



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Houses of Multiple Occupancy Fire Safety

April 2018



Key Messages

Can we work in partnership?

How can we assist each other?

Are shared houses with vulnerable people
HMO's?

Firefighter safety?

Introduction

- The Fire Safety Order (FSO) applies to communal corridors and staircases of HMO's, blocks of flats or Maisonettes
- All the London Boroughs have signed the Housing Protocol on joint working arrangements with the LFB to improve fire safety within housing.

We aim to:

- Ensure that appropriate standards of fire safety and other safety provisions are provided and maintained.
- Assist landlords and other providers to understand the legal framework under which they operate.
- Encourage opportunities for offering joint training and awareness sessions for both authorities.
- Encourage data sharing arrangements

Challenges of change to HMO licensing

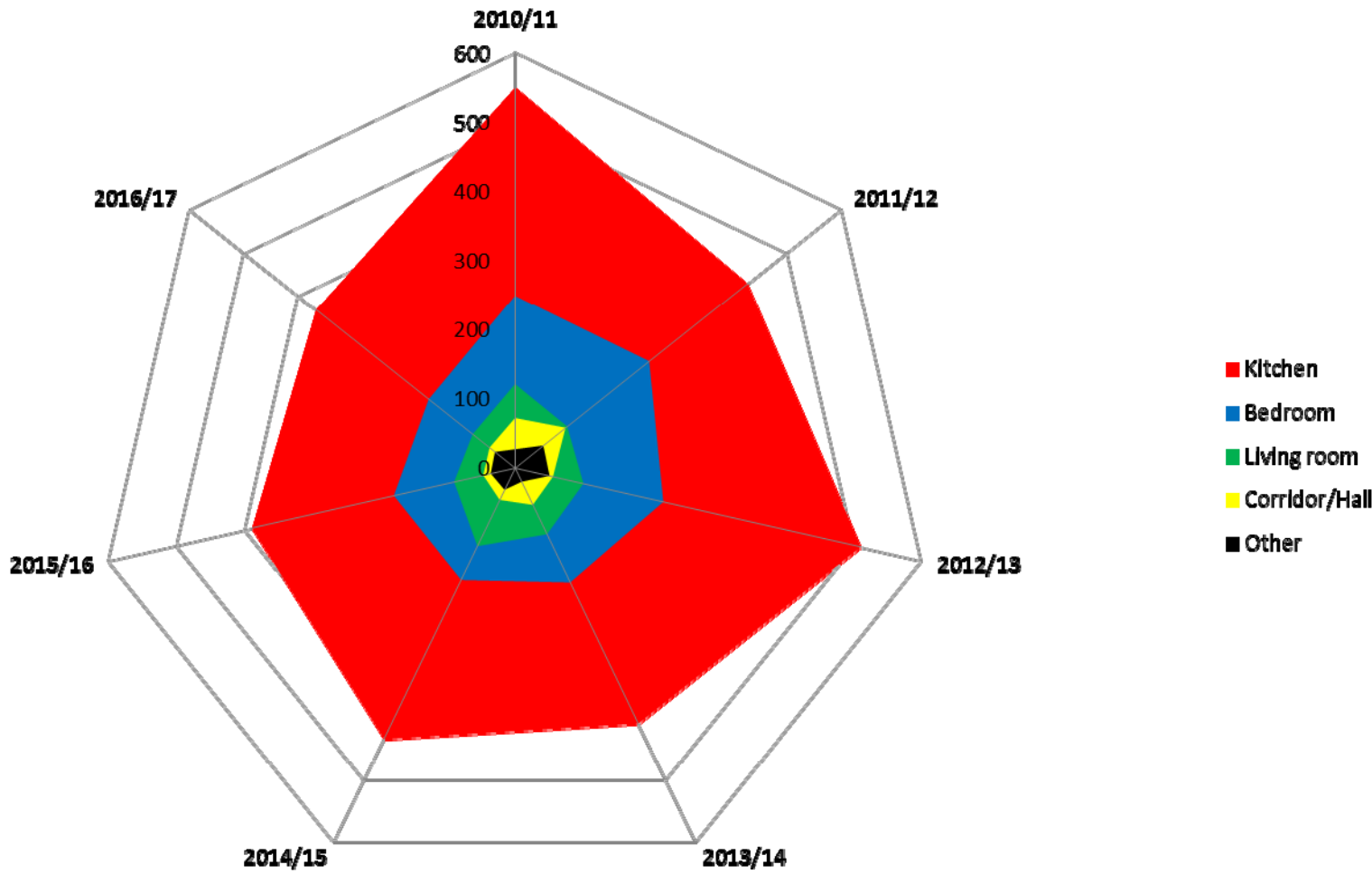
- The October 2018 Regulations could bring an extra 170,000 premises into the licensing regime in London, including flats in multiple occupation
- LFB is a statutory consultee for HMO licensing – increases in workload for LA's and LFB
- Historically local authorities often call on LFB to take enforcement action even though we are not the lead authority.
- HA's can issue civil penalty notices up to a maximum of £30,000 - which is not an option available to LFB.

Challenges of change to HMO licensing

- How do we identify a HMO?
- Firefighters risk attending HMOs
- Fire Safety Officers
- What impact will the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations have in its reissue?
- Is the LACORs guidance still fit for purpose?

Key Risks – ignition sources (all dwelling types)

<i>Ignition Source</i>	<i>3 year Avg %</i>	
Cooker	2,323	38%
Kitchen appliances/white goods	813	13%
Electrical distribution	732	
		12%
Smoking related	567	9%
Matches and Candles	378	6%
Heating appliances	237	4%
Lighting	175	3%
Domestic appliances	75	1%



Our commitment to vulnerable persons

- Our proactive community engagement and fire safety inspections include 'Person Centred Risk Assessments'.
- Landlords should also 'Spot the signs' - burns marks on clothes or furniture are often ignored.
- Immediate action should be taken to reduce/remove risk.
- Identified risks should be discussed with the person and be referred
- LFB can conduct home fire safety visits.

Checklist for Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessment



Name of resident			
Full address			
Date	DD / MM / YYYY	Form completed by	

1. Does the individual have an increased fire risk?

- Yes If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No Skip to next question
- Smoking – with signs of unsafe use of smoking or vaping materials (e.g. smoking in bed).
 - Use of emollient creams that are petroleum or paraffin based.
 - Air pressure mattress or oxygen cylinders are used.
 - Unsafe use of portable heaters (e.g. placed too close to materials that could catch fire).
 - Unsafe cooking practices (e.g. cooking left unattended).
 - Overloaded electrical sockets/adaptors or extension leads.
 - Faulty or damaged wiring.
 - Electric blankets used.
 - Previous fires or near misses, burns or scorch marks on carpets and furniture.
 - Unsafe candles/tea light use (e.g. left too close to curtains or other items that could catch fire or within easy reach of children or pets).
 - Other (please specify): _____

2. Would the individual be less able to react to an alarm or fire?

- Yes If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No Skip to next question
- Mental health issues (e.g. dementia, anxiety or depression).
 - Cognitive or decision making difficulties.
 - Alcohol dependency or misuse of drugs.
 - Sensory impairments (e.g. hard of hearing or sight loss).
 - Other (please specify): _____

3. Does the individual have a reduced ability to escape?

- Yes If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No Skip to next question
- Have restricted mobility, are frail or have a history of falls.
 - Are blind or have impaired vision.
 - Lacks capacity to understand what to do in the event of a fire.
 - Is a hoarder, or there are cluttered or blocked escape routes.
 - Are bed or chairbound.
 - Internal doors are left open at night.
 - Would be unable to unlock front door to escape.
 - Other (please specify): _____

4. Are there any smoke or heat alarms fitted within the individual's home?

- Yes If yes, please specify which rooms have them fitted: _____
- No

5. Has a carbon monoxide alarm been fitted anywhere that gas or solid fuels are used?

- Yes If yes, please specify which rooms have them fitted: _____
- No

What to do next

If there are any questions in sections 1–3 that have been answered 'Yes', or you have identified that there are no smoke or heat alarms fitted, or they are broken or poorly sited, this suggests there is a risk from fire. Immediate actions are required to ensure agreed safety measures are in place:

- If you are employed by a company or organisation, return this checklist to your manager for a full Person-Centred Risk Assessment to be conducted where necessary.
- Inform the resident or other family members of the risks identified, if you are certain they will understand.
- Contact the local fire service to arrange for a home fire safety visit.
- If a care plan exists, all actions taken should be noted in that plan.
- In addition, you or your manager may also consider:
 - Referral to Adult Social Care teams where a serious risk has been identified.
 - Informing the housing provider that there is an increased risk of fire to the individual.

Fire safety in the home

Home fire safety visits are provided by most fire services and are usually free. Trained persons will visit the property, carry out an inspection and offer fire safety advice. Where necessary they can also install free smoke alarms.

A 'Fire Safety in the Home' booklet is available from London Fire Brigade and can be downloaded from our website. Some basic fire safety advice has also been provided below.

Prevention

- It is safer not to smoke, but anyone who does should try to smoke outside and always make sure cigarettes are put out properly.
- Never smoke in bed, or anywhere else, if there's a chance of falling asleep.
- Use fire-safe ashtrays and fire-retardant bedding, nightwear and throws.
- Ensure paraffin based emollient creams are replaced with non-flammable alternatives.
- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat-resistant holders. Keep these items or any other type of naked flame well away from curtains, furniture and clothes.
- Sit at least one metre away from heaters and keep them well away from anything that can catch alight.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Close all doors at night as this helps to prevent fire and smoke spreading.
- Switch off and unplug electrical items such as TVs and avoid charging devices like mobile phones whilst asleep.

Early warning and detection of a fire is essential

- As a minimum, fit at least one smoke alarm on every level of the home and in any room where a fire could start. The ideal position for these are usually in rooms that are used the most, in hallways and anywhere electrical equipment is left switched on.
- Fitting multiple linked smoke alarms, that all activate together, is the best way to be alerted in the event of a fire. For some, the provision of a Telecare monitoring system may also be beneficial.
- Specialist alarms can be fitted for people who may have a delayed response to escape – for example: strobe light and vibrating pad alarms for the deaf or hard of hearing.
- Remember to test all alarms monthly.

Escape

- Make sure escape routes are kept clear of anything that may slow down or block exit routes.
- Ensure security gates can be easily opened from the inside without the need for a key. Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.
- Mobility aids and any methods of calling for help should always be kept close to hand (e.g. mobile phone, link alarm/pendant).

What if a fire happens?



- Know the plan! Is there a stay put policy in the building or are you advised to escape?
- If a smoke alarm goes off do not assume it is a false alarm
- **Do not tackle the fire yourself**
- Before you open a door, check if it's warm using the back of your hand
- Keep calm and assist the resident out (but only if it is safe to do so)
- Call 999
- Close doors behind you

Looking forward

- Joint working with the HMO protocol review.
- New Home Fire Safety initiatives.
- Fire Safety Inspections will cover the structure and condition of the building, and also the arrangements for raising the alarm and evacuation.
- Recording the risk for our firefighters, review our plans.
- What about behind front doors?

Thank you