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CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

**Climate Change, Housing and
Communities Scrutiny Panel Meeting**
Thursday, 28 September 2023

Dear Councillor

**CLIMATE CHANGE, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY, 28TH
SEPTEMBER, 2023**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Thursday, 28th September, 2023 meeting of the Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel, the following presentation that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

8 Wolverhampton Homes – Building and Asbestos Safety (Pages 3 - 26)

[Ian Gardner Director of Property Services and Simon Bamfield, Head of Assets and Stock Investment (Wolverhampton Homes) to present report]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Building Safety Update

28 September 2023

Agenda Item No. 8



Building Safety Act 2022

- Introduced following Grenfell Inquiry
- Addresses historic issues with Building Regulations and Building Control
- Improves safety management of higher risk buildings within 'prescribed principles'
- Requires 'Accountable Persons' to 'adapt to technical progress' by utilising new technology where available
- Includes leaseholder protection for relevant buildings and defects
- Mandates Resident Engagement
- Establishes new competency requirements
- Created a new Building Safety Regulator and committees
 - Building Advisory Committee
 - Industry Competence Committee
 - Residents Panel

Building Safety Act 2022

The Golden Thread and three new 'Gateways';

1. Planning Permission – the new Building Safety Regulator (BSR) is a now statutory consultee
2. Pre-Construction - Duty Holder must provide the BSR with full design information relating to the individual building's safety
3. Completion – Duty Holder must provide BSR with 'as built' drawings, manuals, certification, accreditations and other key safety related evidence. Once satisfied, the BSR will issue a completion certificate

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

- Applies from 23 January 2023
- New requirements for 'Responsible Persons' on buildings over 11m and 18m
- Electronic building plans and other relevant information
- Monthly inspections
- Provision of information boxes and fire safety signage
- Annual inspections of flat entrance doors and quarterly inspections of fire doors in common areas

Building Safety Governance

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Building Safety Enhancement Programme

- High-rise infrastructure programme providing building safety work to estates across the City
- Infrastructure works include:
 - Sprinkler systems throughout the blocks, including communal areas
 - Communal fire door replacement
 - Front entrance and internal fire door replacement within properties
 - Electrical rewires and new electrical 'sub-mains' installed to the blocks
 - Installation of smoke and heat sensors within homes
 - Replacement of soil & vent pipes and rainwater pipes
 - Replacement and upgrading of fire compartmentation throughout the blocks
 - Installation of new boosted cold-water mains

Building Safety Enhancement Programme

First phases of the Infrastructure Programme works were completed at the Chetton Green in 2020 and Boscobel & Lakefield estates in 2022.

- 468 properties completed to date
- The overall Infrastructure Programme will see 2,165 homes benefitting from building safety work and sprinkler installations by 2028



Building Safety Enhancement Programme

Live projects are in progress at Heath Town, Merry Hill & Graiseley during 2023/24;

- 996 properties included within this phase of infrastructure works
- Combined spend of £33m on Building Safety enhancement works during 2023/24

Development of remaining phases of the infrastructure programme from 2024 onwards at:

- Vauxhalls – 126 properties
- Chetton Green* – 102 properties
- Stowlawn, Millfields – 230 properties
- Whitmore Reans – 116 properties
- Hickman estate – 228 properties
- £67m associated to Building Safety enhancement works over the next 5 years

* Chetton Green will be installation of sprinklers only



Building Safety Enhancement Programme

In addition to the work in the tower-blocks, we are delivering the City-wide Flat Entrance Fire Door Replacement Programme;

- 2,267 doors completed on Phase-1
- 1,828 doors to be completed on Phase-2, currently in progress
- 4,599 front entrance fire doors will have been replaced to low & medium rise properties across the city by 2024-25
- Interlinked alarms project will also provide new alarm systems within shops to safeguard the residents of the flats above, due for completion by April 2024
- Fire Risk Assessment priority remedial works are being delivered through the Strategic Construction Partnership, due to the links with other programmes of work, and WH's in-house externally accredited trades colleagues



Building Safety Team

- Formalised the duties undertaken by the WH on behalf of the Principal Accountable Person
- Appointed a competent Building Safety Manager
- Formed a multifunctional, externally accredited, Building Safety Team
- Formed a Fire/Building Safety Committee, to consider management, specification and customer engagement matters
- Completed Fire Risk Assessments to 884 buildings and risk rated remedial actions
- Undertakes post incident reviews, to establish how fires have started and identify any learning, review performance of the building and safety systems, and develop recommendations
- Completes Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessments (PCFRAs) to assess the vulnerabilities of residents and assess what further support is required for fire prevention
- Compliance of building safety management systems reported to Wolverhampton Homes Board, Committees and the PAP

Building Safety Team

- Installed Premises Information Boxes (PIBs)
- Implemented a Control of Contractors Policy to manage competence
- Trained and externally accredited in-house trades colleagues who may be required to undertake fire critical maintenance
- Developed effective and collaborative relationships with West Midlands Fire Service, including a formal data sharing agreement
- Implemented Fire Door inspections and data tagging
- Programmed External Wall Assessments in accordance with PAS9980
- Reviewed available resident vulnerability data and assessed their vulnerabilities for inclusion under Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS) to be held securely within the PIB's for the fire and rescue services
- Held a range of building safety focused resident engagement events
- Undertake Incident Investigations and report on findings and submit recommendations
- Undertake site visits to observe construction and maintenance activities and engage with residents

Building Safety Team

- Managing and undertaking Fire Risk Assessments, as required, that identify fire related hazards, evaluates the risks and recommend remedial action
- Manage the Fire Risk Assessment External Wall (FRAEW) programme in accordance with PAS9980.
- Provide regular and statutory updates to the Building Safety Regulator
- Inform the Building Safety Regulator of 'safety occurrences' (mandatory and voluntary) related to fire and structural safety issues affecting the HRB's.
- Arrange and facilitate the Fire/Building Safety Committee
- Act as the central communication hub for building safety focussed resident engagement
- Investigates complaints or concerns for residents relating to building safety
- Acts as the key point of contact for the Building Safety Regulator and West Midlands Fire Service
- Assesses the competency of contractors engaged in Building Safety related remediation works or maintenance
- Ensures compliance with the 'gateways' design, planning and execution with the Building Safety Regulator and Building Control

Communications Campaign

This targeted campaign supports the following core objectives from the 2023-24 WH Business Plan:

- Ensure that WH complies with all relevant Health & Safety compliance requirements.
- Ensure that all mandatory and legislative requirements covering all compliance activities are enforced and evidenced, including through tenant involvement in building safety.
- Deliver a range of large estate regeneration, refurbishment and Building Safety projects, including fire safety enhancements.

Fire Safety Campaign

- Website content for fire safety reviewed and reformatted to ensure it was clear and easy to understand.
- Existing videos were retained and BSL videos from West Midlands Fire Service were added.
- The hero banner slot on the website homepage is a premium, high traffic slot, and this was given over to the campaign for four weeks.
- A campaign was developed to run from May to August, incorporating the UK-wide National Sprinkler Week from 15-19 May, Home Fire Safety Week from 12-16 June and Green for Grenfell day on 14 June.
- A combination of written, image and video-based content was used across social media channels, signposting to our website where the Recite Me software ensures it is accessible.
- Following feedback from the team, the website menu drop down for '*Repairs*' was changed to '*Repairs and home safety*' to ensure it is as easy as possible for customers to find the information they need.
- Fire Safety has also been given a dedicated slot on the 'Top tasks' area of the website homepage.

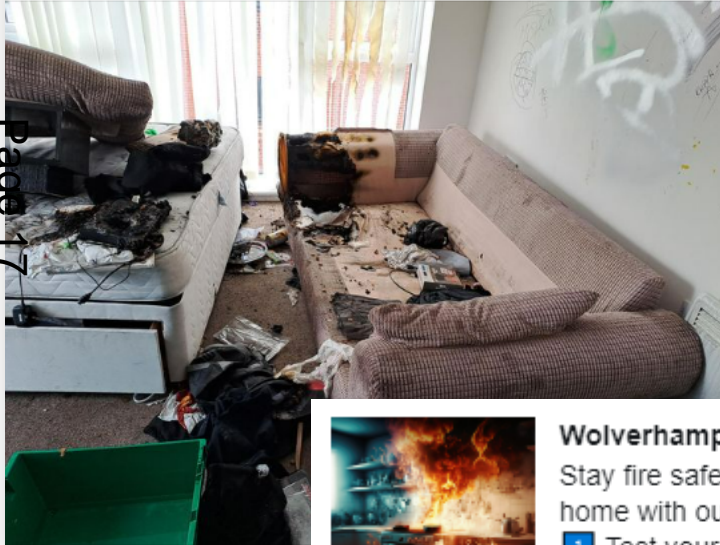
Messaging

Wolverhampton Homes
Published by Fiona Capel · 18 May ·

It's national Sprinkler Week. We're in the process of installing sprinkler systems in all our tower blocks - it's like having a firefighter in every flat. #ThinkSprinkler

This recent fire in Low Hill was caused by a laptop left on the arm of the sofa which overheated while charging. The fire alarm and sprinklers activated and fortunately the resident was able to escape quickly with no injuries.

Without the sprinkler system, the damage to this flat would have been significan... See more



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Wolverhampton Homes @WolvesHomes
Stay fire safe this #Firesafetyweek in your home with our top 3 tips:

- 1 Test your smoke alarms on a weekly basis.
- 2 Take 15 minutes to consider an escape plan.
- 3 At night make sure electrical items are turned off where they can be, and keep escape routes clear.

#TestitTuesday pic.twitter.com/Er4InU4gFp

Wolverhampton Homes
5,169 followers
1mo ·

"During the last three months of 2021 in England alone, there was a 41% rise in fire-related deaths."

Nick Lacey, our Building Safety Manager, is committed to keeping our customers safe. We caught up with him to find out more about his role and how we can all play our part in keeping our homes safe from fire.

If this interview with Nick has inspired you, we are recruiting fire safety advisors to join his team. Apply by Wednesday 23 May!

#safety #interview #firesafety #teamwork #partnershipworking

https://lnkd.in/esQ_fBPM

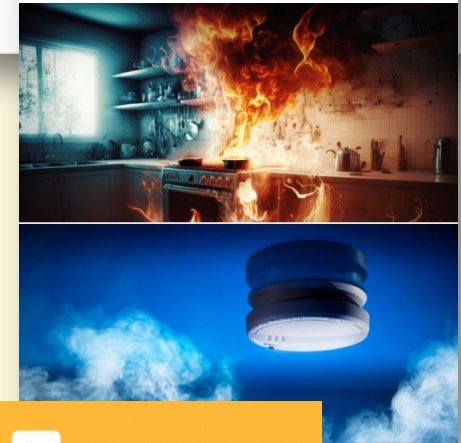


Wolverhampton Homes
Published by Fiona Capel · 20 June at 19:00 ·

West Midlands Fire Service recommends testing your fire alarms once a week by pressing the button in the centre.

If it beeps, it's working. If it doesn't, it will need replacing, so let us know straight away.

#TestitTuesday



Protect

Prepare



Campaign performance - social



We have reached **almost 23,000 people** with our messaging, received **243 likes, comments and shares**, and **more than 850 content clicks** to fire safety information on our website or to watch videos or other linked content.

The most successful channel overall was Facebook, delivering around two thirds of the activity.

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22.9K people reached

243 engagements

853 clicks

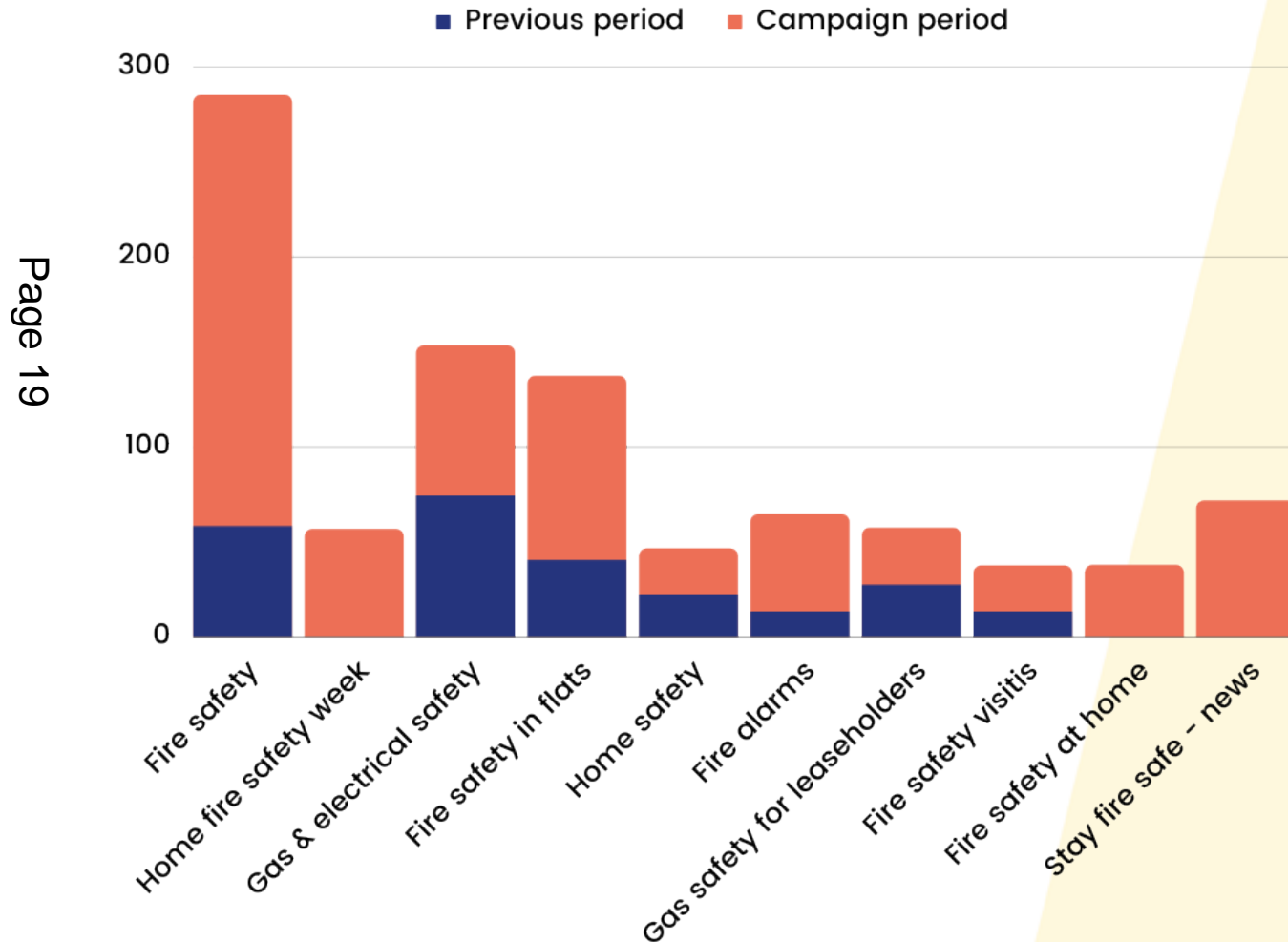


Our best performing post told the story of a family in Low Hill whose e-scooter had exploded while charging, highlighting the risk of accidental fire at home.

2,700 post views and 300 photo views.



Campaign performance – web



We can see that the campaign activity encouraged residents to view content on the fire safety pages of the website.

There was **an increase of 293% in traffic** to the main Fire Safety landing page during the 13-week campaign period.

Overall, website visitors viewed **more than 600 pages of fire safety related content** during the campaign, compared to less than 200 for the previous period.

The fire alarms page saw a 292% increase in traffic and the 'fire safety in flats' page had 143% more views.

Resident Engagement Strategy

The Building Safety Act now requires a specific Resident Engagement Strategy, that must;

- include information that will be provided to residents and flat owners about the individual building management decisions
- what decisions residents will be consulted on
- how participation will be measured

The City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Homes are members of a national working group, facilitated by Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), to develop best practice and guidance to optimise Resident Engagement. This project is due to conclude and report in March 2024.

Asbestos Management

A previous 'Consumer Standards' audit recommended some further enhancements regarding asbestos management, including:

- Refresher training – this has resulted in 530 colleagues and contractors having role specific awareness training
- Improving access and management reporting of asbestos data – implementation of Compliance 365 (a cloud-based compliance software solution) is in progress, which will enhance compliance reporting and improve access to staff and contractors to effectively manage any asbestos risks

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The asbestos procedures have also been reviewed, with updates to:

- The Asbestos Management Plan
 - The Emergency Procedures, including introducing a new “second find” procedure
 - The Major Work Procedures
 - The Repairs and Maintenance Procedures
- Introduced a new process for requesting surveys, to ensure surveys are accurately scoped

To provide further assurance of compliance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and the Regulator's Consumer Standards, a specialist third-party consultancy will shortly commence an independent audit of our asbestos management arrangements.

Asbestos Management

New audit procedures have been developed to assist with monitoring the quality of service provided by our asbestos consultants and contractors, these include:

- Survey audits
- Air monitoring audits
- Asbestos removal audits

Contract management arrangements also include with regular contractor progress meetings, that include a range of stakeholders from across the business and KPI reporting, to monitor the quality of work being undertaken on WH sites and ensures the safety of customers and colleagues.

Summary of 'Big-6' performance



Gas Safety 99.99%
17,624 Dwellings



Lift Safety 100%
72 Passenger Lifts



Electrical 99.78%
21,654 Dwellings



Fire (100%)
884 blocks of flats and offices and
other buildings requiring FRAs



Legionella 100%
68 Sites



Asbestos (100%)
2,150 blocks of flats, garages,
offices & other buildings requiring
Reg.4 inspections.

Compliance 365

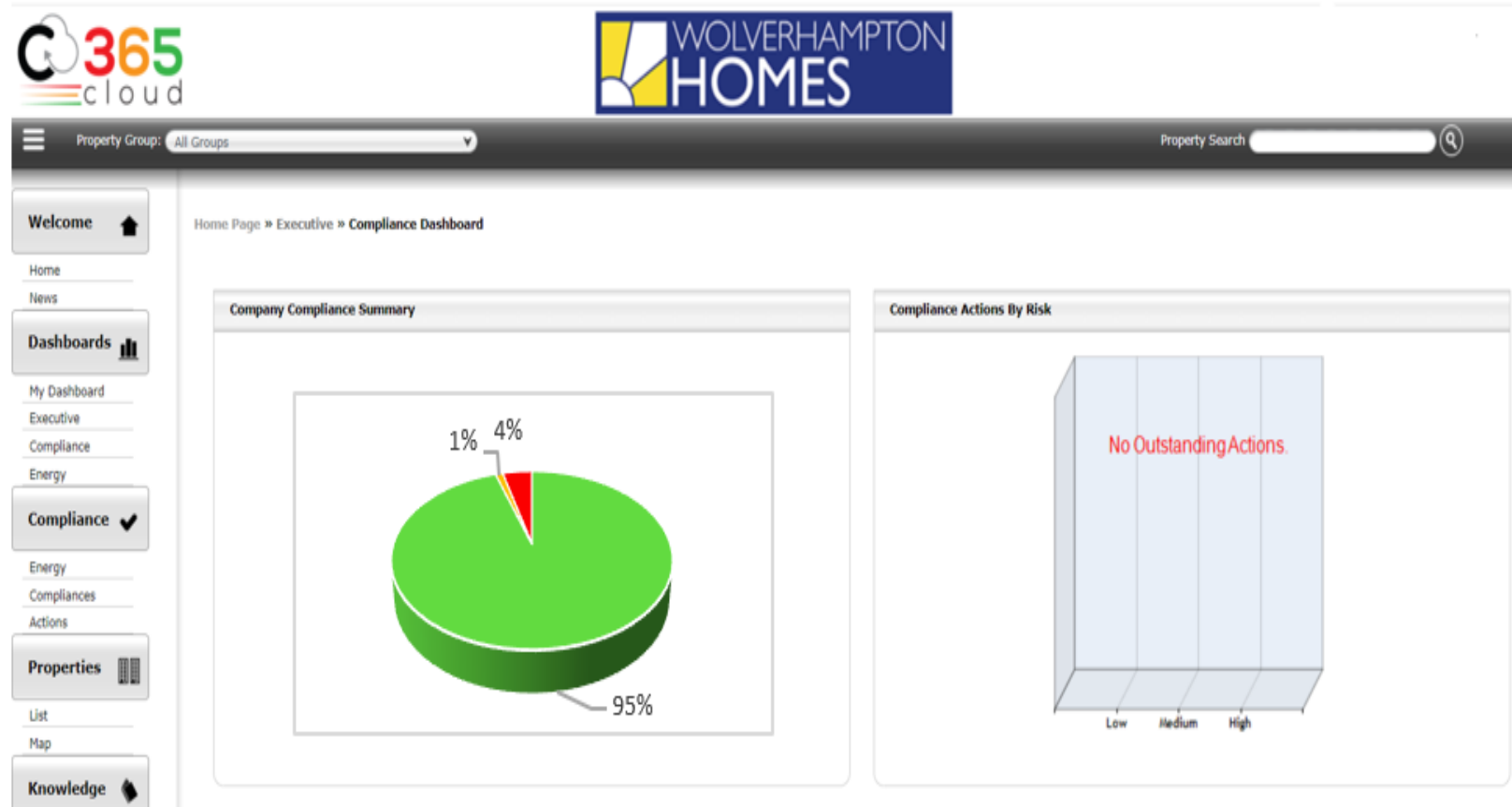
- Provides a compliance management solution in a format that demonstrates you are meeting all the statutory requirements

Software includes:

Remedial Action Tracking

Fully Auditable

Executive Dashboard
(example included)



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