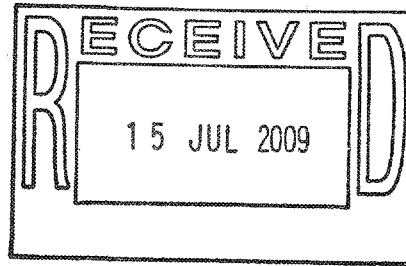


LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Ron Dobson OFSM, MFireE
LONDON FIRE COMMISSIONER



London Fire Brigade Headquarters
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To:

London Fire Brigade is run by the London
Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Mr Derek Myers
Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Town Hall
Hornton Street
Kensington
London
W8 7NX

Date 9 July 2009

Dear Mr Myers,

SOCIAL HOUSING - FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF MEANS OF ESCAPE PROVISIONS

You may recall the letter dated 23 March 2009 from Assistant Commissioner Steve Turek in which he highlighted a number of significant fire safety issues relating to social housing. ;

Following the tragic fire in Camberwell on 3 July 2009 I consider it appropriate to personally write to you to remind you of certain matters for which you are either responsible under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order), or which you have a role in enforcing.

Firstly, a requirement of the Order is that a suitable and sufficient fire safety risk assessment is undertaken for all premises to which the Order applies. In this regard I would emphasise that any risk assessment should include, amongst other things, consideration of the compartmentation within the premises, particularly where it protects means of escape routes, and that there are systems in place to ensure that these elements of compartmentation are maintained. It is also a requirement of the Order that the risk assessment should be reviewed if any material change takes place within the premises. This will include changes to the compartmentation arrangements, as well as potentially any refurbishment work.

The findings of the fire risk assessment must be implemented to remove or reduce fire risks and to ensure adequate general fire precautions are provided. In particular this includes an evacuation strategy that is appropriate to the circumstances of the individual premises.

In terms of guidance for your tenants I would emphasise that it should be safe for them to remain in their flats, in the event of fire elsewhere in the building, providing the premises comply with both the Building Regulations and the Order and suitable management and maintenance procedures are in place. If the tenants are unsure what the appropriate action to take will be in the event of a fire, then your organisation should be able to provide them with appropriate advice about the evacuation strategy.