

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Why was my building being reassessed?

- *Tri Fire Ltd — a formerly accredited fire engineering company we previously used to carry out some building assessments — was removed from the professional register earlier this year, following concerns about the integrity and reliability of their work. In response, we have proactively been carrying out fresh inspections on the buildings involved using an alternative independent expert.*

Who is Tri Fire and why is their work being reviewed?

- *Tri Fire Ltd was a formerly accredited fire engineering company used by housing associations across the country to conduct building assessments. Concerns have been raised about how certain reports were completed and the accuracy of their findings. In response, we have proactively been carrying out fresh inspections on the buildings involved.*

What did the new assessments find?

- *The investigations have identified that some parts of the building's external wall system (EWS) do not fully meet current fire safety standards, so we are taking extra steps to strengthen overall safety. For clarity the EWS fitted to these buildings is primarily made up of non-flammable cement-based rendering.*

Is my building safe to live in?

- *Both our independent fire safety experts and Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority have confirmed that the buildings remain safe to live in, with additional safety measures that have been put in place.*

Who carried out the new assessment?

- *The new assessment was conducted by independent, accredited fire safety engineers from a company called PRP. The results of the new assessment were reviewed and confirmed by Savills, our fire safety advisers, and Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority.*

Does this affect any other Platform homes?

- *Other Platform buildings were also assessed by Tri-Fire historically. We are progressing with a risk-based plan to re-assess these where necessary, on a prioritised basis.*

What does a 'Stay Put' fire safety policy mean?

- *Advice on what to do in the event of a fire **has not changed**. In the unlikely event of an emergency, your building continues to operate under **a Stay Put** policy. This means in the event of a fire, you should remain in your home as long as it's safe to do so or unless you are advised otherwise — either by the Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority or the new on-site Fire Safety Support Team.*

How will I know what to do in the event of a fire?

- *You should remain in your home as long you assess it to be safe to do so or unless you are advised otherwise — either by the Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority or the new on-site Fire Safety Support Team.*
- *If you have any questions at all regarding what to do in the event of a fire, then please contact your Retirement Housing Officer.*
- *If anything changes that might affect your ability to evacuate safely — such as your health or mobility — please let your Retirement Housing Officer know as soon as possible. This is important so that we can ensure you receive the support needed to stay safe.*

I have additional mobility, health or support needs. What support will I receive if there is a fire?

- *We've reviewed **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans** which set out the support you need and your individual circumstances, and we'll continue to keep this under review. If anything changes that might affect your ability to evacuate safely — such as your health or mobility — please let your Retirement Housing Officer know as soon as possible.*

Will you be holding fire drills or walkthroughs?

- *Both our team and the Fire Safety Support Team will be walking through procedures on site to make sure they are all clear on their role. This will likely be on going over time so that we can be assured these new arrangements are working as intended.*

Can I use the lifts in the event of a fire?

- *Lifts cannot be used in the event of fire. We are aware of the customers who require assistance to evacuate the building and are working closely with the new Fire Safety Support Team and Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority to ensure they can do so safely.*

How will I be kept informed about what's happening?

- *Keeping our customers informed is our absolute priority, and we are committed to updating you every step of the way. Further updates will be provided in the following ways:*
 - *Door to door letters*
 - *Resident meetings where you can attend and ask questions*
 - *Direct contact with a member of the Retirement Housing team or your Customer Liaison Officer Jenny Matthews. You can call Jenny on 07484 489663 or find her weekdays in the Henwick House office*
 - *All information shared with you can also be found at www.platformhq.com/fire-safety-update*
 - *You can also contact us at high-risequeries@platformhq.com*

Who do I speak to if I have a question or concern?

- *If you or your family have any questions please talk to your Customer Liaison Officer Jenny Matthews. You can call Jenny on 07484 489663 or find her weekdays in the Henwick House office and you can contact us at high-risequeries@platformhq.com*

Why do we need a Fire Safety Support Team?

- *The Fire Safety Support team will be on site 24/7 to provide extra reassurance and provide practical support in the unlikely event of an emergency. This will include:*
 - *Responding promptly to any fire alarm activations*
 - *Supporting the running of fire safety systems in the building*
 - *Assisting in the unlikely event of an emergency*
 - *Carrying out regular external and internal building inspections, including to identify any possible fire risks*

What happens if my smoke alarm goes off?

- *If smoke is detected in your home, the Fire Safety Support Team will be notified automatically through the Telecare system. They will come to your flat straight away to check everything is okay.*
- *If you don't answer the door, they will enter your home to make sure you are safe and there is no danger. This is part of their role in helping to keep everyone in the building safe.*

Will my building require work to bring it up to safety standards?

- *We are working with Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority and independent experts to understand what will be required to bring our buildings up to the most modern safety standards. We expect remedial work will be required and will update you when we know more. In the meantime, the buildings remain safe to live in with the additional safety measures we have put in place.*

When will the work start and how long will it take?

- *We don't yet have any timings for any remedial work required and will update you as soon as we know more. We will of course take every step to minimise disruption when work does need to happen.*

What's happening with fire doors in my building?

- *We regularly inspect and maintain fire doors at Henwick, Cripplegate, and Severn House to make sure they meet safety standards. These*

inspections are carried out as part of our Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) and separate door surveys, in line with the Fire Safety Act 2021.

- Any repairs identified are carried out on schedule. As doors age, we expect more work may be needed, so we've already ordered a full batch of new communal doors for Henwick House. However, after they arrived, we received advice that replacing all doors in one go would require notifying the Building Safety Regulator. This process has specific requirements and timelines, which can currently take up to 18 months.*
- While we work through that process, we're re-planning how to install the doors at Henwick House and will reassess Cripplegate and Severn House. A previous review at Cripplegate confirmed that a full replacement programme wasn't needed there.*
- All current fire doors are being maintained to meet fire safety standards, and will continue to be inspected in line with legal requirements. Our Fire Safety team will work closely with the on-site Fire Safety Support Team to quickly identify and address any faults in the future."*

Why has the Sky Lounge been closed?

- The Sky Lounge has been closed on the recommendation of Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority, and in line with advice from our independent fire safety engineers. We understand this space is well used and valued, and the decision hasn't been taken lightly. However, because it is located on the top floor and often used by people with reduced mobility, the Fire Service has advised that this is the safest course of action as having more people on the top floor of the building would present a greater challenge in the event of a fire.*

Where can I go as an alternative to the Sky Lounge?

- Alternative locations can be used for events and social activities at nearby schemes and the Retirement Housing Team will let you know locally what changes need to be made to existing arrangements and options for future bookings.*

Why have the changes been made to the mobility scooter charging room?

- *The changes made to the charging of mobility scooters are precautionary measures recommended by the Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority to help manage fire safety risks more effectively. Like any electrical device, mobility scooters can pose a fire risk while charging — and night-time charging carries more risk, especially when fewer people are awake or around to respond quickly. The Fire Safety Support Team will ensure all charging stops at 9pm, including unplugging any scooters found to be charging after this time.*

Is it still safe to use a mobility scooter in and around my building?

- *Yes, it is still safe to use your mobility scooter on the ground floor in your building at any time.*