



North Warwickshire  
Borough Council

North Warwickshire Borough Council Housing Division

# ADVICE ABOUT FIRE SAFETY IN FLATS



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Borough Council

## CONTACT US

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**Telephone:** 01827 715341 (between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday)

**Out of Hours Emergency Repairs Telephone:** 01827 715341  
(calls will be directed to the lifeline centre which is manned 24 hours a day)

**Write to:**

Housing Division,  
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# ADVICE ABOUT FIRE SAFETY IN FLATS

## FIRE SAFETY LAW

As your landlord North Warwickshire Borough Council has responsibilities for the home in which you live.

One of those responsibilities is making sure that the structure of buildings and communal areas within them meet the fire safety requirements.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires North Warwickshire Borough Council to carry out Fire Risk Assessments in all communal areas. The purpose of this is to identify and put in place all measures to reduce the risk of a fire starting, quickly spreading, or producing lots of smoke that will put lives in danger. One of these measures is restricting items stored by tenants in communal areas of flats/apartments.

## CALLING THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The fire and rescue service should always be called to a fire, whatever the size. This should be done straight away – don't wait for someone else to do it.

In some blocks there is a fire alarm system which gives an early warning about a fire. If a fire is discovered in the common area call the fire and rescue service. Smoking cigarettes in these blocks will set the alarm off.

## GOOD HOUSEKEEPING IN COMMUNAL AREAS

We need your co-operation to ensure occupants of flats are safe.

Items which are combustible and could cause or fuel a fire or cause smoke should not be kept on landings or in store cupboards. In addition, we need to ensure any items that may cause problem for routes of escape are not kept on landings or on stairs.

Examples of items which **should not** be placed in Communal Areas if they could cause or fuel a fire or create an obstruction:

- Household rubbish, cardboard boxes, paper.
- Chairs/ seating - especially with upholstery.
- Curtains & blinds.
- Pushchairs, car seats or toys.
- Rugs, runners, carpets & offcuts.
- Boots, shoes & clothing
- Wheelchairs & Mobility Scooter.

Or any other items which may be a trip hazard or are flammable.

## FOR YOUR SAFETY

- All escape routes must be kept clear.
- Fire exits must not be obstructed in any way.
- Fire doors must be kept closed.
- Rubbish should only be left in bins in allocated areas.
- Please report any damage or vandalism to fire exit doors to the Council on **01827 715341** including out of office hours.

## SMOKE FREE LAWS

- It is an offence to smoke in an enclosed public space.
- North Warwickshire Borough Council has a **no smoking** policy in all communal areas, and this **must** be adhered to.

## SMOKE ALARMS

The Fire Service highly recommends smoke alarms to be installed in flats to give an early warning of a fire. Please ensure you have a working smoke alarm in your home.

## STORE CUPBOARDS

The Council will ensure that the store cupboards for its use are kept clear of combustible items. We ask tenants not to keep their own personal items in the Council's store cupboards and certainly not without permission.

If you have a store cupboard as part of your tenancy, you must ensure that it is not used to store items which are flammable or could fuel a fire. This includes cardboard, paper, wood, paint, petrol, paraffin, or bottled gas. You must not use electrical appliances in store cupboards – for example fridges or tumble driers.

## ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Faults with electrical appliance and installations are a common source of fire.

Electrical appliances can cause fires. Please ensure that the electrical appliances in your home are in good working order and that you use them safely.

For example, tumble driers should have their filters cleaned out regularly and not left on unattended when on.

## MOBILITY SCOOTERS

We have been advised that the storage and charging of mobility scooters in communal areas can pose a fire hazard

Occupants of flats who use a mobility scooter must ensure that it can be stored and charged up in their flat.

## YOUR FRONT DOOR

- Individual flat entrance doors for **tenanted** properties are the property of North Warwickshire Borough Council. They provide protection from fire so **no** alterations should be made to these without written consent. Fire doors are designed to provide 30 minutes protection in case of fire.

**Leaseholders** should have front doors that offer good protection in case of fire in the building. They should be fire doors which prevent the fire and smoke from escaping on to the communal escape routes for a sufficient period of time to allow for occupants to escape in an emergency. The Council can assist leaseholders with information about the type of door required or help to provide the correct type of door.

## IN CASE OF FIRE

Consider what you would do if you discovered a fire and plan your escape route.

If you discover a fire, you must contact the Fire Service immediately by **calling 999**. Tell them clearly the address where the fire is.

Do not replace the receiver until the fire service has repeated the address to you and you are sure they have got it right.

Alert other occupants.

## IN CASE OF FIRE IN YOUR HOME

- Leave the room where the fire is quickly and close the door.
- Evacuate your flat and close the front door behind you (this will help to protect your neighbours).
- Do not stay behind to put the fire out.
- Do not go back into the property.
- Wait outside away from the building.

## IF THE FIRE IS IN ANOTHER PART OF THE BUILDING

The Council operates a stay safe policy. This means you can determine whether to evacuate or not if there is a fire.

If the fire is not in your home and it is safe to do so you can stay there until the fire service extinguish the fire or order a full evacuation.

If you decide to leave the building wait outside away from the building.

## CHARGING DEVICES WITH LITHIUM BATTERIES

Lithium-ion batteries are the predominant type of rechargeable battery used to power the devices and vehicles that we use as part of our daily lives – for example in bikes, laptops, tools and scooters. If not treated with care they can be hazardous and lead to a fire or explosion. Once on fire it is difficult to extinguish. Safety measures to prevent a fire should include:

- Only use batteries purchased from a reputable manufacturer or supplier.
- Do not leave batteries charging in unoccupied locations and disconnect/ remove batteries from chargers after charging is complete
- Do not leave/store batteries in contact with conductive materials.
- Always inspect batteries for any signs of damage before use and never use damaged or defective batteries.
- Only charge batteries with a suitable OEM (original equipment manufacturer) or compatible charger designed to safely charge the specific battery cells or battery packs in use.

