



Building Safety Resident Engagement Framework

July 2023

Lead Officer: Building Compliance Manager

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1.0	New Framework	03/07/2023	Ongo Homes Board	July 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ongo Homes is a registered provider of social housing and is regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). Ongo Homes is responsible for the management and maintenance of all its social housing stock and holds responsibility for the safety of residents (this includes tenants, leaseholders and licensees) and visitors in the buildings it owns.
- 1.2 This Framework details Ongo Homes' approach to resident engagement in building safety, focussing initially on legally defined high-risk residential buildings¹ (Phase 1), in response to the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022 (The Act) which apply to such buildings following the tragic event of the Grenfell Tower fire.
- 1.3 The high-risk buildings, as per the legal definition, identified within Ongo Homes stock are: (Phase 1)
 - High-rise residential buildings (Crosby House, Princess House, Sutton House, Trent View House)
- 1.4 This framework details what we will do to ensure residents who live in Ongo Homes' buildings are engaged and able to participate in building safety decisions. It details what we will do to engage and communicate with residents about building safety for new and existing buildings and any decisions required to be made under The Act by Ongo Homes in relation to the high-risk buildings.
- 1.5 This framework sets out our approach to meaningful engagement with residents on the safety of their homes.

2. Internal and external context

- 2.1 There is a diverse range of residents who live in the high-risk buildings, including older people, people with disabilities, families and single people.
- 2.2 None of the high-risk residential buildings are clad in dangerous materials and the high-rise blocks have both automatic detection and have all been fitted with sprinkler systems.
- 2.3 Following Grenfell, the Government commissioned the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, namely *The Hackitt Review*. This review was published in May 2018 and in December of the same year, the Government accepted all 53 of the recommendations proposed.
- 2.4 In 2019, the Government published a consultation document setting out the plans for the overhaul of the system for high-rise residential buildings through:
 - Clearer responsibilities for those building or managing buildings
 - A stronger voice in the system and better information for residents
 - Greater oversight by regulators

¹ A high-risk residential building is defined in section 65 of the Building Safety Act 2022. These are buildings which are at least 18 metres in height, or have at least 7 storeys, and have at least two residential units.

- Tougher enforcement when things go wrong
- 2.5 Following this consultation and various publications, including the publication of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 1 Report in October 2019, the Building Safety Act 2022 (The Act) received Royal Assent and was passed into law in April 2022. The Act contains *provisions intended to secure the safety of people in or about high-risk buildings and to improve the standard of buildings.*
- 2.6 Alongside The Act, the Social Housing White Paper, *The Charter for Social Housing Residents* was published which detailed plans for new regulation, a strengthened Housing Ombudsman to speed up resolving complaints and a commitment to a new set of tenant satisfaction measures that all social landlords will have to report against from April 2023.
- 2.7 These fundamental changes will improve building and fire safety ensuring residents are and feel safer in their homes. Alongside the Government, Ongo Homes are committed to learning the lessons of the Grenfell tragedy and have already begun to take significant actions, including but not limited to:
- Reviewed all fire risk assessments for our buildings and resolved actions identified, these are reviewed in line with recommendations and monitored
 - Reviewed and revised all fire procedures associated with the high-risk buildings and implemented a Fire Management Strategic Framework. These documents are reviewed on an annual cycle
 - Worked with Humberside Fire and Rescue to familiarise them with the high rise buildings
 - Installed enhanced fire safety measures in all our high-rise buildings, which includes the fitting of sprinkler systems and new 60 minute fire doorsets (doorsets are a complete unit which includes but is not limited to, the fire door, its frame, the ironmongery, seals etc, these are tested to withstand the effects of fire for 60 minutes)
 - Created a Resident Building Safety Group, which includes members who are Ongo residents, to work with Ongo Homes to raise any concerns or issues in relation to the safety of their homes / buildings
 - The Resident Building Safety Group have received awareness training and monitor Health and Safety action plans for the high-risk buildings
 - Installed new Wayfinder signage in all the high rise buildings. (Wayfinder signage exists to assist in confirming location and to guide and give directions to a destination within a building with ease. It should clearly identify floor and individual flat numbers as per The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
 - Provided fire door information and evacuation instructions to residents
 - Put a Fire Door Inspection programme in place

3. It applies to...

- 3.1 This framework applies to our identified high-risk buildings and residents who live in these homes:

- High-rise residential buildings (Crosby House, Princess House, Sutton House, Trent View House)

3.2 Many of the principles of this framework will also apply to other buildings managed by Ongo but, under the legislation, we are not required to include those buildings within this framework. These buildings will be dealt with separately and are identified as:

Medium-risk buildings identified within Ongo Homes stock: (Phase 2)

- Retirement Schemes
- Myos House
- Large Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (which have capacity for 6 or more residents)

Lower-risk buildings identified within Ongo Homes stock: (Phase 3)

- Small HMOs (which have capacity for less than 6 residents)
- Low rise blocks of flats

3.3 This framework does not include specific building safety information about individual homes or building security information.

4. Because we want to...

4.1 The aims of this framework are to ensure that:

- Residents play an active and effective role in ensuring their building is, and continues to be safe
- Residents know how they can get involved and what the benefits are to them by participating in engagement on building safety
- Ongo Homes understands what building safety information residents wish to be provided with and ensure it is provided in the way they want to receive it
- Ongo Homes improves its approach to engaging with residents in relation to the safety of their home
- Ongo Homes engages its employees with regards to residents' rights to have a say in relation to their homes
- The responsibilities of Ongo Homes and residents are clear to ensure homes remain safe

5. Principles of the framework

5.1 This framework details Ongo Homes' approach to engaging and involving residents in relation to building safety in our high-risk residential buildings and empowering them with the knowledge to keep themselves safe. There will be individual strategic plans bespoke to the individual buildings concerned detailing how the framework will work in practice for each.

- 5.2 Ongo Homes has worked with residents of the high-risk buildings and other involved residents on developing this framework to ensure it addresses their needs and requirements. It is based around three main themes:
- Information and understanding
 - Resident and Landlord responsibilities
 - Action to take in the event of a fire

5.3 **Information and understanding**

- 5.3.1 Resident involvement and engagement is a key priority at Ongo Homes. We use a wide range of ways to communicate with residents to address their diverse needs and preferences:

- Digitally (including social media, website, text, MyHome App, e-mail)
- Face to face
- Over the phone
- Resident meetings / focus groups
- Letter drops
- Notice boards in communal areas
- Neighbourhood events

- 5.3.2 Building safety information will be provided through a variety of means to residents living in Ongo's buildings, making sure the diverse needs and requirements are taken into account. Where there is a need, all the information relating to building safety can be shared with residents' family / advocates.

- 5.3.3 Where a significant issue is identified, affecting the safety of residents, Ongo Homes will make sure this is communicated effectively with all residents and appropriate updates provided when required as to the resolution of the issue. This may be in the form of a resident meeting, a letter-drop, information being made available through social media channels, our website or direct texts or e-mails to residents. Specifics are detailed in the supplementary strategic plans for each building.

- 5.3.4 Each building will have a *fire action notice* in place. This explains the fire evacuations strategy that is in place for that particular building in the event of a fire.

- 5.3.5 Ongo Homes will be pro-active in providing information relating to building safety to residents to ensure they understand the protective measures that are in place to keep their building safe.

- 5.3.6 All information provided will be relevant and in a format that can be understood by residents. This could mean providing the information in different formats, for example for those who do not speak English or who have visual impairments.

- 5.3.7 As standard across Ongo Homes' high-risk residential buildings, we will provide:
- Fire Evacuation Notices
 - Information on Fire Doors

- Publish the Fire Risk Assessment on our website

5.3.8 Residents can request additional and / or more detailed information about the safety measures in their building if they wish. We will implement a process for requests for information in line with legislation and regulation as guidance becomes available. The request for information may include (but is not limited to):

- Full, current and historical fire risk assessments
- Outcome of building safety inspection checks
- Inspection and testing information (for lifts, alarm systems, sprinkler systems)
- Details of any preventative measures in place
- Fire protection measures in place
- Information on the maintenance of fire safety systems
- Structural assessments of the building (where available)

5.3.9 Safety information will be provided when residents move into their homes and annually thereafter. All relevant information will be provided to the resident at sign-up. This includes fire evacuation information and fire door information.

5.3.10 If residents have concerns about the safety of the building, they should contact Ongo Homes using their preferred method of contact and this will be directed to the relevant member of the Building Compliance Team for their review and action.

5.4 **Landlord responsibilities**

5.4.1 As a registered provider of social housing, Ongo Homes has a responsibility to keep all residents safe. To ensure this, Ongo Homes will:

- Comply fully with the Building Safety Act 2022 and all other relevant legislation and regulation
- Seek to meet obligations in advance of statutory requirements where possible and always promote a culture of safety
- Produce individual resident engagement plans for all high-risk residential buildings (Phase 1)
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for residents who are unable to evacuate safely without assistance – it is the responsibility of the resident to advise Ongo Homes of any changes to their ability to self-evacuate so a PEEP can be put in place. Ongo Homes aim to review this information with residents at least annually
- Ensure homes within all our high-risk residential buildings are fitted with Smoke and Carbon Monoxide alarms as required
- Keep all fire risk assessments up to date and publicly available on our website
- Ensure relevant, up to date policies and procedures for building and fire safety are in place for all identified high-risk buildings
- In line with the Inspection and Testing Policy and Plan, ensure all appropriate testing is 100% complete within the required timescales
- Prioritise all customer contacts which may have a building safety implication

- Work with the local fire and rescue services and provide information to them that they require in an effective, efficient way
- 5.4.2 Where necessary, Ongo Homes will complete person-centred risk assessments to evaluate the needs of individual residents to ensure specific measures can be put in place that minimise risks to the individual.
- 5.4.3 Ongo Homes will work with residents to ensure they are involved in decisions about their building's safety and, where possible, provide them with reasonable information on works due to be carried out to their property or building.
- 5.4.4 Ongo Homes has a responsibility to keep residents safe in their homes. Residents are encouraged and empowered to play an effective role in making sure the building they live in is safe. This includes identifying and reporting hazards as well as not to interfere with, remove or damage any safety equipment provided (including but not limited to; propping open fire doors, removing fire alarm detectors/sounders, removing/damaging self-closing devices, damaging fire doors, having BBQ's on balconies, cooking under the influence, being careless with lit cigarettes, smoking in communal areas) that may impact on the safety of the building and meeting their responsibilities to ensure their own safety and that of their households and neighbours. If residents are found to be compromising the safety of the building we may need to enforce the terms of the tenancy, lease or licence agreement which may result in Court action. Cost may be recovered from the resident in these cases.
- 5.4.5 Residents are expected to provide reasonable access to allow us to carry out necessary works and inspections to ensure their safety in their homes. Ongo Homes will always provide reasonable notice (unless in an emergency situation) where access to the home is required or information is needed from the resident. Where access is not provided, we may need to enforce the terms of the tenancy agreement which could result in court action. Costs may be recovered from the resident in these cases.
- 5.4.6 Residents must ensure they understand the evacuation / emergency action plan specific to their building so they know what they should do in the event of an emergency.
- 5.4.7 Where residents see something that suggests their neighbours have not understood or remembered building safety information, they should remind them of it as a matter of priority. If residents are not comfortable in doing this, they should contact Ongo Homes to report as a building safety concern.

5.5 **Action to take in the event of a fire**

There is a fire evacuation plan for each high-risk residential building with specific details of what action residents should take in the event of a fire. This information is contained in a Fire Action Notice, which is displayed in communal areas of each high-risk building and is also provided to each resident at sign-up.

- 5.5.1 All Ongo Homes buildings are designed to keep residents safe. Buildings are compartmented, which means they are built in such a way to contain fire in a single room or multiple rooms. This limits the spread of fire, smoke and flue gases.
- 5.5.2 Our building evacuation plan for the high risk buildings is “**Simultaneous Evacuation**”, meaning that if the fire alarm activates all residents must leave the building and go to the assembly point for the building in the case of an emergency. They should attend the assembly point as a place of safety away from the building.
- 5.5.3 Where residents are required to evacuate their home:
- They must go to the safest and closest exit and / or stairway
 - They must close any fire doors behind them where possible
 - They must never use a lift to exit during a fire alarm activation
 - Once outside the building, residents must move away from the building and go to the nearest safest place. This means away from the building, not obstructing access to the fire and / or other emergency services
 - Residents must not re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so

6. Making sure we do what we say...

- 6.1 Each high-risk residential building will have its own action plan to ensure appropriate engagement with residents who live in those buildings. These plans will be reviewed annually.
- 6.2 Regular progress reports against the action plans will be provided to Ongo Homes’ Leadership team, the Resident Building Safety Group and Community Voice.

7. Other things to bear in mind...

- 7.1 This policy also links to our:
- Individual building safety action plans for each high-risk residential building
 - Fire Risk Assessments for each high-risk residential building
 - Fire Management Strategic Framework
 - Fire Management Procedures for each individual high-risk residential building
 - Ongo Homes Scooter Policy
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Lettings Policy & Lettings Criteria
 - Tenancy Management Policy
 - Customer Engagement Framework
 - Tenancy, Leasehold or Licence Agreement
 - Neighbourhood Management Policy and Procedures
- 7.2 The main pieces of legislation and regulation relevant to this policy include:
- Building Safety Act 2022

- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Regulator for Social Housing – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- Social Housing White Paper – The Charter for Social Housing Residents

8. We'll look at this again...

- 8.1 This framework will be reviewed every 3 years, the strategic action plans will be reviewed annually. The framework will be reviewed and revised if necessary earlier if there is a requirement under any relevant legislation and / or regulation.