Fire Risk Assessment

1-8
South Dene,
Smethwick,
B67 7DB.



Date of Inspection: 06 November 2026

Review Period: 3 years.

Officer: S. Henley **- Fire Risk Assessor**

Checked by: A. Froggatt **- Building Safety Manager**

Current Risk Rating = Tolerable

Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

Subsequent review

Review date	Officer	Comments

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Section 0 Introduction, Scope & References

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O) requires the Responsible Person to ensure that a **suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)** is carried out for the common parts of all multi-occupied residential buildings. This FRA supports the organisation's wider fire safety management system and ensures compliance with statutory duties relating to the safety of residents, visitors, staff, and contractors.
This FRA has been completed in accordance with **BS 9792:2025 – Fire Risk Assessment for Housing**, and with reference to relevant UK legislation and guidance, including:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO): The primary law governing fire safety in the common parts of flats, including stairways, corridors, and entrance doors.
- Fire Safety Act 2021: Information about the commencement of the Fire Safety Act and how it affects Responsible Persons and others.
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022: Introduced under the FSO, it mandates high-rise residents (>11m) to have fire doors checked quarterly and provides safety information.
- Housing Act 2004: Empowers local authorities to enforce safety standards within individual residential units.
- Building Safety Act 2022: (where applicable) Imposes strict management requirements on higher-risk buildings.
- Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats (Local Government Association): Considered the definitive guidance, often known as the "LGA guide," for purpose-built blocks.
- Making your small block of flats safe from fire: *Fire Safety in Small Blocks of Flats*
- NFCC guidance on residential fire safety

The purpose of this FRA is to evaluate the risk to life from fire within the **common parts** of the building and to identify any measures required to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.

The assessment considers:

- The building's construction, layout, and fire protection features
- The nature of the occupancy and any residents who may require additional support
- Fire hazards and the measures in place to eliminate or control them
- The adequacy of means of escape and fire safety systems
- The management arrangements for maintaining fire safety

Type of Assessment

This FRA has been completed as a:

- ☒ Type 1 – Common parts only (non-intrusive)
- ☐ Type 2 – Common parts only (Intrusive)
- ☐ Type 3 – Common Parts & Dwellings (Non-Intrusive)
- ☐ Type 4 – Common Parts & Dwellings (Intrusive)

Scope of the Assessment

The assessment includes, but is not limited to:

- ☒ Visual review of the external wall construction (where relevant)
- ☒ Inspection of flat entrance doors from the common side
- ☒ Means of escape routes and exit doors
- ☒ Accessible compartmentation and fire-stopping, passive and active fire protection measures.
- ☒ Service cupboards, risers, and meter rooms (where accessible)
- ☒ Roof voids and loft spaces (where accessible)
- ☒ Fire safety signage, lighting, and detection systems
- ☒ Accessible compartmentation,

Limitations

This FRA is based on a **visual, non-destructive inspection** unless otherwise stated. No opening up of construction, removal of fixtures, or intrusive investigation was undertaken. Areas that could not be accessed at the time of inspection are recorded within the report.

This FRA does **not**:

- Provide a full fire strategy for the building
- Assess the structural fire resistance of building elements
- Identify latent construction defects
- Assess internal conditions within individual dwellings
- Provide an external wall appraisal (FRAEW), which is not normally required for low-rise buildings unless specific concerns are identified
- Serve as a compliance audit or snagging inspection

The findings are therefore limited to the conditions observed and the information made available at the time of inspection.

Review Requirements

The FRA should be reviewed:

- At regular intervals (typically every 3 years)
- Following any significant change to the building
- Following a fire incident
- Following identification of new risks or concerns
- Following significant changes in occupancy or management arrangements

The Responsible Person must ensure that all significant findings and recommended actions are addressed within appropriate timescales and that fire safety information is kept up to date in line with the principles of the **Golden Thread**.

If required, complaints can be made to them by telephone on 0121 380 7500 or electronically on https://www.wmfs.net/our-services/fire-safety/#reportfiresafety.

In the first instance however, we would be grateful if you could contact us directly via https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/contact/log-complaint or by phone on 0121 569 7867

The FRA does not address the risk to property or business continuity from fire.
This FRA complies with the above legislation which is enforced locally by West Midlands Fire Service.

If required, complaints can be made to them by telephone on 0121 380 7500 or electronically on https://www.wmfs.net/our-services/fire-safety/#reportfiresafety.

In the first instance however, we would be grateful if you could contact us directly via https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/contact/log-complaint or by phone on 0121 569 7867.

The date of the fire risk assessment is on the front page, followed by any subsequent reviews. A recurring time frame is not set in legislation, but SMBC will as a minimum review:-

- High Risk Residential Buildings annually.
- Commercial buildings annually.
- Emergency Housing Schemes annually.
- Sheltered schemes annually.
- Other Buildings every 3 years.

The council has procedures and policies in place that will trigger a review of the fire risk assessment. This outcome will then be recorded on the fire risk assessment.

If the review suggests the fire risk assessment is not currently suitable and sufficient, then a new fire risk assessment will be undertaken and published.

The Building Safety Case will be updated to reflect the latest detail/information of latest fire risk assessment. (High Rise Only)

References

This Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken with reference to relevant UK fire safety legislation, statutory guidance, and applicable British Standards current at the time of assessment. For example: -

Applicable Legislation

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO): The primary law governing fire safety in the common parts of flats, including stairways, corridors, and entrance doors.
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022: Introduced under the FSO, it mandates high-rise residents (>11m) to have fire doors checked quarterly and provides safety information.
- Building Safety Act 2022: Imposes strict management requirements on higher-risk buildings.
- Housing Act 2004: Empowers local authorities to enforce safety standards within individual residential units.

Key Guidance Documents

- Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats (Local Government Association): Considered the definitive guidance, often known as the "LGA guide," for purpose-built blocks.
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Sleeping Accommodation (GOV.UK): Guidance on managing risks in communal areas.
- Making Your Small Block of Flats Safe from Fire (GOV.UK): Specific guidance for small, 3-storey blocks.
- BS 9792:2025: New British Standard for conducting fire risk assessments in housing.
- NFCC publication “Fire safety in specialised housing.”

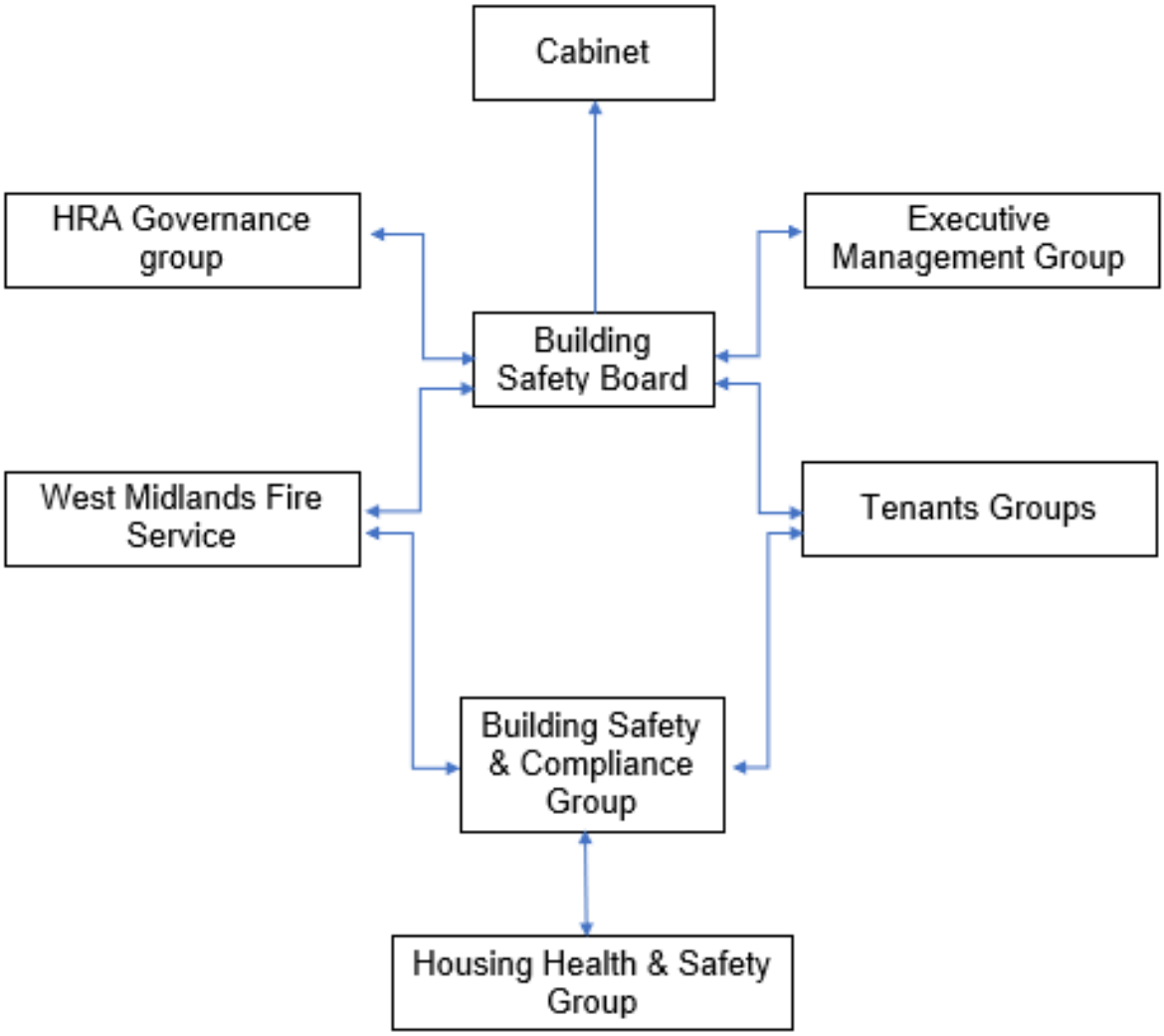
The following diagrams illustrate those procedures and persons that support the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review of the preventive and protective measures. This information is provided as required under the RR(FS)O.



The above processes and procedures are overseen by the Fire Safety, Manager who reports to the Head of Building Safety

These managers attend the Building Safety and Compliance Group for scrutiny which is part of the governance structure below.

Governance Structure



To summarise the fire risk assessment, in this scenario the RR(FS)O requires the prescribed information to be recorded. The prescribed information is the significant findings of the fire risk assessment and those groups or persons especially at risk from fire.

This is recorded here in section 1. Also required to be recorded under article 11, are the fire safety arrangements for the planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review of the preventative and protective measures. The information shown above is part of this requirement.

Section 1

Executive Summary

This Fire Risk Assessment provides an overview of the fire safety arrangements in place within the building and evaluates the level of risk to life from fire within the common parts. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, and BS 9792:2025. It reflects the building's design, construction, occupancy profile, and the fire safety measures provided.

The building is a low-rise, purpose-built block of flats designed to support a **Stay Put Unless Affected** evacuation strategy. This approach is appropriate for buildings of this type, where each flat is intended to provide a degree of fire resistance that allows occupants to remain safely within their dwelling unless directly affected by fire or smoke. The common areas are designed to remain clear and unobstructed, with a single protected stairway providing the means of escape for residents who need to evacuate.

The assessment considers the building's passive and active fire protection measures, including compartmentation, flat entrance doors, fire-stopping, emergency lighting, and domestic smoke detection within sampled flats. It also reviews the management arrangements in place for maintaining fire safety systems, controlling contractors, managing waste, and providing residents with appropriate fire safety information.

The building benefits from traditional, inherently robust construction, and the fire protection measures provided are generally consistent with the expectations for low-rise residential buildings. The management regime supports the maintenance of a sterile common area, which is a key control measure in buildings with a single escape route. The building's occupancy profile does not indicate any unusual or heightened risk factors, although residents who may require additional support are managed through Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessments (PCFRAs) and Residential PEEPs where agreed.

Based on the conditions observed at the time of inspection, the overall risk to life from fire is assessed as **Tolerable**.

This means that the existing fire safety measures are broadly adequate, and only minor or routine improvements may be required. The detailed significant findings and recommended actions are provided in the Action Plan at the end of this report.

The Responsible Person must ensure that all recommended actions are addressed within appropriate timescales and that the FRA is reviewed regularly, or sooner if significant changes occur to the building, its use, or its occupancy.

Significant findings

Include a brief summary of protective and preventative measures where relevant along with any issues found.

The escape strategy is **'Stay Put Unless'.** This means in the event of a fire in your flat you should evacuate. If there is a fire elsewhere in the building you should stay put unless you are affected by fire, smoke or you have been advised by the emergency services to leave.

Section number	Section Area	Individual Risk Level
Section 6	**External Envelope** The building comprises a four-storey block of two-storey maisonettes with predominantly brick-built external elevations and open-deck access at second-floor level. The external walls appear to be of traditional brick and concrete construction with a pitched roof. There is partial rendering applied over balconies. uPVC double-glazed windows are fitted throughout, which were in generally satisfactory condition at the time of inspection. The open-deck access arrangement provides good natural ventilation to the common	Trivial

	access areas, reducing the potential for smoke retention in the event of a fire. The external envelope showed no significant defects that would adversely affect fire spread or compartmentation.	
Section 7	**Means of Escape from Fire** The building comprises of a single stairway centrally located within the block, giving travel to residents on the upper floor. The open-deck access arrangement provides natural ventilation to escape routes. One flat has a timber entrance door; this requires upgrading to an FD30s door set. Final exit doors are fitted with levered handles and self-closing devices. Timber electrical service cupboards are located on the ground floor level at ceiling height, recommend these are upgraded in future refurbishment.	Tolerable
Section 8	**Fire Detection and Alarm Systems** Each flat is equipped with a fire detection system that meets at least the LD3 standard. No detection in communal areas.	Trivial
Section 9	**Emergency Lighting** Emergency lighting is not provided within the block. Recommend the installation of emergency lights to the internal communal area during future refurbishments. There is lighting externally installed to the building within the rear courtyard sides.	Trivial

Section 10	**Compartmentation** The building is constructed to provide 1-hour vertical and horizontal fire resistance around all flats.	Trivial
Section 11	**Fire Fighting Access & Equipment** The premises have no provision for firefighting equipment. Fire-fighting access is gained at the two entrances of the property via a fireman's drop key	Trivial
Section 12	**Fire Signage** There is sufficient 'Fire door keep shut/locked' & 'No Smoking' signage in place throughout the block.	Trivial
Section 13	**Employee Training** All staff receive basic fire safety awareness training.	Trivial
Section 14	**Sources of Ignition** The fixed electrical installation should be tested every 5 years. Last EICR was carried out on the 29/06/2026.	Trivial
Section 15	**Waste Control** Waste for South Dene 1-8 is disposed of via an internal bin chute. Bin room is accessed from the external part of the building and contains 2 steel industrial bins. Items of waste were within the communal area at the time of the survey.	Tolerable

Section 16	**Control and Supervision of Contractors and Visitors** Contractors are controlled centrally, and hot works permits are required where necessary.	Trivial
Section 17	**Arson Prevention** A door entry system to the premises is installed to prevent unauthorised access to the building. Lighting is installed externally around the building	Trivial
Section 18	**Storage Arrangements** There are individual residential storage cupboards within the courtyard and internally within the communal area. Residents should not store fuel or LPG Cylinders in their home or storage facilities.	Trivial

Risk Level Indicator

The following simple risk level estimator is based on commonly used risk level estimator:

Likelihood of fire	Potential consequences of fire		
	Slight harm	Moderate harm	Extreme harm
Low	Trivial risk	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk
Medium	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
High	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

Considering the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the hazard from fire (likelihood of fire) at these premises is:

☐ Low Risk: ☒ Medium Risk: ☐ High Risk:

In this context, a definition of the above terms is as follows:

Low Unusually low likelihood of fire because of negligible potential sources of ignition.

Medium Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).

High Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant increase in likelihood of fire.

Considering the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this fire risk assessment, it is considered that the consequences for life safety in the event of fire would be:

Slight Harm ☒ Moderate Harm ☐ Extreme Harm ☐

In this context, a definition of the above terms is as follows:

Slight harm	Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).
Moderate harm	Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.
Extreme harm	Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.

Accordingly, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is:

Trivial ☐ Tolerable ☒ Moderate ☐ Substantial ☐ Intolerable ☐

Intolerable (Very High Risk)	The situation is intolerable. All or part of the building is unsafe for occupation. Significant effort and/or expenditure might be required to rectify the situation.
Substantial (High Risk)	Significant improvements are required. Urgent and/or substantial rectification work to at least normalize the risk.
Moderate (Normal Risk)	Improvements are necessary to reduce the risk to a tolerable level.
Tolerable (Low Risk)	While some very minor improvements might be required, the existing controls only require maintenance.
Trivial (Very Low Risk)	The risk to life is exceptionally low. No action is needed.

Comments

The communal, any workplace areas and the external envelope of the building are subject to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as confirmed by the Fire Safety Act 2021. The enforcing authority is West Midlands Fire Service.

A Type 1 Fire Risk Assessment of the premises at South Dene 1-8 has been carried out. The assessment included a thorough inspection of the site's layout, identification of potential fire hazards, and evaluation of existing fire safety measures. The findings and recommendations have been documented.

Based on the assessment, the likelihood of a fire is deemed medium prior to the implementation of the action plan, due to the identified normal fire hazards.

Considering the use of the premises and the profile of the occupants, the potential consequences to life safety in the event of a fire are considered to be slight harm. This assessment is based on the majority of maisonette entrance doors appearing to provide FD30 fire resistance, the provision of smoke and heat detection systems to a minimum LD3 standard within all flats, the availability of multiple final exits, and the implementation of a stay-put evacuation strategy.

Access was attempted to a sample some of the properties as part of the risk assessment. This was to ensure the doors have not been tampered with by residents. One door requires replacement to an FD30s door set due to its location being on an escape route for residents.

The common areas are not provided with emergency lighting within escape routes to assist occupants in safely evacuating the premises in the event of a mains power failure during an emergency. It is recommended that these are installed in future building refurbishments are carried out.

Overall, as a number of actions have been communicated to the relevant departments and confirmation has been received that these are being progressed, the level of risk at the time of this Fire Risk Assessment is considered to be tolerable.

Once the reported actions have been completed, the overall risk rating for the building will be reduced to trivial, subject to the implementation of the suggested measures outlined in this fire risk assessment.

Section 2 People at Significant Risk of Fire

Sandwell Council takes the health, safety and wellbeing of residents and leaseholders seriously. It is our policy to exceed, where possible, the minimum health and safety requirements of the law.

The Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025 requires the Responsible Person to identify any groups of people who may be especially at risk in the event of a fire. This section considers the building's occupancy profile, the nature of the premises, and any factors that may increase vulnerability.

This low-rise residential building is occupied primarily by general-needs residents; however, as with all multi-occupied housing, there may be individuals whose personal circumstances increase their level of risk. These risks may arise from physical, sensory, or cognitive impairments, temporary health conditions, or other factors that could affect a person's ability to detect a fire, respond to an alarm, or evacuate safely.

Groups of People Who May Be at Increased Risk

- **Residents with mobility impairments** – may require more time or support to evacuate.
- **Residents with sensory impairments** – reduced ability to detect fire or navigate escape routes.
- **Residents with cognitive impairments** – may struggle to recognise danger or follow instructions.
- **Residents with temporary vulnerabilities** – illness, injury, recovery from surgery, or pregnancy.
- **Children and young people** – may rely on adults for guidance during an emergency.
- **Visitors unfamiliar with the building** – may not know escape routes or fire procedures.
- **Contractors working on site** – may be unfamiliar with fire safety arrangements and introduce additional risks.

Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025

These regulations apply:

a) all buildings in England that are high rise residential buildings, that is, buildings containing two or more sets of domestic premises (multi residential) that are at least 18 meters above ground level or have 7 storeys), and

b) all multi- residential buildings more than 11 metres in height above ground level (typically a building height of 5 storeys or more) that have simultaneous evacuation strategies in place. The requirements include:

Identification of Residents Needing Assistance

The Responsible Person must take reasonable steps to identify residents whose ability to evacuate independently may be compromised due to physical, sensory, or cognitive impairments.

Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessments (PCFRAs)

A PCFRA is a structured conversation with the resident to understand their individual needs, risks, and capabilities. It considers mobility, communication, awareness, and any assistive technology required.

Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (RPEEPs)

Where agreed with the resident, an RPEEP sets out the actions they should take in the event of a fire. It may include:

- Evacuation routes
- Support required
- Communication needs
- Use of mobility aids
- Any agreed assistance arrangements

RPEEPs are voluntary and require the resident's consent.

Consent-Based Sharing of Information with the Fire Service

Information relating to residents who may require assistance can only be shared with West Midlands Fire Service if the resident provides explicit consent. This information helps the Fire Service plan an appropriate operational response.

Review Requirements

PCFRAs and RPEEPs must be reviewed:

- Annually
- When a resident's circumstances change
- When requested by the resident

Summary for This Building: PCFRAs/RPEEPs (not required due to being a low-rise building)

Number of PCFRAs/RPEEPs currently in place:
If no residents have been identified as requiring additional support, this should be recorded. If residents decline to participate, this should also be noted.

Section 3 Contact Details

The Chief Executive of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has ultimate responsibility for the site as the responsible person identified by the RR(FS)O 2005.

The Chief Executive has put a structure in place to support the management of the site.

The contact names to support the management of the site are as follows:

Chief Executive Shokat Lal		
Executive Director Asset Manager & Improvement Alan Lunt		
Assistant Director Asset Management & Improvement Sarah Agar		
Head of Building Safety & Compliance Jon Hemming		
Building & Fire Safety Team Manager Tony Thompson		
Team Lead Fire Safety Jason Blewitt		
Team Lead Building Safety Anthony Smith		
Housing Office Manager Lisa Ellis		
Building Safety Managers Adrian Jones Andrew Froggatt Carl Hill Louis Conway Craig Hudson	**Fire Risk Assessors** Mohammed Zafeer Stuart Henley Ethan Somaiya	**Resident Engagement Officers – Fire Safety** Abdulmonim Khan Hannah Russon

Please note, the above details are correct at the time of the production of the risk assessment and may be subject to change.

Section 4

Description of Premises

1-8
South Dene
Smethwick
B67 7DB





A Type 1 Fire Risk Assessment of the premises at South Dene 1-8 has been carried out. The assessment included a thorough inspection of the site's layout, identification of potential fire hazards, and evaluation of existing fire safety measures. The findings and recommendations have been documented.

Based on the assessment, the likelihood of a fire is deemed medium prior to the implementation of the action plan, due to the identified normal fire hazards.

Constructed in 1954, this four-storey residential block comprises a total of eight maisonettes, with four dwellings accessed externally at ground floor level and a further four accessed from an open access deck at second-floor level. The building is of traditional construction, incorporating brick masonry external walls and reinforced concrete elements, beneath a pitched roof finished with concrete interlocking roof tiles. The roofline is fitted with uPVC fascias and soffits. A centrally located internal staircase serves the upper levels and discharges onto a concrete rendered open access balcony/walkway protected by metal balustrading extending across the front elevation, providing access to the upper maisonettes.

At the rear elevation of the block, the upper residential maisonettes are provided with individual balconies situated on the external elevations of the building. The balconies are of solid concrete construction, incorporating metal balustrade guarding, and are accessed directly from the respective flats.

Residents' storage facilities are provided both internally and externally within the block. These storage units are individually numbered, designated for the exclusive use of specific residents, and are secured with locks accessible only by the respective key holders.

The building is set within landscaped grounds and are served by pedestrian pathways and provides car parking at the rear of the property.





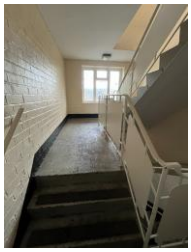

The building is positioned on South Road. Access is provided to the main block via the access road off Broomfield into the block's car park. The communal entrances are fitted with a timber door and frame assembly with an internal self-closing device. The doors incorporate multiple glazed vision panels arranged vertically within the leaf. Each door is fitted with an electronic access control system incorporating an intercom with keypad entry panel, fob access and fire fighters drop key access located adjacent to the frame. The lower section of the door is protected by a metal kick plate.






The central staircase serves the upper-floor accommodation and is open to the external environment at the head of the stair. Resident storage units are located beneath the staircase at ground-floor level. Natural ventilation is provided by openable windows within the stairwell. The upper landing contains a number of tenant storage units together with a waste chute hopper forming part of the refuse disposal system.









The refuse chute room is located at the rear of the property next to the rear exit and is accessed via a timber door. The room contains the discharge point of the refuse chute and two industrial steel waste containers for the collection of deposited waste.





The enforcing authority is West Midlands Fire Service.
The nearest fire station is Smethwick Fire Station,
located approximately 0.2 mile away.

Types of fire risk assessments (FRAs) for multi-occupied buildings,

- Types of fire risk assessments (FRAs) for multi-occupied buildings,
- Type 1 is a basic, non-destructive check of common areas;
- Type 2 involves destructive sampling of common areas for serious flaws;
- Type 3 extends Type 1 to include individual flats non-destructively; and
- Type 4 is the most comprehensive, combining Type 3 with destructive inspection of common areas and flats for deep structural assessment

High/Low Rise	Low Rise
Number of Floors	2 (4 storeys)
The building height from external ground level to the finished floor level of the highest habitable storey is approximately	9 Metres
Approximate floor area	196.46 m² (2,114.66 ft²)
Properties within the block	8 maisonettes/flats
Date of Construction	1954
Construction Type	Traditional brick & concrete
Last Refurbished	Unknown
External Cladding	N/A
Number of Lifts	N/A
Number of Staircases	1
Automatic Smoke Ventilation to communal area	No
Fire Alarm System	No
Refuse Chute	No
Access to Roof void	No (not from the communal area)
Equipment on roof (e.g., mobile phone station etc)	No
EV charging points, distance from building	N/A
WMFS Audit	N/A
Enforcement action	N/A
Fire strategy	N/A

Persons at Risk

Residents / Occupants of 8 maisonettes/flats.
Visitors,
Sandwell MBC employees,
Contractors,
Service providers (e.g., meter readers, delivery people etc)
Statutory bodies (e.g., W.M.F.S, Police, and Ambulance

Section 5

Building Plan





Section 6

External envelope

Following the introduction of the Fire Safety Act 2021, consideration needs to be given to the external envelope of the building for any fire risk. This predominantly means the external wall construction including any insulation filler. It also includes balconies and any other fixtures as well as doors and windows.

Below is a breakdown of the materials used within the external envelope, it is deemed that the combination and application of these materials present an acceptable level of fire risk.

1) The external elevations are predominantly of facing brick construction beneath a pitched roof structure finished with concrete interlocking tiles. uPVC fascia and soffit boards are installed around the perimeter of the roofline.



2) uPVC double-glazed units have been installed in each flat and within the communal stairway. The final exit doors incorporate multiple glazed vision panels arranged vertically within the leaf. Exit door is fitted with an electronic access control system incorporating an intercom with keypad entry panel, fob access and fire fighters drop key access located adjacent to the frame. The lower section of the door is protected by a metal kick plate.



3) External lighting is provided around the external sides of the block and above the communal entrance doors. The lighting enhances visibility and assists in maintaining the safety and security of residents and visitors during periods of darkness.



4) The building incorporates external balcony structures serving separate residential flats on the upper floor. The balconies are formed from reinforced concrete and are fitted with metal guarding to the perimeter. Each balcony is accessed solely from the flat it serves.
The upper floor properties are accessed via an open decked area to the rear of the premises. The structure is of solid concrete construction and is enclosed by metal balustrade guarding. The balconies are coated in a cream-coloured render.



Section 7 Means of Escape from Fire

1) Each property is fitted with a minimum of an LD3 detection system within the flat. See Section 8

2) All corridors are of adequate width (at least 1050mm) and will be maintained clear to that width as a minimum

3) None of the corridors that form part of the means of escape are dead ends.

4) Majority of the flat entrance doors are Permadoor and Nationwide FD30s fire doors. The second-floor properties benefit from open-deck access with alternative directions of travel, while ground-floor properties discharge directly to open air.



1 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed
2 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed
3 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Nationwide	Glazed
4 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed
5 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed
6 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Timber non fire door	Glazed
7 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed
8 Southdene;South Road;Smethwick;West Midlands;	Permadoor	Glazed

5) Access was attempted to the upper floor properties as part of the risk assessment. This was to ensure the doors have not been tampered with by residents.

Ground Floor properties	Upper Floor
a) Flat 1: No attempt made, exit to fresh air	e) Flat 5: No answer
b) Flat 2: No attempt made, exit to fresh air	f) Flat 6: Non fire door fitted. FD30s required
c) Flat 3: No attempt made, exit to fresh air	g) Flat 7: No answer
d) Flat 4: No attempt made, exit to fresh air	h) Flat 8: No answer

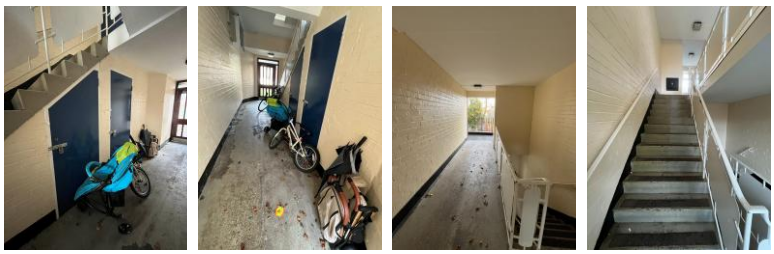
f) **Flat 6: Leaseholder flat – Glazed timber door installed at the time of the survey, this needs to be an FD30s door as the entrance is on an escape route along the open deck.**



6) The upper floor is served by a concrete staircase, which provides the means of escape for occupants of the flats located on the upper floor. The staircase has a clear width of approximately 1 metre measured between the handrail and wall.



7) The communal staircases and landings within the block are of reinforced concrete construction



8) Automatic smoke ventilation is not employed. The stairway is an open stairway to the second floor open decked access. This would be sufficient to ventilate the stairway.



9) The block is served by an open-deck access design. Consequently, glazing is installed within the elevations facing the access deck. The windows are located above brickwork upstands extending to approximately 1.2m in height.



10) Top-floor residential storage cupboards are provided and secured with resident key-operated locks. The cupboards are enclosed by timber doors and timber frames and are accessible only to authorised residents.





11) A bin hopper is located on the top floor. At the time of the inspection, the hopper seals and self-closing mechanisms were present and found to be in good working order.





12) A timber door is located at the mid-landing of the stairway. The door was locked and inaccessible at the time of the survey; therefore, it was not possible to assess the area beyond or comment on its use, fire risk, or the presence of any storage within this space.



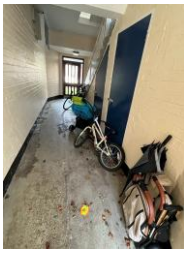
13) On the ground floor, adjacent to one of the final exit doors, there is a high-level timber-constructed electrical cupboard secured with a budget lock. The cupboard was not accessible for internal inspection at the time of the survey; however, appropriate electrical hazard warning signage was displayed on the door. It is recommended that, as part of any future refurbishment works, the cupboard is upgraded to a suitably fire-resisting and compliant enclosure to provide improved protection of the electrical installation and reduce the potential fire risk associated with the communal escape route.



14) Beneath the staircase are several locked timber doors providing access to residential storage cupboards. These cupboards are for tenant use only and were inaccessible at the time of the survey. Consequently, the level of storage, housekeeping arrangements, and the adequacy of any fire-stopping measures within these units could not be verified.



15) **The ground floor communal area was being used for the storage of items including pushchairs, bicycles, and other personal belongings. Such items have the potential to obstruct escape routes and contribute to the fire load within the means of escape. These items should be removed from the communal areas and relocated either within the designated storage units or inside the occupants' flats.**



16) The final exit doors (x2) are fitted with an electrically controlled locking mechanism that is released by means of a levered handle. This arrangement enables occupants to unlock and open the door from the inside without the use of a key, facilitating safe and efficient escape in the event of an emergency.



17) Communal areas are kept free of flammable items. The communal areas are checked on a regular basis by Caretaking / Cleaning teams 365 days per year, and all items of rubbish are immediately removed. There is also an out of hour's service that allows combustible items of furniture / rubbish to be removed.

18) Emergency lighting is not provided to the communal landings and stairways. Refer to Section 9 for recommendations regarding the adequacy of the existing lighting provision and proposed improvements. (Refer to section 9)

Definitions Fire Doors.

Notional fire door – A fire door that is thought to have been installed at the time of construction. This door may not meet current building regulation requirements however is still acceptable if performing as originally intended.

Upgraded notional fire door – A notional fire door that has been upgraded. For example, with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals.

Nominal fire door – A fire door that may meet the standards specified within the building regulations but has not been awarded the official certification of doors manufactured and evaluated by an accredited, third-party testing unit and approved formally with the relevant certificates and documentation.

Certified fire door – A fire door and frame that have been approved and certified by the manufacturer. A competent person must install the door assembly.

Classifications of FD30 and FD30s fire doors include timber-based options designed to provide 30 minutes of fire resistance, with the "s" suffix indicating additional smoke sealing capabilities. Timber notional doors are a distinct category within this, referring to older, existing timber doors—often in older residential buildings—that are deemed capable of providing 30 minutes of fire protection based on an inspector's assessment rather than formal, modern fire testing certification.

Section 8 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

1) Early warning is limited to hard wire or battery smoke alarms within each of the resident's flats and the community room. The equipment is subjected to a cyclical test.

2) The following information is based on a sample of properties visited at the time of the survey or information gained via SMBC's Job Manager system, the smoke alarms within resident's flats are installed to a minimum of an LD3 Standard. The detectors are checked and records updated during the annual gas service.

Ground Floor	Upper Floor
a) Flat 1: Detection Unknown	1) Flat 5: Hallway, landing, living room, kitchen (LD2)
b) Flat 2: Detection in Hallway, landing (LD3)	2) Flat 6: Detection Unknown
c) Flat 3: Detection in Hallway, landing, living room, kitchen (LD2)	3) Flat 7: Hallway, landing, living room, kitchen (LD2)
d) Flat 4: Detection in Hallway, landing, living room, kitchen (LD2)	4) Flat 8: Hallway, landing, living room, kitchen (LD2)

For information
LD1 all rooms except wet rooms
LD2 all-risk rooms e.g. Living Room, Kitchens and Hallway.
LD3 Hallway only

3) There is no effective means for detecting an outbreak of fire to the residential communal areas. The reason for this is:

I. Such systems may get vandalised.
II. False alarms would occur.
III. A Stay Put - Unless policy is in place.

Section 9

Emergency Lighting

1) Emergency escape lighting is not provided within the communal stairway and circulation areas, with illumination reliant solely on the normal mains-powered lighting system. Government guidance for small blocks of flats only permits reliance on borrowed lighting in certain two-storey buildings where such lighting is adequate and reliable; this four-storey block exceeds that scope and reliance on borrowed lighting is therefore not considered appropriate. Furthermore, BS 5266-1:2025 recommends that defined escape routes, including stairways, changes in direction and final exits, are provided with emergency illumination in the event of failure of the normal lighting supply. It is therefore recommended that a suitable 3-hour emergency escape lighting system be installed throughout the communal means of escape and maintained in accordance with BS 5266-1:2025 and Article 14 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Section 10 Compartmentation

1. A visual inspection of the accessible areas was undertaken as part of the assessment, but areas with restricted access, i.e., false ceilings and void areas, were only inspected where readily accessible. The inspection did not reveal any breaches in compartmentation.

   The survey undertaken as part of this risk assessment should not be construed as a full compartmentation survey of the building.

2. The building is designed to provide as a minimum 1-hour vertical and horizontal fire resistance, except at entrance to flats which is a minimum of 30-minute fire door.

3. Any remedial works arising from the fire stopping / compartmentation check(s) will be actioned immediately by the Fire Safety Rapid Response Team.

4. All communal doors are fitted with automatic closing devices that are checked on a regular basis by Caretaking Teams as part of their checks. Defective closing devices are replaced either by the Caretaking Team(s) or the in-house repairs team(s).

5. A high-level timber electrical cupboard is located adjacent to a final exit door on the ground floor. The cupboard was not accessible for inspection during the survey; however, electrical hazard warning signage was displayed. Consideration should be given to upgrading the enclosure to a suitable fire-resisting standard as part of future refurbishment works.

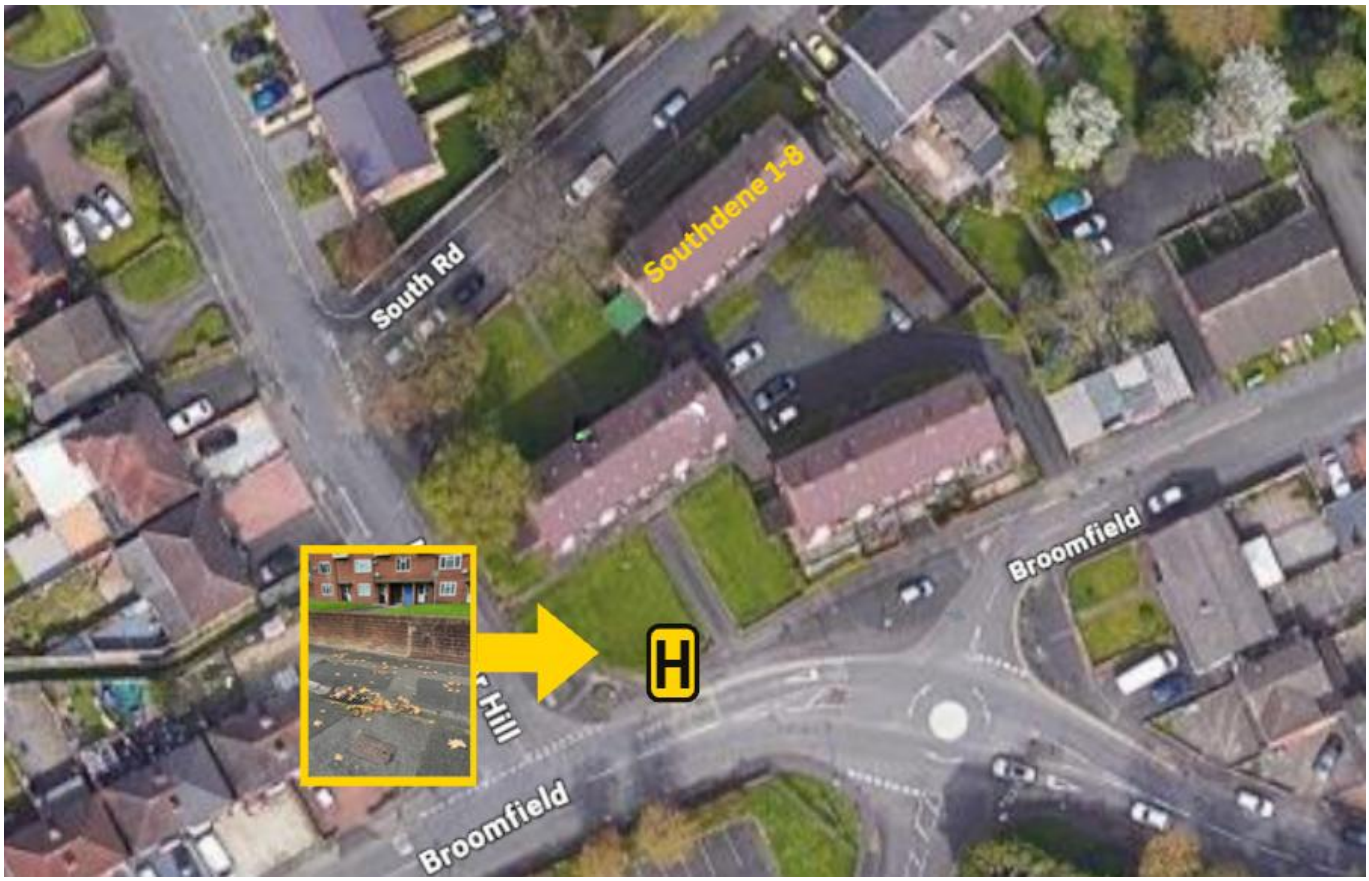


Section 11

Fire Fighting Access & Equipment

1) There is no firefighting equipment on this premises.

2) Nearest fire hydrant is indicated within the attached plan.



The enforcing authority is West Midlands Fire Service.
The nearest fire station is Smethwick Fire Station,
located approximately 0.2 miles away.

Section 12

Fire Signage

1) Smoking is prohibited within any communal parts of the building in line with Smoke Free England legislation. Signage is installed to notify residents and visitors of this.



2) Hazard warning signage is installed on the electrical mains cupboard within the communal areas, where required. The signage alerts occupants, contractors, and emergency personnel to the presence of potentially hazardous services and helps prevent unauthorised access or interference with critical building infrastructure.





3) Directional escape signage is not provided throughout the building. This is considered acceptable due to the simple and straightforward layout of the premises, where the route to the final exit is readily apparent and can be easily identified by occupants and visitors. The absence of directional signage is therefore not considered to adversely affect means of escape arrangements at the time of assessment.

Section 13

Employee & Resident Training/Provision of Information

1) All Caretaking / Cleaning Employees have undertaken fire safety training. This includes use of bespoke ‘Fire Safety in High / Low Rise Flatted Accommodation’ Video.

2) All employees are encouraged to complete ‘In the line of fire’ training on an annual basis.

3) Staff undertaking fire risk assessments on Low Rise buildings have or are working towards a minimum of Level 4 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment.

4) Fire safety information has been provided as part of tenancy pack.

Section 14

Sources of Ignition

1) Smoking is prohibited on entrance and within any communal parts of the building in line with Smoke Free England legislation.

2) Hot working is not normally carried out. If essential maintenance requires the use of hot work processes, then corporate policies and procedures are to be followed.

3) Portable electrical equipment used as part of the Caretaking / Cleaning regime is subject to annual PAT Testing. This information is held by the Estate Services Manager.

4) The fixed electrical installation shall be tested every 5 years. The date of the last EICR was 29/06/2026.


Dodd Group

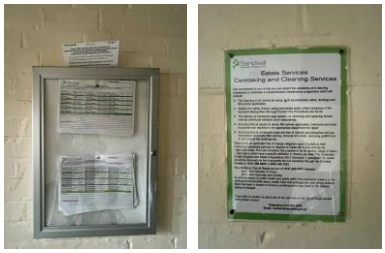
ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORT

5) Portable heaters are not allowed in any common parts of the premises.

6) Gas appliances and pipework (where installed) are subject to annual testing and certification. This cyclical contract is managed by the in-house Gas Team.

Section 15 Waste Control

1) There is a regular Cleaning Service to the premises.



2) Refuse bins serving South Dene 1-8 are located within a dedicated bin store at the rear of the premises. This room also incorporates the refuse chute discharge point, where waste deposited via the bin hoppers from the upper floors is collected. At the time of the survey, the bin store appeared suitably managed, and refuse is removed as part of the routine waste collection service.



3) Regular checks by Caretakers minimise risk of waste accumulation.

4) ‘Out of Hours’ service is in place to remove bulk items.

section 16

Control and Supervision of Contractors and Visitors

1) Responsive Repairs service delivered by Sandwell MBC necessitates the production of an order via the computerised repairs system. Details of any known risks are documented on the repair order.

2) Hot works are not permitted unless authorisation is given via the approved officer. The hot works procedure is to be followed.

3) Utility companies are not allowed to access any service cupboard or secure area. They must request and collect maintenance keys from the local housing office. This allows scrutiny of what is the scope of any works such as installation of tenant's broadband / phone line etc.

4) Where contractors are appointed to undertake major refurbishment works, Sandwell MBC Urban Design team will put control measures in place. Such Measures include: -

a) Pre-Contract Meetings – where contractor is made aware of all working arrangements and safe systems of work to be adopted. Issues covered in this meeting will include:

- Health and Safety.
- Site Security.
- Safety of working and impact on children/school business.
- Fire risk, if any.
- Site Emergency Plan.

b) Monthly Site Meetings – in order to monitor, review and share any new information including any new risks.

c) Site monitored daily whilst work is in progress by Clerk of Works / Health and Safety Officers.

d) Final Contractor review on completion of works undertaken.

Section 17

Fire Precautions

1) Regular checks are undertaken by Caretakers / Cleaning Team(s) 365 days per year which helps reduce the risk of arson.

2) Restricted access to the premises by means of a door entry system.

3) The perimeter of the building is well illuminated.

4) There have been no reported fire incidents since the last FRA.

Section 18

Storage Arrangements

1) Residents instructed not to bring L.P.G cylinders into block.

2) The tenancy conditions, Section 7 – Condition 5.6 stipulates “If you live in a flat or maisonette, you, people living with you and any visitors to your property must not keep or use paraffin oil, petrol, bottled gas appliances or any other explosive, FLAMMABLE or dangerous material in the property. This restriction also applies to any storage facility situated in or attached to the block, which has been provided for your use.”

3) Residents should not store flammable liquids or gas cylinders on site.

4) No Flammable liquids stored on site by Caretakers / Cleaners.

5) There are individual residential storage cupboards are located throughout the premises, including a few situated externally at the front of the block, two located beneath the ground-floor stairway, three positioned on the top-floor internal stair landing, and one located on the open deck access adjacent to Flat 6. These cupboards are provided for residents' use and are secured against unauthorised access.






Section 19

Additional Control Measures. Fire Risk Assessment - Action Plan

Significant Findings

Action Plan

It is considered that the following recommendations should be implemented to reduce fire risk to, or maintain it at, the following level:

Trivial: ☒ Tolerable: ☐

Definition of priorities (where applicable):

P1 Arrange and complete as urgent – Within 10 days

P2 Arrange and complete within 1-3 Months of assessment date

P3 Arrange and complete within 3-6 Months of assessment date

P4 Arrange and complete exceeding 6 months under programmed work

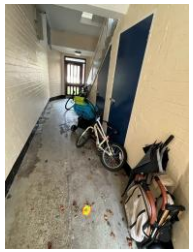
Fire Risk Assessment
Action Plan

Name of Premises or Location: South Dene 1-8

Date of Action Plan: 19/11/2026

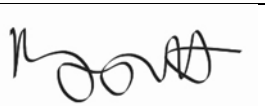
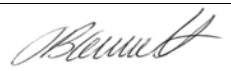
Review Date: <Insert date>

Question/ Ref No	Required Action	Supporting photograph	Priority	Timescale and Person Responsible	Date Completed
7/5f	**Flat 6:** Fit FD30s door set, existing door is not compliant on the escape route		P3	Within 3-6 Months Leasehold Manager	

7/15	**Communal areas**: Items are being left within the communal area. Notify residents to relocate these items out of the communal area,		P3	Within 3-6 Months Housing Manager	

Observations/Recommendations
When undertaking future improvement program(s), it is advised that the observations listed below should be given consideration (noting that the safety of the residents is not jeopardised by these, and all steps to reduce any known risks have been taken).

- **Lighting (Electrical):** Recommend that the existing lighting is upgraded to emergency lighting when funding allows, or when a refurbishment is being carried out.
- **Electrical cupboard:** It is recommended that the electrical cupboard situated on the ground floor is upgraded to a suitably fire-resisting and compliant enclosure to provide improved protection of the electrical installation and reduce the potential fire risk associated with the communal escape route.

Fire Risk Assessor	**Signed**	**Qualifications**	**Date**
S. Henley		**L4 Diploma**	**17/11/2026**
Contact details	**0121 569 7474**		
Verified by	**Signed**	**Qualifications**	**Date**
A. Froggatt		**L4 Diploma**	**17/11/2026**
Contact details	**0121 569 7474**		
Action plan approved by	**Signed**	**Job Role**	**Date**
Jason Blewitt		**Team Lead Fire Safety**	**19/11/2026**
Contact details	**0121 569 7474**		

Appendix 1

Significant Hazards on Site and Information to be Provided for the Fire Service

Name of property: Sothdene 1-8

Updated: November 2026

Premise Manager: Sumayya Hafezjee
Tel. No.: 0121 569 7474

Hazard	Information/Comments
Asbestos	An asbestos survey has been undertaken of the communal areas. Survey held by Sandwell Housing Tel:- 0121 569 5077. *Include survey*

Report No.:	J420783
Nature of Work:	Management Survey
Issue Date:	14/05/2025
Client Name:	Sandwell MBC (formerly Homes) Building Services, Direct 2 Trading Estate, Roway Lane, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3ES
UPRN:	BL44420SO09 2
Site Address:	1-8 Southdene, Smethwick, B67 7DB



Order Placed By:	Dean Harding
Site Contact:	Site Manager
Date(s) of Work:	26/04/2025
Technical Manager:	D Ely CCP (Asbestos)
Assistant Surveyor(s):	Not Applicable

Lead Surveyor:

Anton Rickards
Asbestos Surveyor

Authorised Signatory:

Paul Walters
Technical Review Officer
14/05/2025

Non-accredited activities are present within this report.

Head Office:
20 Stourbridge Road,
Halesowen, West Midlands
B63 3US
Tel: 0121 550 0224
Email: sales@bradley-enviro.co.uk

UKAS INSPECTION 291 UKAS TESTING 1155 UKATA PROFESSIONAL MEMBER atac

Executive Summary Report of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) By Risk

1-8 Southdene, Smethwick

Report Number: **J420783**

Sample No.:	Floor Level:	Block Name:	Location:	Item:	Asbestos Content:	Determination Method:	Extent:	Risk Category:	Recommendations:
No sample - presumed	E - External	Communal	External	Asbestos Insulating board soffits	Crocidolite	Presumed	120 linear metres	B11	Monitor condition
No sample - presumed	Ground Floor	Communal	09 Hall	Asbestos Textile fuse tapes	Crocidolite	Presumed	4 units	C9	Monitor condition
No sample - presumed	Ground Floor	Communal	09 Hall	Asbestos Bitumen cable wrap	Crocidolite	Presumed	1 linear metres	C9	Monitor condition
No sample - presumed	E - External	Communal	External	Asbestos Cement undercloaking	Crocidolite	Presumed	24 linear metres	C8	Monitor condition