

Leaseholder Information Sheet – Fire Safety

This information sheet aims to provide you with information on fire safety, you will find the following sections of help and advice:

Your Front Door and Fire Safety

This information sheet aims to help you identify if your front door is fire compliant and provides advice on the inspection and maintenance of the Front Door.

Fire Safety in Communal Spaces

Advice and guidance on the safe use of communal spaces within your development including tips on balcony management.

Your Fire Sprinkler System

Basic advice on maintaining your sprinkler system in your home.

Fire Safety in your Home

Information poster highlighting some of the most common causes of fire and tips for staying safe in your home.

Your Front Door and Fire Safety

This information sheet aims to help you identify if your front door is fire compliant. Fire compliant front doors are not required where the door opens directly onto a street.

If you have an original door (one fitted when the property was built), the door should have met building regulations at the time it was fitted, but you must ensure all original doors are in good working order and have an operating self-closing device.

Under your lease it is likely that the front door to your home is demised to you and therefore the maintenance and upkeep will be your responsibility. If you are not sure who owns the fire door to your property, you should read through your lease.

Why is a fire door important?

Controlling the spread of fire and smoke in buildings is vital to allow occupants to either remain or evacuate as instructed and enable the fire brigade to gain access to fight the fire. It is therefore critical that fire doors and fire-resistant glazed panels perform correctly.

What if I have inherited my door and I am unsure if it is compliant?

If you inherited a door from a previous owner, then you should check with your solicitor who may be able to confirm if any alterations to the door took place and attain any certificates of compliance from the manufacturer of the door or building control.

Please note that UPVC front doors are not fire compliant.

If you cannot find any information about your door, there are some simple checks you can carry out to help you identify compliance:

Your door should be:

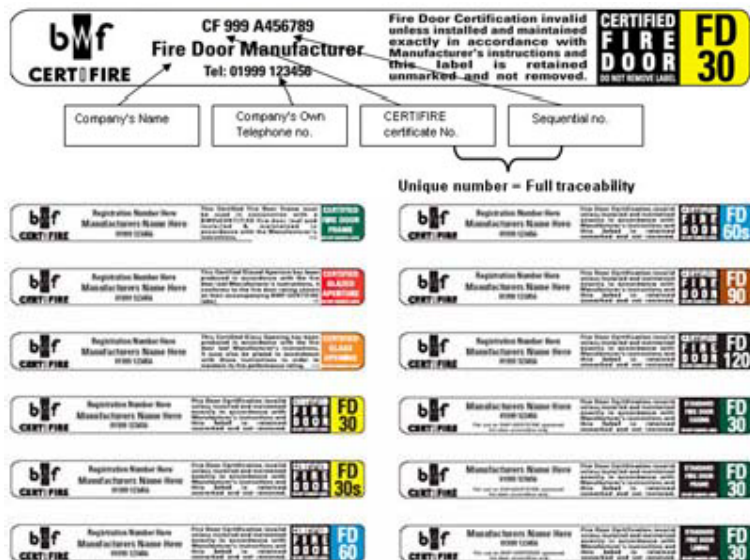
- A minimum of 44mm in thickness / 30 minutes fire resistant
- The door should be of a solid timber construction. If you knock the door and it sounds hollow the door is unlikely to be compliant
- In good condition and working order (note: the hinges should be sufficient to hold the weight of the door)
- Have a working self-closing device (when the door is opened, it shuts on its own)
- Any glass panels in the door, side panel or above the door must be 30-minute fire resistant and in good condition. They cannot be boarded up.

- The frame must be 30-minute fire resistant (a minimum of 30mm thick) without any pieces cut out.
- The door and the frame must fit as a compatible set (the gap between the door and frame should be around 2 to 4 mm)
- Where there is a letterbox, it should be made of a solid metal (not aluminium) or certified fire-resistant material. Solid metals will be magnetic, where aluminium will not.

How can I tell if my front door is fire compliant?

Fire compliant doors can be certified. Certification should be carried out by a UKAS accredited third party to ensure independence and certainty.

One such scheme is that offered by the British Woodworking Federation (BWF). Every BWF- CERTIFIRE Fire Door Assembly carries a permanent and tamper evident label (as per the image below). For more information, visit the BWF website: www.bwf.org.uk



Building Regulations state that a front door to a flat must be at least **FD30S**. This means that the door needs to be 30-minute fire and smoke resistant, FD = Fire Door and 30 = relates to the minutes of fire resistance, S denotes that the door is also smoke sealed.

BM TRADA is another scheme which uses a system known, as TRADA Q-Mark fire door scheme, in which a series of coloured plugs is inserted into the door to indicate the fire door type, member details, the scope of certification during specification and installation, and service history. The plugs can usually be seen from the top of the door.

For more details visit the BM TRADA website at www.bmtrada.com



What if I need to replace my door?

If you own the front door to your flat and you want to replace it, you should start by obtaining Building Regulations approval from the Building Control department at your Local Authority. You are required to seek such approval from the local authority due to the safety implications of replacing a fire door.

Many leases will also require leaseholders to apply for written consent from the landlord before they can carry out any alterations.

If you need to replace your door it will need to be fire compliant under current building regulations. You should seek independent advice in the event you are unsure what building regulations apply to the type of property you own.

The current building regulations provide guidance as to the minimum building standards to be achieved. They reference the relevant British and European Standards defining the test requirements and performance of the fire door assembly or fire door set.

Below is a list of the critical components defined in the current building regulations:-

The door leaf (main component of the door) – The door must as a minimum be of 30-minute fire resistance, in accordance with British Standard 476. You may see this as denoted by an FD30 door rating.

Fire and smoke control doors - New flat entrance doors are required to be both fire and smoke control doors (tested to BS 476-31.1 or EN 1634-3 standards). This means there will be either a combined fire and smoke seal or an intumescent seal and a separate smoke seal to the entire perimeter of the door and/or in the frame. If an air transfer grille (ATG) is fitted to the door, it will contain an automatic smoke damper that will close if a fire breaks out. The 'S' suffix (e.g. FD30S) denotes that the door is both a fire and smoke controlled door.

Fire Door set - Fire door sets relate to the complete unit consisting of a door frame and a door leaf, supplied with all essential parts from a single source (BS EN 12519). This means that it is supplied as a complete unit from one supplier. This guarantees that the entire door set and components, will match the fire tested, original design and fire certificate.

Door Frames - The frame must have the same fire resistance as the door and fit as a compatible set with the door. New doors fitted to existing frames should always be installed by a certified fire door installer.

Intumescent seals - The edges of the door are most susceptible to fire penetration. Intumescent seals expand in the event of a fire and seal the gap between door and frame, stopping the passage of fire. The gap between the frame and door is normally 2-4mm.

Excessive gaps may prevent intumescent seals performing correctly in the event of a fire. All new compliant front doors are fitted with a combined intumescent and smoke seal in accordance with BS476 Part 31.1. 1987.

Smoke seals - Combined with, or separate from, intumescent seals are located in the entire perimeter of the frame or door edge, similar to draft strips. These seals stop the flow of smoke.



Image (above) shows smoke seal being fitted to a door frame

Latch or lock - The latch or lock engages the door leaf securely to the frame when the door is in the closed position. It is critical in securing the door in the event of a fire and preventing warping of the door.

Hinges - A minimum of 3 fire rated hinges must be used with correct intumescent pads, location and fixings.



Image (above) fire rated hinge

Door closer - Flat entrance doors should be fitted with a self-closing device to ensure the fire door always returns to its fully closed position and is held in the closed position when not in use.



Image (above) shows an example of an overhead door closer

Other ironmongery - Apertures are cut in door leaves for a variety of reasons; to accommodate glazed fixed light, air transfer grilles or other ironmongery such as letter plates. Cutting apertures and fitting of fire rated components or glazing systems in a fire door is a highly skilled operation that should be carried out only by a trained person, ensuring the correct materials are used. The allowed size, shape and compatible materials and components are detailed on the primary fire test report, assessment or third-party certification document.

Fire door glazing - Some fire doors have vision panels fitted in them. Special fire tested glass and glazing systems must be used and should be etched with a recognised trademark or BS476-22. When doors are fitted with glazed panels, this operation should only be undertaken by a trained and competent individual, with a good working knowledge of the specific materials and glazing systems required.

The importance of correct installation - The importance of correct installation of fire

doors cannot be over emphasised. There are many recorded instances where an otherwise acceptable door set has been rendered ineffectual due to poor installation. Fire door installation is a specialist skill and even larger contractors are increasingly specifying the use of 'registered' installers.

Important note

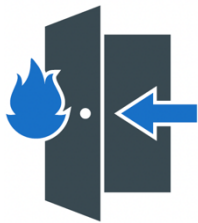
It is the responsibility of you as the leaseholder to ensure the correct door is fitted for the type of property you own in accordance with the building regulations. If you are unsure, you should seek independent advice to determine what type of front door is required. You can obtain further advice on compliant front doors from your local Building Control.

Fire Safety in Communal Spaces

BALCONY MANAGEMENT

Furniture should be kept to a minimum, and fire-resistant tags should be attached where possible.

Storage of combustible items is prohibited, including but not limited to Privacy Garden Screens, BBQs, Wood Burners, Canisters etc.



COMMUNAL FIRE DOOR SAFETY

Please do not wedge open fire doors; these doors are to prevent fire from spreading. In the event of a fire, follow the advice on your emergency plan.

DOOR MATS

If you have a door mat please ensure these are a low profile, well maintained and located in front of your door to avoid any trip hazards in the event of an evacuation.



FIRE ACTION NOTICE

Your Fire Action Notice advises what to do in the event of a fire. It can be viewed via my.Zenith. The notice is also displayed around your property.

COMMUNAL STORAGE OF ITEMS

Do not store items in any communal walkways as this is a trip hazard. No items are to be stored in risers or service cupboards.



Your Fire Sprinkler System

Where your home has a sprinkler system this must be maintained.

Maintaining a sprinkler system is mostly about common sense. Keeping any control valve open, not hanging items from the sprinkler heads, and making sure that the sprinklers do not get painted or obstructed are the most important items.

The Do's

Do carry out a weekly visual inspection of the sprinkler system within the apartment to ensure the system will operate as designed and that nothing has changed that would prevent automatic operation. If you notice any items of concern these should be reported and investigated immediately.

The Don'ts

Don't block sprinklers heads with furniture, home renovations, exercise equipment, or anything else that could obstruct the pattern of water discharge.

Don't paint over sprinkler heads or any cover plates that conceal them. Painting over heads can block water flow, damage the heat sensor and painting over the seams of cover plates means they will likely fail to deploy.

Don't hang objects from sprinkler heads and report any damage you notice to the sprinkler heads.

Don't turn off the system. Make sure the control valve (aka the "water shut-off valve") stays in the open position.



FIRE SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

Top tips for keeping you and your family safe

Plugs



Turn off appliance plugs when not in use

Doors



Do not leave a fire door open and never disconnect an automatic closer

Appliances



Do not leave appliances running when no-one is home

Smoking



Do not smoke in bed and always put out cigarettes fully.

Smoke Alarms



Test your smoke alarm weekly and do not cover or remove

BBQ



If you have a balcony, do not have a BBQ on it

Cooking



Do not leave cooking unattended

Belongings



A tidy home with fewer belongings can reduce the risk of fire spreading

Candles



Do not leave candles unattended and always put out fully

Matches



Store matches and lighters in a safe place, away from children

Electrical



Do not overload electrical sockets and switch them off when not in use

Flammable



Do not store anything flammable, such as petrol, on your home