

# Fire safety advice for residents living in a flat

## Stay safe in your home

Cobalt are committed to ensuring tenants are afforded maximum protection and remain safe in the event of fire, however, we can't do this alone.

To minimise the risk of fire within communal areas, follow the hints and tips in this leaflet to keep you and your family safe in your home. **It could save your life!**



## Cobalt will:

- 1) Undertake Fire Risk Assessments annually and action all remedial actions.
- 2) Inspect flat entrance doors annually to ensure they provide adequate protection to prevent the spread of fire and smoke.
- 3) Undertake monthly visits to our housing stock, to ensure:
  - No items are kept or stored in communal areas or means of escape
  - Service and maintain fire detection, prevention & firefighting systems in our communal areas to ensure they continually provide the protection and preventative measures identified.
  - Repairs are identified promptly, reported and actioned.

## You, and any visitors to your home, must:

- Familiarise yourself with the advice given on the Fire Action Notices located in hallways, corridors and landing areas. In the event of a fire follow the advice.
- NEVER smoke in the communal areas.
- NEVER throw cigarettes off a balcony, or out of a window.
- NEVER use any form of barbecue on any balcony or communal area.
- NEVER leave any items left or stored within the escape routes, as this presents a serious risk of fire and may also obstruct your escape from fire, causing serious injury or death.

**No items whatsoever should be placed or stored in communal areas including, but not limited to, the following: • mats • bikes • ornaments • motorbikes • pictures • mobility scooters • furniture household waste • toys • white goods (fridge/dryer etc) • wheelie bins**

- All bins must be stored within the designated external bin areas, away from the building.
- If your bin is damaged or stolen, you can contact Liverpool City Council on 0151 233 3000.
- Communal doors in your block must be kept shut at all times and must NEVER be propped open, this is to maintain your safety and your security.

### Following the advice above will ensure that in the event of a fire:

- The communal areas remain clear at all times.
- Residents can escape quickly and safely.
- Fire & Rescue Service can quickly access the blocks to deal with the fire.

**Every time items are removed and stored, Cobalt incur significant costs, which are paid for through rental income. If any item is found to be left or stored within the communal area we will arrange for it to be removed. However, if the item is deemed hazardous i.e. combustible items, it will be removed immediately.**

- Remove or report any items left in the communal corridor to Cobalt Housing on 0330 303 2222.
- Report any excessive or uncleared build-up of combustible material in blocks or bin areas.

## Cobalt emergency fire procedures and advice to residents

### If a fire starts in your flat:

- Alert your family, and any visitors in your home.
- Call the Fire & Rescue Service by dialling 999. All calls to 999 are free.
- DO NOT tackle the fire yourself unless you are sure it is safe to do so.
- Leave the flat immediately, closing all doors behind you, including the front door to your flat.
- If possible, warn your immediate neighbours of the fire.
- Leave the building via the nearest safe exit route, use the stairs. DO NOT USE THE LIFT.

## Cobalt emergency fire procedures and advice to residents

**If there are signs of fire or smoke in the corridor or stairs and you are unable to safely leave your flat:**

- Stay safe within the flat.
- Close your front door, and any other doors which will help distance you from the fire or smoke.
- Call the Fire & Rescue Service by dialling 999. Tell them where you live and what is happening.
- If you have no phone, wave from your window and shout 'FIRE' to get the attention of passers by.
- Find the window that is furthest away from the fire or smoke. Open it to let fresh air in.

**You may also decide to follow the advice immediately above if you become aware of a fire in a remote part of the building which is not, or is unlikely to affect your flat, and you choose to stay safe within your flat.**

**To call the Fire & Rescue Service:**

- In an **emergency** call 999.
- When the operator answers, ask for the Fire & Rescue Service.
- When the fire operator answers give them your name, address and the location of the fire, who and what is involved.
- DO NOT end the call until the operator has confirmed the details back to you.
- Contact Cobalt at the earliest opportunity and inform us of the situation.

## General fire safety advice

### Smoke alarms

- You should test your smoke alarms weekly to ensure that they are present, undamaged, and in full working order.
- During your annual gas safety inspection, Cobalt's contractor will check the smoke alarm and replace batteries where necessary.
- You should never disconnect or remove the batteries from your smoke alarm.

**If your smoke alarm is no longer working, contact Cobalt Housing on 0330 303 2222 to request a replacement smoke alarm to be fitted for free.**

### Fire door safety checklist

Cobalt will be carrying out annual visits to blocks of flats to check the entrance door to individual flats is providing adequate protection to prevent the spread of fire and smoke travelling around a building.

Here is a 3-point checklist you can do to make sure your fire door is working as it should:

- 1. Check the self closing device** – open the door and let it self-close. The door should close firmly onto the latch without sticking to the floor or the frame
- 2. Check fire strips** (usually a plastic strip with a fuzzy brush) around the top and sides of the door or frame. Check they are undamaged.
- 3. Check your door and door frame has no damage or holes**

If your door does not pass all three checks call Cobalt on 0300 303 2222.

Your front door provides protection from fire in the communal area and gives other residents protection from fire in your property.

Your front door should close fully on its own mechanism - check regularly and report faults.



## Have your circumstances changed?

We know that sometimes circumstances change. If you are struggling with ill health, or there has been a change that might make you unable to react quickly in an emergency, please get in touch with us on **0330 303 2222**, and we will be happy to visit you in your home to discuss how we might be able to provide extra support.

## Useful contact numbers

For Emergency Services call **999**

Call Fire Service Direct for advice on **0800 731 5958** or email [fireservicedirect@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:fireservicedirect@merseyfire.gov.uk)

To report a repair or an issue in the communal block of flats please contact Cobalt solutions **0330 303 2222**

To remove any unwanted bulky items for free, such as furniture, please contact Bulky Bobs on **0151 233 3000**

To report a damaged or stolen bin please contact Liverpool City Council on **0151 233 3000** who will replace it for you.