- Preventative behaviour to stop fires happening in the home and common areas
- What to do if there is a fire in your building
- What to do if there is a fire in your flat
- Where to go for more advice.

On the basis of the above, the following measures can be used for evaluation of this activity:

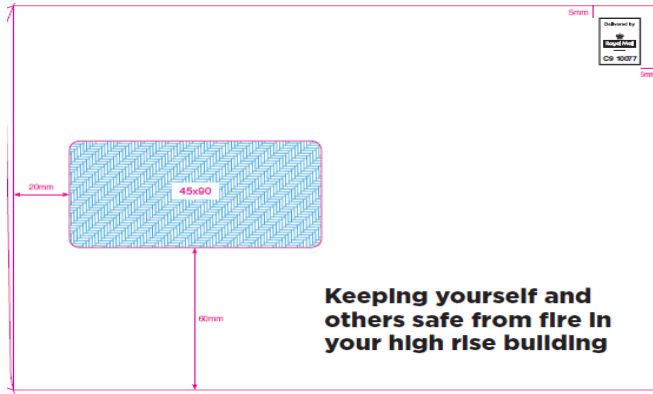
- **Awareness:** To generate good levels of awareness of the leaflet
- **Engagement:** To generate a positive response to the leaflet and good levels of reading of the leaflet
- **Knowledge:** To increase knowledge of what to do in response to a fire in your building/flat
- **Action:** To generate claimed action in response to the leaflet.

The leaflet was delivered with a letter, enclosed in a white envelope (as shown below). The letter explained the purpose of the leaflet, encouraged readers to share it with their household and keep it somewhere visible. It also informed householders that they can make sure their fridge/freezer and other white goods are safe by registering them, check for product recalls and visit [fire.scotland.gov.uk](http://fire.scotland.gov.uk) for more information.

# Leaflet Execution

# Letter

# Envelope



Dear householder,

This letter comes with a leaflet that shows what to do if there is a fire in your building, and some actions you can take to make sure a fire doesn't start in the first place. Please read the leaflet now, share it with other people you live with, and keep it somewhere handy. Tragic fires like Grenfell Tower in London have put the safety of high-rise buildings in the spotlight.

A major high-rise fire is unlikely in Scotland - these buildings are built to be fire safe - but it is not impossible.

You can reduce the risk of a fire happening - don't leave cooking, cigarettes or candles unattended, and keep common areas like stairways and corridors clear of things that can go on fire. You should also make sure you have working smoke and heat alarms, and test them weekly. Make an escape plan, and make sure everyone in your home knows and understands the actions to follow if there is an emergency.

You can help ensure your fridge/freezer and other white goods are safe by registering them at [www.registeryourappliance.org.uk](http://www.registeryourappliance.org.uk). Doing this will mean you'll know if a safety issue is identified.

You can also check for product recalls at [www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls).

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will always come and deal with a fire quickly. They can also come to your home and tell you more on how to prevent fires. If you are concerned about fire safety in your building, request a Free Home Safety Visit.

Call **0800 0731 999**, text **FIRE to 80800** or visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

For more information, visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk) or talk to firefighters at your local community fire station. You'll find contact details on the website, in your local library and in the phone book.

Yours sincerely

*WJ Wilkinson*  
Wendy Wilkinson  
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# Leaflet

### WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A FIRE IN YOUR BUILDING

- 1 Fire resisting cavity barriers around windows
- 2 Self closing device (various kinds)
- 3 Fire resisting door, walls and floors

**STAY PUT, STAY SAFE**  
Most high rise domestic buildings are built with the principle of 'stay put' in mind. This means that flats will be designed to resist the spread of fire. Because of this, a fire is not likely to spread from one flat to another.

If there is a fire in your building - but not in your flat - you should stay in your home and keep the front door closed **unless**:

- you are directly affected by heat, smoke or fire
- or the Fire and Rescue Service or Police tells you to get out

If you have any questions, you should speak to the person responsible for fire safety in your building.

### FOR MORE ADVICE

Visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk), or talk to your local firefighters. You'll find contact details on our website, in your local library and in the phone book.

**TO BOOK A FREE HOME SAFETY VISIT**  
Call **0800 0731 999**, Text **'FIRE'** to **80800** or visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 999**

**USE AND KEEP THIS LEAFLET**  
Make sure everyone in your home is clear on these actions. Put it somewhere handy to remind you - pinned to the wall or the fridge door.

## Keeping yourself and others safe from fire in your high rise building

### ACTIONS TO STOP FIRES HAPPENING

**AT HOME**

**IN THE KITCHEN**

- Never leave cooking unattended - keep an eye on your cooker when it is on.
- Deep fat fryers or oven chips are much safer than using open chip pans.
- If you use a chip pan do not fill it up too much (no more than 1/3 full).

**SMOKING**

- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly in a sturdy ashtray.
- Don't smoke in a chair if you have been drinking alcohol or feel sleepy.
- Do not smoke when sleepy or in bed.
- Keep lighters and matches away from children.

**ELECTRICS**

- Do not overload sockets by plugging in too many electrical appliances.
- Turn electrical appliances off at the wall, this is safer than leaving them on standby.
- Don't leave appliances on when sleeping or out of the house - this includes washing machines, dishwashers and tumble dryers.

**COMMON AREAS**

**STAIRS, HALLS AND CORRIDORS**

- Make sure stairs, landings and corridors are clear for escape. Remove bikes, prams and other objects that could get in the way.
- If you have arranged for items to be taken away, do not leave these in common areas.
- Make sure all rubbish is disposed of properly using the communal bins provided.
- If you have questions about common areas, contact the person that manages your building.

### PREPARE FOR ESCAPE AND GET EARLY WARNING

**AT HOME**

- Close all doors when you go to bed - especially the doors to the lounge and kitchen.
- Plan an escape route out of your home and keep it clear so you can leave quickly if you have to.
- Make sure everyone knows the escape plan.
- Make sure you've got working smoke and heat alarms, and test them weekly.

**AT HOME**

- Get out as quickly as you can, closing doors behind you to stop smoke and fire spread.
- Use the stairs to get down to the ground floor - never take the lift.
- Once you get out, call the Fire and Rescue Service and stay out.

**IF YOU HAVE TO LEAVE**

**TO RAISE THE ALARM**

- If the fire is where you are - in your home or in a common area - leave the building immediately if it is safe to do so and call the Fire and Rescue Service on 999. Tell other residents if you can, but don't put yourself at risk.

## Evaluation

An independent research agency was used to carry out an evaluation of the leaflet. Progressive Research conducted door-step interviews (using CAPI – Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) from 30 January until 16 February 2020 with residents of high rise buildings in Scotland.

A clustered random sampling method was designed to ensure the sample included a good geographical spread and range of blocks. This guided the selection of local authority areas, types of block within each cluster, households within each block (ensuring coverage of all floors) and individuals within each household. The resulting sample size was 376.

Leaflet performance against the measures described above is summarised below:

<p><b>Awareness:</b> To generate good levels of awareness of the leaflet</p>	<p>49% were aware (after prompting) of the leaflet, letter or envelope, including 43% aware specifically of the leaflet.</p>
<p><b>Engagement:</b> To generate a positive response to the leaflet and good levels of reading of the leaflet</p>	<p>Reactions to the leaflet were overwhelmingly positive – at least 8 out of 10 agreed it was clear, useful, relevant and the pictures helped them understand it.</p> <p>Of those who recognised the leaflet, 91% claimed to have read at least some of it.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge:</b> To generate knowledge of what to do in response to a fire in your building/flat</p>	<p>Those who recognised the leaflet were more likely than those who didn't to agree that they feel well informed about what they can do to reduce the risk of fire in their home (90% vs 79%) and to agree that they feel well informed about what they need to do in the event of a fire (87% vs 75%).</p> <p>Those who recognised the leaflet were more likely than those who didn't to know that if there is a fire in the building but not in your flat the safest thing to do is to stay put if you are not affected by heat/smoke, (54% agreed with this vs 39% of non-recognisers) – suggesting that the leaflet has successfully delivered this message to some.</p>
<p><b>Action:</b> To generate claimed action in response to the leaflet</p>	<p>Almost three in ten (29%) of those who recognised the leaflet said they had done something as a result of receiving it, and a fifth (20%) mentioned something included in the leaflet.</p> <p>Among those who recognised the leaflet, 27% said 'staying put in their flat' is something they would do differently as a result of the leaflet, in the event of a fire in their building but not in their flat.</p>

Other results to highlight include:

- Prior to prompting with the leaflet, four in ten respondents (40%) said they recalled seeing/hearing any fire safety information in the last 2-3 months. A leaflet through the door was the most common source of this (mentioned by 56% of those who had seen/heard something).
- Almost six in ten (57%) of those who recognised the leaflet said they had kept it, either somewhere visible (30%) or somewhere out of sight (27%). Among those who had read the leaflet, 17% spontaneously said they would refer to this if they wanted further information about fire safety.
- Overall, the vast majority (90%) of respondents could spontaneously think of actions they already take to reduce the risk of fire.
- The most common fire prevention behaviours people claimed they took (at a spontaneous level) were related to:
  - smoke/heat alarms (60%);
  - electrical appliances (turning off and not overloading) (52%);
  - cooking (not leaving attended and cooking chips) (33%);
  - smoking (29%).
- On prompting, most people reported they had been taking these actions for a while, suggesting that the leaflet is reinforcing knowledge of these actions.
- However, a minority did claim to have started doing some fire safety behaviours in the last 2-3 months and this was higher amongst people who recognised the leaflet. Among those who recognised the leaflet and felt the behaviour was applicable to them, 10% were not smoking after drinking and 12% when sleepy (although the small bases here must be noted), 10% were not overloading sockets and 6% were turning appliances off at the wall.
- Most respondents spontaneously identified at least one correct action in the event of a fire in their flat – mainly relating to getting out/using stairs (77%).
- Knowledge of what to do in the event of a fire in the building (but not in your flat) was less good. 57% named a correct action and 31% said ‘stay put in your flat’.
- However, overall two thirds still don’t know they should stay put, and while half agreed that most high rise blocks in Scotland are built to resist the spread of fire, the remainder disagreed (16%) or were unsure (35%).
- In terms of wider context and potential receptivity to fire safety messages, it is interesting to note 85% of those interviewed in high rise buildings said they feel safe from the risk of fire in their home.

## Conclusions

- There is clear evidence that the leaflet is standing out and being read and kept as intended by some. However, a further leaflet later this year would be a good reminder, or other communication via other channels may be more useful for providing information to those who didn’t recall or engage with the leaflet.
- Reactions to the leaflet were very positive, and this included many respondents agreeing that the pictures were helpful, suggesting that a similar format for future communications would be appropriate.
- While most of the audience know what to do if there is a fire in their flat, many still do not know or actively disagreed that they should ‘stay put’ if there is a fire in the building but not in their flat, suggesting that further work is needed to increase understanding of and belief in the ‘stay put’ message.



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The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
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ISBN: 978-1-80004-260-5 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2020

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS783406 (10/20)

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