Fire Risk Assessment

Sandfield House

Flats 1 - 14.
Walsall Road.
West Bromwich
B71 3LR.

Date Completed: 07/01/2025.

Review Period: 3 years.

Officer: A Jones **Fire Risk Assessor.**

Checked By: Anthony Smith Fire Risk Assessor.

Current Risk Rating = Tolerable

Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

Subsequent reviews.

Review date	Officer	Comments

Contents

Section 0 Introduction

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O) places a legal duty on landlords to complete a fire risk assessment (FRA). Specifically, RR(FS)O article *9. — (1)*

"The responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions he needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on him by or under this Order."

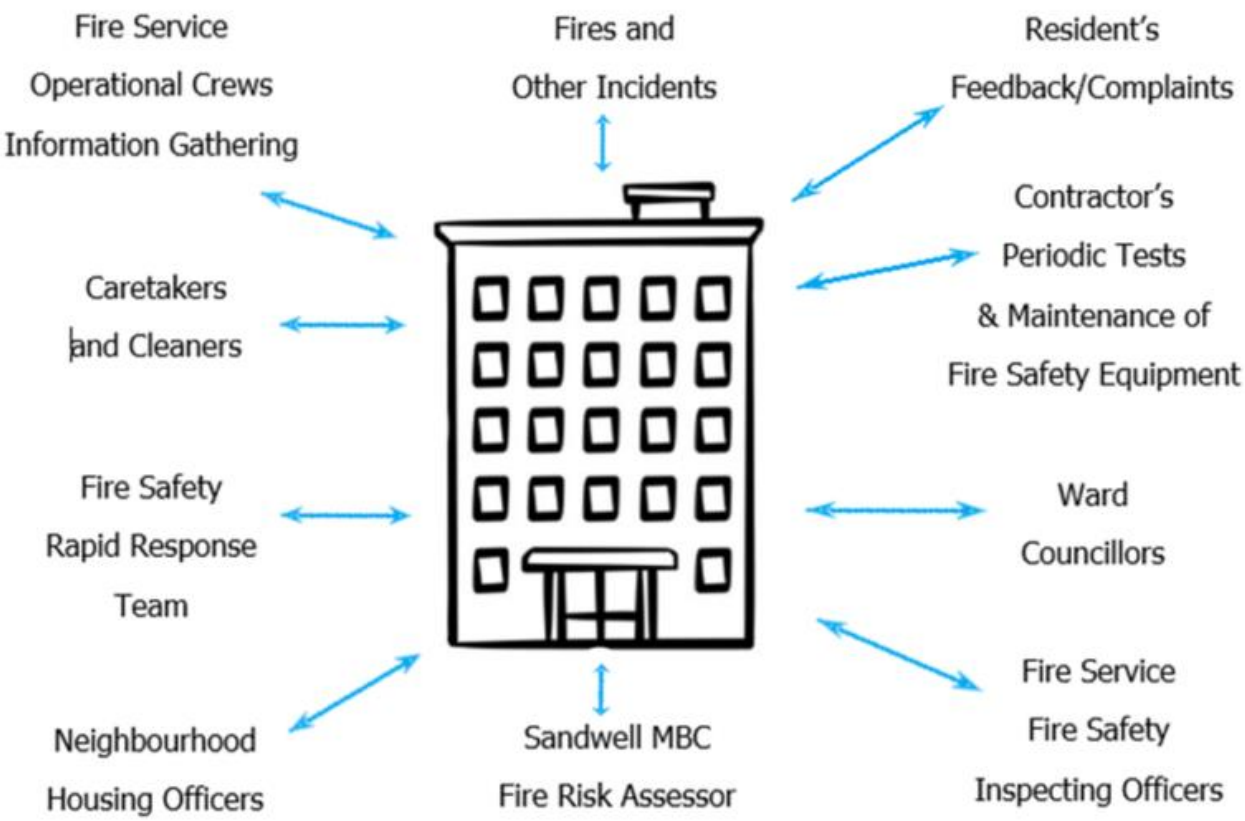
This type 1 fire risk assessment has been written to comply fully with the above legislation which is enforced locally by West Midlands Fire Service. If required, complaints can be made to them by telephone on 0121 380 7500 or electronically on https://www.wmfs.net/our-services/fire-safety/#reportfiresafety. In the first instance however, we would be grateful if you could contact us directly via https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200195/contact_the_council/283/feedback_and_complaints or by phone on 0121 569 6000.

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 the Council will as a minimum review:

- High Risk Residential Buildings 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 then is 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 become the current fire risk assessment. The previous fire risk assessment will be retained in the building safety case for that building.

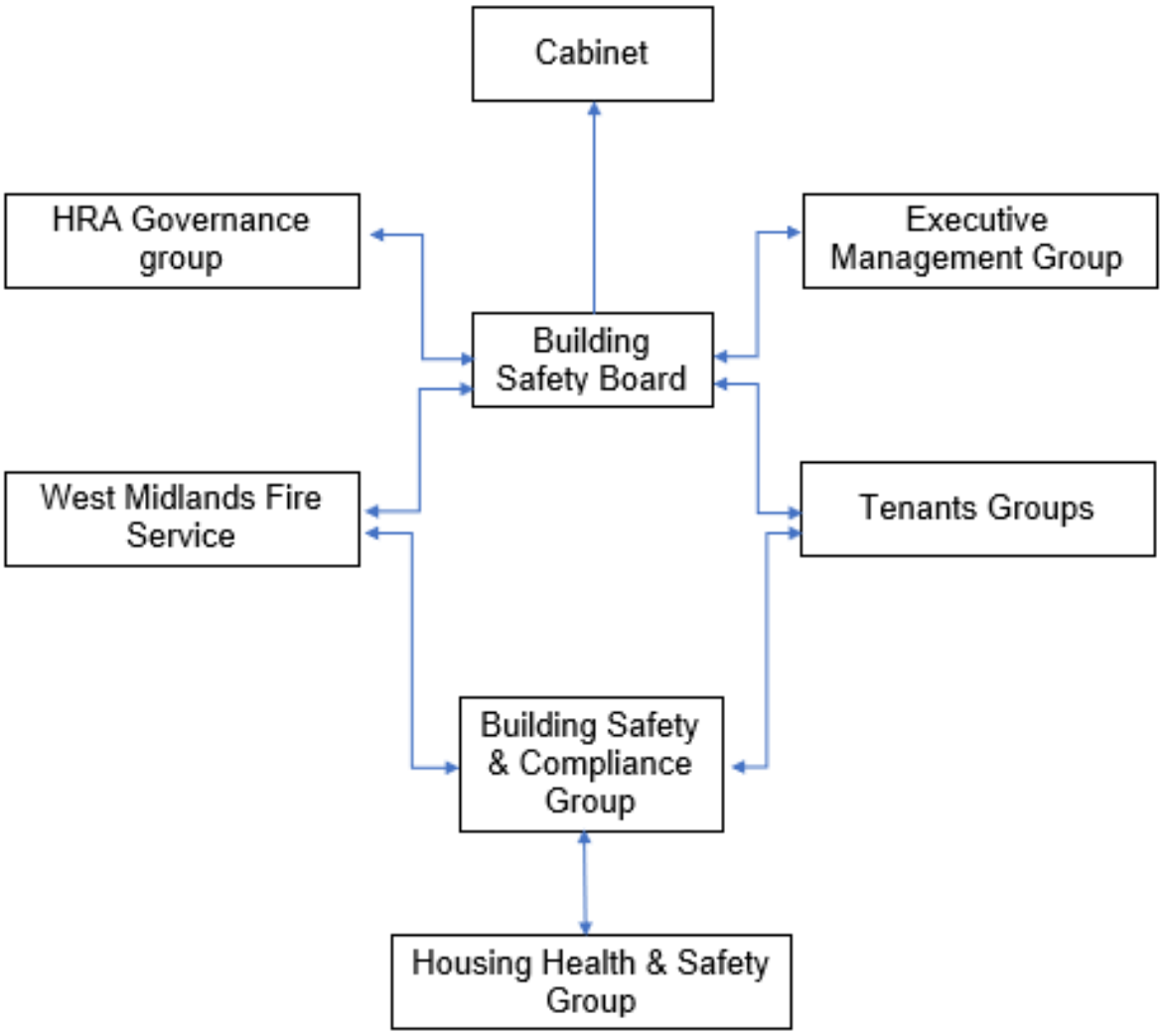
The following diagrams illustrate those procedures and persons that support the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review of the preventive and protective measures. This information is provided as required under the RR(FS)O.



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 Significant findings

The significant findings (executive summary) of the fire risk assessment include those measures that have been or will be undertaken by the responsible person in order to comply with the RR(FS)O 2005.

Groups of people especially at risk of fire include such people as remote or lone workers, at risk due to layout of the building, visitors, and contractors unfamiliar with the building layout as well as those with physical, sensory, or mental health issues.

A third requirement that under the order must be recorded is the fire safety arrangements. This is the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring, and review of the preventive and protective measures. These are shown in the introduction.

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 exterior of the buildings is predominantly traditional brick, concrete construction, rendered sections with a combination of pitched, tiled roofing and a small section of flat roofing. Individual flat windows are UPVC double glazed units. The rear gardens are secured by fencing and gates protected by a coded lock.	Trivial

Section 7	**Means of Escape from Fire** The means of escape staircases incorporate a final exit. Combustible items were present on the means of escape and will be removed. The ground floor fire exit door requires maintenance in order to function correctly.	Tolerable
Section 8	**Fire Detection and Alarm Systems** Early warning is limited to hard wired or battery smoke alarms within each of the resident's flats.	Trivial
Section 9	**Emergency Lighting** Emergency lighting is provided in corridors & staircase areas.	Trivial
Section 10	**Compartmentation** The building is designed to provide as a minimum 1-hour vertical fire resistance and 1-hour horizontal fire resistance around flats. Doors are 30-minute nominal fire doors, including those in 1-hour rated walls. For clarity, there is no access to the roof space from first floor flats. Therefore, no combustibles stored in the roof void. Access to the roof void is via inspection hatches in common areas.	Trivial
Section 11	**Fire Fighting Equipment** There are no firefighting provisions within the premises.	Trivial
Section 12	**Fire Signage** Appropriate signage is in place, no further action required.	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. The date of the last inspection was recorded as 01/03/2022.	Trivial

Section 15	**Waste Control** Regular cleaning services take place at the block and regular checks from caretakers help with waste control at the block.	Trivial
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 is provided to the premise at the front elevation. All doors were operating correctly at the time of the assessment. The rear gardens & bin area is secured by gated access and fencing.	Trivial
Section 18	**Storage Arrangements** 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 ☐ Medium ☒ High ☐

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 ☐

Comments:

In conclusion, the likelihood of a fire is at a medium level of risk prior to the implementation of the action plan because of the normal fire hazards that have been highlighted within the risk assessment. Some of the points identified were combustible items on means of escape routes, a motorcycle parked in close proximity to the building. (rear elevation).

After considering the use of the premise and the occupants within the block, the consequences for life safety in the event of a fire would be slight harm.

A suitable risk-based control plan should involve effort and urgency that is proportional to risk. The following risk- based control plan is based on one that has been advocated for general health and safety risks:

Risk level	Action and timescale
Trivial	No action is required, and no detailed records need to be kept.
Tolerable	No major additional fire precautions required. However, there might be a need for reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
Moderate	It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures, which should take cost into account, should be implemented within a defined time period. Where moderate risk is associated with consequences that constitute extreme harm, further assessment might be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures.
Substantial	Considerable resources might have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the premises are unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the risk has been reduced. If the premises are occupied, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	Premises (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.

(Note that, although the purpose of this section is to place the fire risk in context, the above approach to fire risk assessment is subjective and for guidance only. All hazards and deficiencies identified in this report should be addressed by implementing all recommendations contained in the following action plan. The fire risk assessment should be reviewed regularly.)

Section 2

People at Significant Risk of Fire

Persons at significant risk of fire does not just refer to those people with physical, sensory, or mental health issues. It also includes those at risk due to the layout or features of the building such as inner rooms or dead-end conditions. Persons may also be at risk due to remote or lone working.

The RR(FS)O requires that these people are identified in any fire risk assessment.

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

Residents are responsible for letting us know whether they might need a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). The Resident Engagement Officers (Fire Safety) will conduct an assessment visit upon request. Any risk-reduction measures that are found where a PEEP is necessary and completed will be documented and taken quickly.

With the consent of the resident, we will make a referral for West Midlands Fire Service to conduct a Safe and Well visit.

When a PEEP is in place, the relevant information will be kept in the secure Premise Information Box (High Rise Buildings only), which is set up to help WMFS in an emergency. The data is classified as level 1, which means it complies with the General Data Protection Regulations.

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.

This includes the role of Building Safety Manager who has duties as defined within the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

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

Chief Executive
Shokat Lal

Executive Director of Place
Alan Lunt

Assistant Director Asset Management & Improvement
Sarah Ager

Fire Safety Manager
Tony Thompson

Team Lead Fire Safety
Jason Blewitt

Fire Risk Assessor(s)
Adrian Jones
Anthony Smith
Carl Hill
Louis Conway

Resident Engagement Officer - Fire Safety
Abdul Monim Khan

Housing Office Manager
Lisa Ellis

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

Flats 1 - 14
Sandfield House,
Walsall Road,
West Bromwich
B71 3LR.

Description of the Property:

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.

This low-rise block constitutes two storeys (inclusive of the ground floor) and was constructed circa 1962.

The building received some refurbishment works in 2018/2019 to convert a former sheltered scheme into a general let scheme. This has included remodelling all flats and an upgrade of fire related works to ensure compliance with Building Regulations part B at the time of the refurbishment.

The revised low rise block layout consists of 13 number dwellings. There is a mixture of one and 2 bed properties. It should be noted that flat 3 is a duplex flat, however there is no access out onto the first-floor landing.

The communal areas to both ground and 1st floors are enclosed.

The ground floor has 7 number dwellings, (flat numbers 1,2,3,4 & 5,6,7). The first floor consists of 6 number dwellings, flat numbers 8,9,10 & 11,12,14 **(there is no number 13).**

The low-rise building has a main entrance located on the front elevation leading to the public highway and side communal parking area. There are two further exits, one located on the side elevation (by flat 3) leading to the public highway and a further rear exit leading to the rear communal garden.

The building constitutes traditional brick, concrete construction, partial render, double glazed UPVC window frames surmounted by a pitched roof.



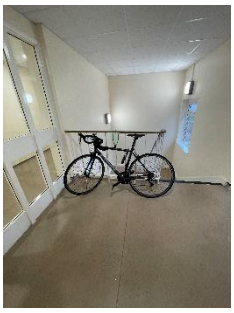

Side gates have key coded locks, and internal thumb turns that have been installed to the communal garden area. This rear exit gate has not been designated as a fire exit escape route.

There is a car park located adjacent to the side elevation offering approx. 13 spaces for residential parking. There is a barrier installed to prevent unauthorised parking, residents have been issued with remote control fobs. Access to the car park is obtained via Sandfield Road.

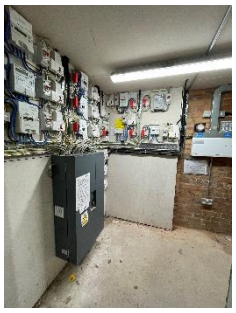

A number of inspection hatches for the roof space can be found on the first floor.


The building has two protected staircases these are located on the East wing & a further staircase on the West wing.





There is an electrical cupboard on the ground floor, this is located adjacent to the rear access and egress door. This is maintained locked when not in using a138 key.


At the rear of the premise there is a storeroom, this is an 054 key and was going to be used to store cleaning materials. The store is currently locked, empty and not in use.

Flat entrance doors were in good condition. The doors appeared to be timber flush doors.

Waste facilities are provided at the rear of the premise in a secured garden area.


It was observed from the front elevation that the sides of the building are secured by a section of fencing secured with a coded gate for security.

High/Low Rise	Low Rise
Number of Floors	Two
Date of Construction	1962
Construction Type	Tradition Brick Construction with tiled pitched roof.
Last Refurbished	2018 / 2019
External Cladding	Part rockwool insulated render
Number of Lifts	None
Number of Staircases	Two
Automatic Smoke Ventilation to communal area	No
Fire Alarm System	None
Refuse Chute	No
Access to Roof	Access to the roof/loft space can be found on the first floor. All loft access hatches are secured with a suited square type budget lock.
Equipment on roof (e.g. mobile phone station etc)	None

Persons at Risk

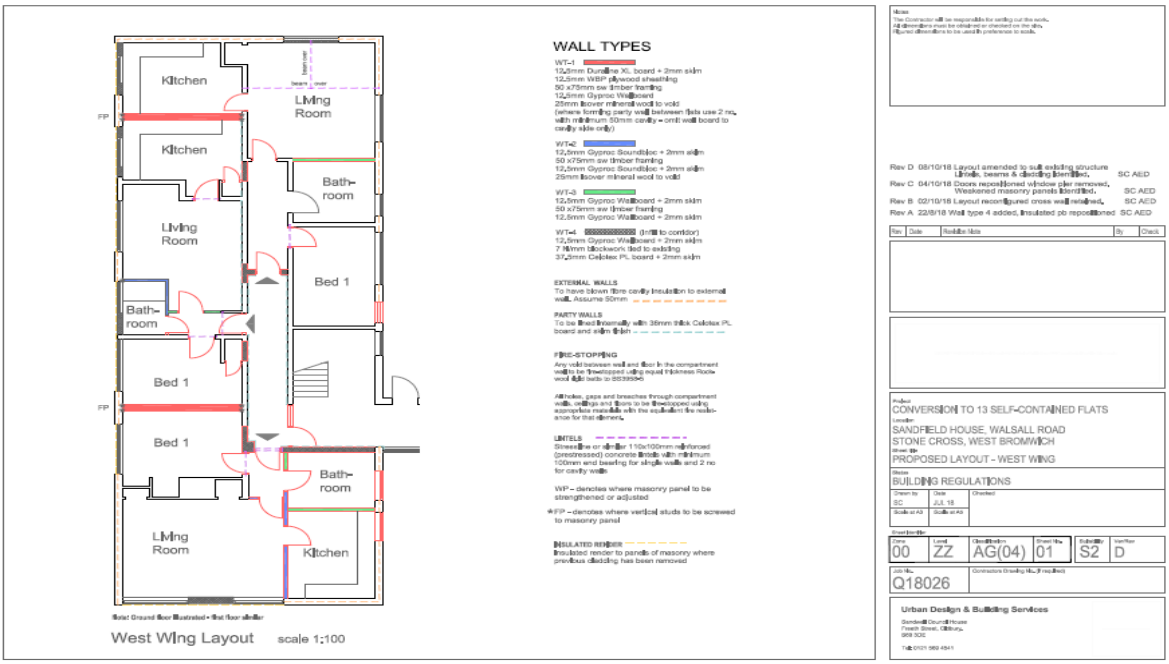
Residents / Occupants of 13 flats.
Visitors,
Sandwell MBC employees,
Contractors,
Service providers (e.g., meter readers, delivery people etc)
Statutory bodies (e.g., W.M.F.S, Police, and Ambulance)

Section 5

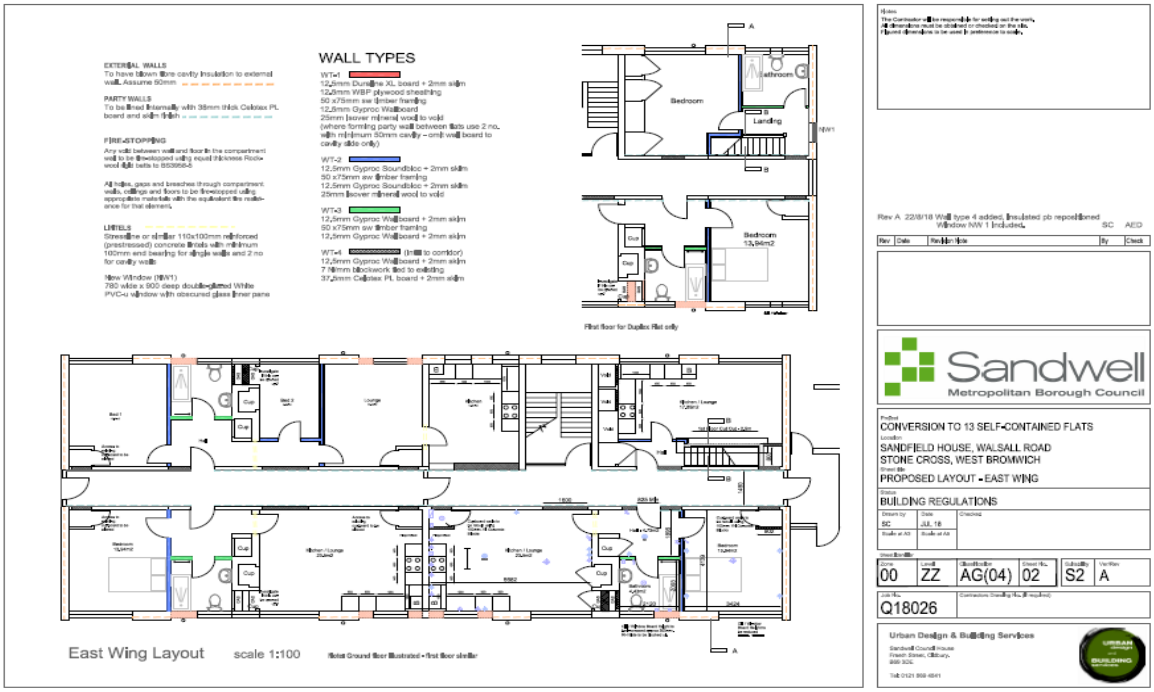
Building Plan

Floor layout plans detailed below:

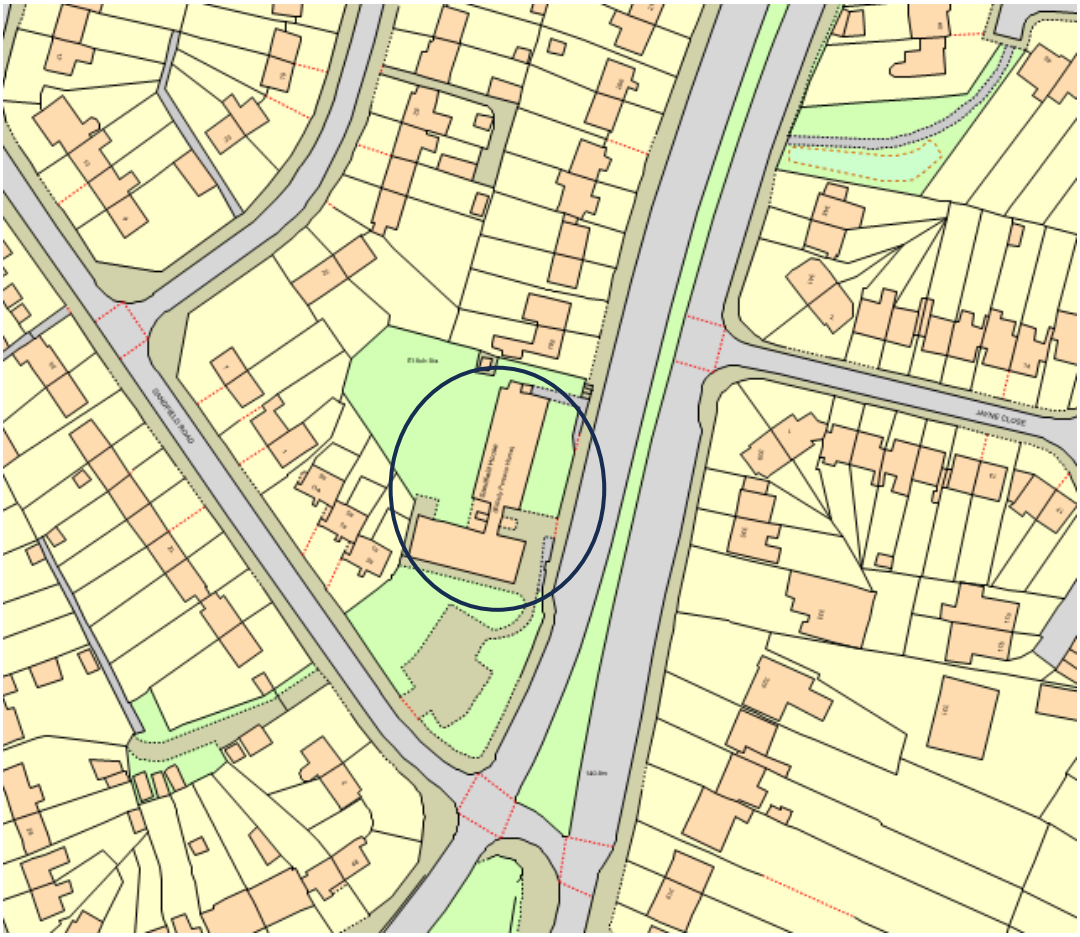
West Wing Layout



East Wing Layout



An overview of the building location & surrounding area.



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.

With regard to the external façade, the materials, construction, and their constituent properties have been taken from a database provided by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

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

1) The external envelope of the premise is predominantly traditional brick, concrete construction, rendered sections, UPVC double glazed window frames surmounted by a combination of a pitched tiled roof and a section of flat roofing at the main entrance.



2) Access is gained to all flats from the ground floor using the main access door.

3) Access and egress doors are powder coated aluminium framed with double glazed units.

4) Communal windows are (openable) UPVC double glazed units.


5) Individual flat windows are UPVC double glazed units.


6) Waste provisions are provided at the rear of the premise with the site secured by fencing.

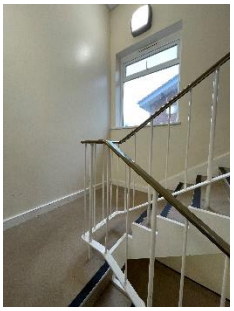
7) There is provision for off road car parking for approx. 13 residents.

Section 7

Means of Escape from Fire

1) The building has two staircases that provide the means of escape from the building. Staircases provide a 1050mm width as a minimum.





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



3) Where communal doors are installed, they are fitted with automatic closing devices, intumescent strips, and cold smoke seals. These are checked on a regular basis by Caretaking Teams as part of their cyclical checks. Defective closing devices are replaced either by the Caretaking Team(s) or the in-house repairs team(s).

4) The front and rear final exit doors have a door entry system installed. These systems are designed to fail safe i.e. door unlocked in the event of a power failure, confirmation to be provided. This prevents residents being locked in or out of the building.

5) **The ground floor fire exit door is difficult to open & requires remedial action (adjacent to flat 3). The door appears to be warped and does not sit in the frame correctly. This could also create a security issue if not able to close.**


6) Automatic smoke ventilation is not employed, the communal windows are double glazed UPVC windows that have push button handles installed and therefore are operable without the use of a key.

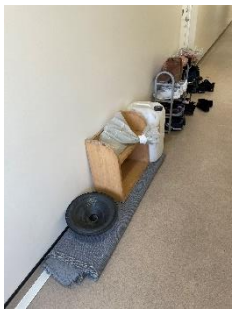
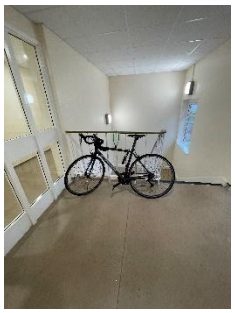
7) Emergency lighting is provided to communal landings and stairs. Checks are carried out on a monthly basis by Sandwell MBC in house electrical team or approved contractor.

8) Meter cupboard located on the ground floor is fitted with FD30s rated door. This cupboard contains tenants' electricity meters and therefore the door is secured with a suited 138 type lock (keys provided to tenants). Fire Door Keep Locked Shut Signage fitted by the Assessor.

9) The communal areas are checked on a regular basis by the Caretaking / Cleaning teams 365 days per year and all items of rubbish are immediately removed.

10) There is an out of hour's service that allows combustible items of furniture / rubbish to be removed.

11) Communal areas are kept free of flammable items. However, it was noted in some areas that several combustible items were present on the means of escape route, this included a bicycle chained to the head of the staircase. The corridors should be maintained as sterile areas and items combustible items removed. (email sent to housing).

12) It was noted that a motorcycle was parked at the rear of the property in close proximity to the building. This should be relocated at least 8 metres away from any building stock. (email sent to housing).

13) The surface coatings to the communal areas are Class 0 rated. The system used is Johnstone's flame retardant acrylic eggshell class 0 paint system.

14) The building has sufficient passive controls that provide effective compartmentation to support a Stay Put Unless Policy. Therefore, residents are advised to remain in their flat unless a fire directly affects them.

15) Individual flat doors are nominal timber flush FD30s rated doors fitted with door closers. Access was gained to a sample of properties as part of the risk assessment to ensure the doors have not been tampered with by residents etc.

Section 8 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

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

2) During the assessment, the assessor spoke with residents at flat number(s): -

   Flat 4, who confirmed that smoke alarms are installed in the Hallway, Landing, Living room & Kitchen.

   Flat 12, who confirmed that smoke alarms are installed in the Hallway, Landing, Living room & Kitchen.

3) Based on the sample of properties accessed during the fire risk assessment, the smoke alarms within resident's flats are installed to a minimum of LD2 Standard.

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

4) There is no effective means for detecting an outbreak of fire to 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) The premises has a sufficient emergency / escape lighting system in accordance with BS 5266 and has test points strategically located.

2) The self-contained units are provided to the communal landings, stairs, and electric room.

3) All installed equipment is checked and tested on a monthly basis by Sandwell MBC in house electrical team or approved contractor, in accordance with current British standards.

Section 10 Compartmentation

1) The building is designed to provide as a minimum 1-hour vertical fire resistance and 1-hour horizontal fire resistance around flats. All flat entrance doors are nominal 30-minute doors, including those in 1-hour rated walls.

2) The premise has sufficient compartmentation to limit the travel and effect of smoke and flame in event of a fire.



3) The fire stopping / compartmentation of the premises is subject to an annual inspection by the Fire Rapid Response Team.

4) A variety of methods / materials have been used to achieve fire-stopping, please refer to the table below.

	Fire Stopping Materials									Fire Stopping Materials									Fire Stopping Materials									Fire Stopping Materials									Fire Stopping Materials									
Floor No	Supalux	Intu Batt	Intu Sponge	Intu AM Mastic	Graphite Filler	Intu Pads	Intu Pillows	Intu Wraps	Rockwool	Supalux	Intu Batt	Intu Sponge	Intu AM Mastic	Graphite Filler	Intu Pads	Intu Pillows	Intu Wraps	Rockwool	Supalux	Intu Batt	Intu Sponge	Intu AM Mastic	Graphite Filler	Intu Pads	Intu Pillows	Intu Wraps	Rockwool	Supalux	Intu Batt	Intu Sponge	Intu AM Mastic	Graphite Filler	Intu Pads	Intu Pillows	Intu Wraps	Rockwool	Supalux	Intu Batt	Intu Sponge	Intu AM Mastic	Graphite Filler	Intu Pads	Intu Pillows	Intu Wraps	Rockwool	Floor No
B																																														B
G			✓	✓																																										G
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Communal doors free from defects	✓	Communal windows free from defects	✓	Flat doors free from defects	✓	Communal cupbaords locked and secure	✓	Communal areas free from tenants stored items	✓	Communal areas free from repairs materials	✓

Foam Removal & Enhancement Record		Foam, Enhancements & Other Comments:
Foam Present But Not Removed This Visit		
Foam Present & Partailly Removed This Visit		
Foam Present & Fully Removed This Visit		
No Foam Present	✓	
No Enhancement Carried Out This Visit	✓	
Enhancement Carried Out This Visit		

5) The means of escape is protected from flats with the use of nominal FD30s doors.

6) The building has sufficient passive controls that provide effective compartmentation to support a Stay Put -Unless policy. Therefore, residents are advised to remain in their flat unless the fire directly affects them or if they are advised to evacuate by the emergency services.

7) Any service cupboards to communal landings are lockable and fitted with intumescent strips, and cold smoke seals.

8) Residents on the first floor confirmed that their flats do not have access to the roof space/void, flats 8 & flat 9 provided this confirmation. It was important to clarify this point to confirm that individual flats would not be able to store combustible items in the roof space and subsequently spread the products of fire and smoke.

With regard to compartmentation and the roof space the following information was taken from the previous fire risk assessment and is still relevant.

9) Access was gained to the loft area via a non-fire rated integrated hatch built into the suspended ceiling located on the first-floor landing / corridor via the use of a suited square budget lock key. The original plasterboard ceiling has been left in situ, presumably to provide 30 minutes vertical fire compartmentation. It was noted that the timber hatch door was enhanced by securing fire batt on the back of the hatch door. It was noted that the bare edges on the BATT to timber hatch door had not been “buttered” with an intumescent coating, so it is unsure how effective this solution is in its current form.

Guidance from PB SAMB Fire Officer covering points 10/8

The top floor of Sandfield House is designed on 30 minutes fire resistance, due to < 5m height. The flats are the risk and are enclosed within at least 30m fire resisting construction. In reality by the fitting of the second fire resisting ceiling in those flats and the construction material of the walls, 60 minutes fire resistance should be achieved in practice. The escape corridor should contain no fire load (this would be in breach of the RRO (Fire Safety) 2005).

The corridor is therefore protected by the walls and ceilings of the flats. The flats have internal lobbies and window escape. Any smoke entering the escape corridor should therefore only occur during fire service intervention and should be managed by them.

10) It was noted that the compartment walls within the loft area of the East Wing had dedicated access apertures within the brickwork, presumably to facilitate access.

Due to the fact the building has been completely renovated; it should comply with latest Building Regulations Part B Fire Safety.

The Building Regulations state that each flat shall be compartmentalised as not to allow fire or the effects of fire transfer from one flat to another.

The loft area needs to have full compartmentalised works to provide horizontal compartmentation of at least 30 minutes **(see Appendix 2)**

11) It was noted that the corridor walls in the West Wing terminate at ceiling level, they do not extend into the loft area. Therefore, there is no horizontal compartmentation. Due to the fact the building has been completely renovated; it should comply with latest Building Regulations Part B Fire Safety.

The Building Regulations state that each flat shall be compartmentalised as not to allow fire or the effects of fire transfer from one flat to another. The loft area needs to have full compartmentalised works to provide horizontal compartmentation of at least 30 minutes. **(see Appendix 2)**

Guidance from PB SAMB Fire Officer covering points 10/8, 10/9 and 10/10.

Following the site visit to Sandfield House, I have reviewed the plans and the design philosophy for fire precautions in this block. The renovation supports a stay put policy, with local warning to the flat where the fire originates, via a BS 5839-6:2013 fire alarm system (there is a newer version of this standard, but it post-dates the design phase). Each flat is a 60 minute fire resisting compartment, with 60 minute fire resistance provided by the walls, floor, and ceiling. The first floor is of concrete construction. To prevent fire spread between flats on the first floor the new ceiling installed is of fire resisting construction and has been installed beneath an existing fire resisting ceiling. Each flat is therefore a 60 minute fire resisting compartment. This is an alternative to fire resisting walls to full roof height (or above), with suitable fire stopping at junctions. In essence the top floor achieves compartment lines in the same way as the ground floor.

Guidance on protection of concealed spaces is clear within Approved Document B (ADB) (the version used is 2006 edition, incorporating 2007, 2010 and 2013 amendments) and is detailed in Requirement B3(4) which states “The building shall be designed and constructed so that the unseen spread of fire and smoke within concealed spaces in its structure and fabric is inhibited.” The pitched roof voids are clearly concealed spaces; however, they are separated from each other via the flat roof above the interconnecting entrance lobby/vestibule. The Walsall Road elevation block is nominally 25.5m in length and the Sandfield Road elevation block is nominally 24.1m in length.

ADB states in clause 9.10c. “in any floor or roof cavity above a fire-resisting ceiling, as shown in Diagram 35 and which extends throughout the building or compartment subject to a 30m limit on the extent of the cavity; This means the roof void needs to be separated at 30m intervals with cavity barriers where it extends in excess of 30m. Both roof voids are sub-divided as we saw, even though they do not extend beyond 30m.

SN Building Control advised he viewed a cavity barrier above the upper floor flat on the Sandfield Road elevation, the one furthest away from the Walsall Road. We can only think that this was an artefact from the previous design. The original building is believed to be circa 1960s, or before and so there may have been cavity barriers above the dividing walls of the flats, due to lath and plaster ceilings. Since the initial build, fire resisting ceilings were installed, making them superfluous. The renovation resulted in a new fire resisting ceiling being installed and due to the dimensions involved cavity barriers are not required under Buildings Regulations.

Section 11

Fire Fighting Equipment

1) Currently, there is no fire-fighting equipment installed at these premises. The nearest firefighting hydrant is located near to the junction of Sandfield Road and Walsall Road.

Section 12

Fire Signage

1) Any communal fire doors display “Fire Door Keep Locked Shut” or “Fire Door Keep Shut” where appropriate.

2) The fire escape routes are self-evident and therefore additional fire action notices are not required.

3) No smoking (Smoke Free England) signage is displayed at various locations within the premise.

4) Fire escape directional signage is installed above all exit doors.

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) Caretaking Teams are not currently trained in the effective use of fire extinguishers. Caretaking Teams are not expected to tackle fires in this area.

4) Staff undertaking fire risk assessments are qualified to a Level 4 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment.

5) Fire safety information has been provided as part of tenancy pack. Information regarding the Stay Put Unless fire evacuation strategy is provided to tenants.

Section 14

Sources of Ignition

1) Smoking is prohibited 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) The fixed electrical installation should be tested every 5 years, the fixed electrical installation should be tested every 5 years. The date of the last inspection was recorded as 01/03/2022.

4) 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 Bryan Low.

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.

7) As per tenancy agreements, flammable liquids or gas cylinders should not be stored on site.

Section 15

Waste Control

1) Refuse containers are emptied at regular intervals.

2) ‘Out of Hours’ service 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) Owing to the nature of low-rise flatted accommodation it is difficult to manage/control individual contractors/utility companies.

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

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

5) 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 – 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

Arson Prevention

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

2) Access to the building is restricted by a door entry system.

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

Section 18

Storage Arrangements

1) Residents are instructed not to bring L.P.G cylinders into block. This information is contained within the tenants' handbook.

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

4) There is a store cupboard located at the rear within the communal garden for use by the Caretaking / Cleaning Service, this room is kept locked, and no access is required by residents, therefore, the store is secured with a suited 54 type lock.

5) As per tenancy agreements, flammable liquids or gas cylinders should not be stored on site.

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: Sandfield House, Walsall Road, West Bromwich.

Date of Action Plan: 23/01/2025

Review Date: <Insert date>

Question/ Ref No	Required Action	Supporting photograph	Priority	Timescale and Person Responsible	Date Completed
07/05	Repair the ground floor fire exit door. This is difficult to open, and the door does not close correctly onto the frame.		P2	Fire Rapid Response 1 – 3 months.	

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).

Observations	
Following on from the previous fire risk assessment of 2019, there were concerns with compartmentation in the roof space. The premise was refurbished in 2019 and therefore the renovation was carried out in line with Building Regulations at that time. (See section 10) Residents in first floor flats confirmed that flats on this level do not have access to the roof space.	N/A.
When any future upgrades of the building are carried out consideration should be given to providing additional compartmentation in the roof/loft space. As the building was refurbished in 2019 Architects should design suitable fire stopping to prevent/restrict any smoke spread in the roof space.	 

Signed

Adrian Jones	Fire Risk Assessor	Date: 23/01/2025.
A. Smith	Quality Assurance Check	Date: 28/01/2025

Appendix 1

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

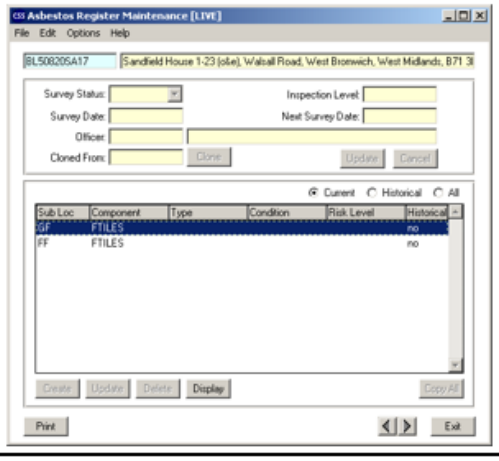
Name of property: Sandfield House, Walsall Road, West Bromwich

Updated: 02/03/2018

Premise Manager: Tony Thompson. Tel. No.: 0121 569 2975

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

Asbestos Survey	Property Address	Sandfield House, Walsall Road, B71 3LR		✓ Office use
Surveyed by	D Jones	Date	24/03/2014	Checked by	Derek Still	Desktop Check ✓	Site Check
Reason for request		HSG 264 - Survey Report Type		Date	01/04/2014		
Investment Void		Refurbishment Survey		Property Description			
Investment Tenanted		Management Survey	✓	Low Rise Sheltered Housing			
R & M Void		SHAPE Interrogated.	✓				
R & M Tenanted		No Existing SHAPE Data.					
Medical / Emergency - Heating Works		Existing SHAPE Data.	✓				
Communal Areas	✓	Refurb Surveys Interrogated ?				Year Built	1962



Notes / including details of similar property surveys completed.

Main roof verge cloaking may have asbestos containing material encapsulated by existing dry verge system.

Revised by Don Webb 24/03/16

Revised By Don Webb 02/01/18

Building Surveyors
0121 569 5077

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Asset Team – Investment Division
Operations & Development Centre
Roway Lane
Oldbury
B69 3ES

Sample Locations	Property Address	Sandfield House, Walsall Road, B71 3LR						
LOCATION	MATERIAL	QTY	SURFACE TREATMENT	SAMPLE REF	RESULT	HSE NOTIFY	Labelled ?	ACTION TAKEN ON CONTRACT
IF DURING THE COURSE OF WORK SUSPECTED ACM'S ARE IDENTIFIED THAT ARE NOT CONTAINED WITHIN THIS REPORT STOP WORK & SEEK ADVICE								
COMMUNAL LANDINGS, BATHROOMS & LOUNGE FLOORS	THERMOPLASTIC TILES	-	SEALED	PRESUMED	CHRYSOTILE	NO	NO	
GROUND FLOOR LAUNDRY FLUE PIPE INCLUDING EXTERNAL PIPE	CEMENT	-	UNSEALED	PRESUMED	CHRYSOTILE	NO	NO	
REAR EXTERNAL FLUE PIPE INCLUDING COVER ABOVE BIN STORE	CEMENT	-	UNSEALED	PRESUMED	CHRYSOTILE	NO	NO	
LOFT HATCH	BOARD	-	SEALED	DW660/001	AMOSITE	YES	YES	
FIRE BREAK IN LOFT	BOARD	-	UNSEALED	PRESUMED	AMOSITE	YES	YES	
FLAT NUMBER 23 (ALL CEILINGS)	TEXTURED COATINGS	-	SEALED	DW910/001	CHRYSOTILE	NO	NO	

ITEMS SHOWN BELOW HAVE BEEN ASSESSED ON SITE BY THE ASBESTOS SURVEYOR & ARE CONFIRMED NOT TO BE ACM's.					
LOCATION DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	LOCATION DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	LOCATION DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL
GND. FLOOR ENTRANCE LOBBY HIGH LEVEL BOXING	CONTI BOARD	GND. FLOOR BATHROOM BATH PANEL	HARDBOARD	GND FLOOR LUNDRY VERTICAL BOXING	PLYWOOD
GND. FLOOR BATHROOM LOBBY VERTICAL BOXING ADJ. FLAT 3	PLYWOOD	GND FLOOR COMMUNAL LOUNGE VERTICAL DUCT PANEL ADJ. DOOR	PLYWOOD	1ST FLOOR BATHROOM LOBBY VERTICAL BOXING ADJ. FLAT 14	PLYWOOD
GND. FLOOR BATHROOM VERTICAL BOXING	PLYWOOD	COMMUNAL BATHROOM VERTICAL BOXINGS ADJ. FLAT 9	PLYWOOD	1ST FLOOR BATHROOM VERTICAL BOXING	PLYWOOD
GND. FLOOR BATHROOM WC CISTERN	PLASTIC	COMMUNAL BATHROOM WC CISTERN	PLASTIC	1ST FLOOR BATHROOM WC CISTERN	PLASTIC
GND. FLOOR BATHROOM BOXING TO CEILING BEAM	PLASTERBOARD	COMMUNAL BATHROOM BATH PANEL	HARDBOARD	1ST FLOOR BATHROOM BATH PANEL	HARDBOARD

ABOUT THE REPORT – PLEASE READ

All Survey Methodology is based upon HSE document HSG 264 - Asbestos: The Survey Guide. All surveyors are experienced British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) P402 qualified surveyors with extensive Surveying & Refurbishment Project experience specific to Sandwell MBC's managed housing stock.

The person or persons using this report to programme refurbishment work on site are assumed to be competent & experienced in the field of domestic refurbishment projects & have suitable & sufficient asbestos awareness to understand the scope of this report & apply it to the project. All trade operatives working on site are also expected to have relevant asbestos awareness training & experience. IF IN DOUBT STOP & ASK! Please ensure the report covers the areas that you need to work on.

SHAPE: Sandwell MBC's Integrated ICT solution holds the Company Asbestos Register. The Asbestos Register is interrogated when completing the asbestos survey report to ensure that ACM's in similar properties are considered where relevant. The Register holds details of all suspected or confirmed ACM's identified during Refurbishment & Demolition programmes as well as Repairs activities for the past 11 years. If potential ACM's have been identified within difficult to survey areas such as Cavity Walls, Floor Voids etc these will be highlighted within the report. The interrogation of the Company Asbestos Register compliments the survey & report process it does not substitute the Refurbishment & Demolition Survey.

Void Properties – The Building Surveying team who undertake Refurbishment & Demolition Asbestos Surveys also undertake Domestic Energy Assessment Surveys, Boroscope Surveys for Thermal Insulation & Fire Integrity Assessments to a representative percentage of the void turn over.

Site Overview Page 2 – This section is included to aid surveying & to ensure comprehensive survey information is detailed.

Term	Explanation
Property Address	Specific Property to which survey relates.
Surveyed by	Relates to P402 trained surveyor.
Action taken on Project	Record what action may have been undertaken to the Asbestos in question, E.g. Nothing, Repair, replace, Manage.
Type of Work to be undertaken	Relates to the envisaged type of work that the Asbestos Survey Report will be used to aid. This assists the asbestos surveyor to guide his survey methodology & will help the users of this report decide if it is suitable for the work activity being undertaken.
ACM	Asbestos Containing Material.
HSE Notify	This highlights if a material normally requires notification to the Health & Safety Executive prior to removal. GUIDANCE ONLY.
Bulk Sample	Sample of potential ACM that is representative of the whole.
Request Sample	The item described has not been tested for Asbestos content. The item must be presumed to contain asbestos until sampling confirms. If work is going to be undertaken in this area sample should be requested prior to work starting.
Awaiting Results	If no results have been detailed then you must not work on these items until you receive further confirmation.
Extent	An estimate of quantity will be given where possible to aid work planning & valuation.
Labels	Materials will be labelled where practical. Labelling will be not be undertaken to low risk materials e.g. floor tiles, Textured Coatings etc or where labelling could easily be removed or would cause potential exposure if removed. All presumed ACM's will be labelled as "Asbestos" where practical. All sampled materials will be labelled with an" Asbestos Sampled" label.

Term	Explanation
Photo's	These will usually be provided for the front elevation of the property to aid identification.
Sampled by	P402 trained surveyor.
Checked by	P402 trained surveyor who checks report prior to issuing.
Survey Report Type	Report type is determined by the type of work to be undertaken. The reader of this report must satisfy themselves that the scope of the survey is sufficient for the purpose of work being undertaken.
Refurbishment Survey	HSG 264 – Refurbishment & Demolition Survey. Surveying undertaken to all parts of the property presuming full decant homes refurbishment, which may include, New Kitchen, New Bathroom, Electrical Rewire, Re-roof, Full Heating System. Taking account of the complete structure of the property & archetype information available. This survey has been carried out without detailed knowledge of the works to be undertaken during refurbishment. Anyone using this report to support building works being undertaken to the property should ensure that the report is sufficient for the purposes of the building work being undertaken. The reader should be confident that the areas that are to be disturbed by the proposed work are included.
Management Survey	A management survey is the standard survey. Its purpose is to locate, as far as reasonably practicable, the presence and extent of any suspect ACMs in the building which could be damaged or disturbed during normal occupancy, including foreseeable maintenance and installation, and to assess their condition.
Refurb & Management Survey	Both Survey Report Types are ticked! due to works identified at survey stage the surveyor has completed Refurbishment Survey for the works required & may have undertaken a management survey on remaining areas of the property. The report should not be used for works outside the scope stated, unless the reader assures themselves that it is suitable & sufficient.
Cavity Walls / Floor Voids or similar.	Will be assessed at survey stage & desktop assessment of similar archetypes.
Photo's	Where practical & to aid the identification of ambiguous material locations photos will be included within the report to ensure that materials are identified on-site correctly. Photos will be annotated where necessary.

Appendix 2

Requirement

Requirement	*Limits on application*
Internal fire spread (structure)	
B3. (1) The building shall be designed and constructed so that, in the event of fire, its stability will be maintained for a reasonable period	
(2) A wall common to two or more buildings shall be designed and constructed so that it adequately resists the spread of fire between those buildings. For the purposes of this sub-paragraph a house in a terrace and a semi-detached house are each to be treated as a separate building.	
(3) Where reasonably necessary to inhibit the spread of fire within the building, measures shall be taken, to an extent appropriate to the size and intended use of the building, comprising either or both of the following—	Requirement B3(3) does not apply to material alterations to any prison provided under section 33 of the Prison Act 1952.
(a) sub-division of the building with fire-resisting construction;	
(b) installation of suitable automatic fire suppression systems.	
(4) The building shall be designed and constructed so that the unseen spread of fire and smoke within concealed spaces in its structure and fabric is inhibited.	