

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 15/09/2025

**Subject:** Annual Review of Housing Safety Compliance 2024/25

**Report of:** Councillor Frances Umeh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

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**Responsible Director:** Richard Shwe, Director of Housing

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### SUMMARY

This report is an update on the safety compliance position of housing for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Housing performance across the six core areas of compliance (gas, electric, lifts, fire, water and asbestos) reports 100% for five of the six areas on 31 March 2025.

We report annually to the Social Housing Regulator as part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and publish the details on our website. Table 1 sets out our performance for the financial year, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The service continues to deliver our Residents and Buildings Safety Compliance Strategy to comply with health and safety legislation, support our strategic housing objectives and go above the minimum requirements to protect residents within our council housing.

The service has been independently audited by Mazars across the six core areas biannually, with asbestos, electrical and water safety management undertaken this year. Mazars reports satisfactory performance for electric and asbestos with substantial performance reported for water.

In response to the Building Safety Regulator's (BSR) request, we have submitted the relevant information for 26 of our 49 Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs): this is part of the formal certification process. We await the outcome of our submission.

The Council continues to invest £1.4 million per week to improve homes. This includes fire safety infrastructure and health and safety measures such as 6,000 new fire doors, sprinklers in more than 600 homes, five new wet risers in buildings over 50m and more than 6,000 fire detectors upgraded over the past year.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Feedback on the annual review of Housing Safety Compliance for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
2. Note the work strands of Housing Safety Compliance that has been delivered and continues to occur across Housing as set in this report.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the <a href="#">H&amp;F Corporate Plan</a> and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Good-quality homes for our residents that are safe provides a platform from which to thrive, learn and work in a key inner London Borough.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	We are passionate about providing safe homes and buildings and developing personal emergency evacuation plans and additional safety systems to enable equity.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	We work closely with the fire and building safety residents group which is chaired and made up of local residents.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	There is robust, competent contract management to ensure quality standards and value for money but always ensuring safety comes first.
Taking pride in H&F	Working to make our housing safe and of a good standard that makes our residents proud to live in their homes.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Working to deliver service utilising technology to maximise operational performance and minimise our carbon footprint. And that climate change work to our buildings are delivered competently and are safe.

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## 1. Compliance overview

1.1 The table below shows the key performance information for April to March, which demonstrates good, sustainable assurance across the six main compliance areas.

*Table 1 - 6 primary compliance performance plus CO - Trend Analysis*

		Apr 24	May 24	Jun 24	July 24	Aug 24	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25
Gas Safety Checks	Actual	99.87	99.93%	99.88 %	99.86 %	99.89 %	99.95 %	99.95 %	99.95%	99.99 %	99.99%	100%	100%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Fire Safety Checks	Actual	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99.7%	99.7%	99.7%	99.9%	99.9%	100%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Asbestos Safety Checks	Actual	100%	99.8%	100%	100%	99.9%	100%	100%	99.9%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Water Safety Checks	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Lift Safety Checks	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Electrical Safety Checks (5 year)	Actual	96.40%	97%	97.3%	97.6%	97.6%	97*%	97%	97%	97.3%	97.4%	97.4%	97.5%
	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CO Detectors in place	Actual	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	100%	100%	100%
	Target	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	New	100%	100%	100%

## 2. Notes on Performance

### 2.1 Gas Safety

2.1.1 Each year we inspect over 11,064 gas boilers to ensure they are safe, which includes testing the carbon monoxide detector located near the appliance. Gas Safety is currently at 100%. Our communal boilers are serviced and maintained routinely against recognised standards, and many are now monitored by automated cloud-based systems.

### 2.2 Electrical Safety

2.2.1 Every five years we will test the fixed wiring and the fuse box in tenants' homes, and ensure the fire detection is working, in all habitable rooms and has more than 5 years life expectancy left on the detectors. In addition, we will check the communal wiring in the building every 5 years.

2.2.2 Electrical Safety is not 100% as the previous standard was 10-year electrical certification. As part of our service improvement, we have moved our standard to 5 years in line with industry best practice and complying with the Social Housing Act 2023.

## **2.3 Legionella (Water)**

- 2.3.1 Officers have undertaken checks for legionella in communal tanks based on risk assessment and put in place controls as applicable. This measure is 100%.

## **2.4 Lifts**

- 2.4.1 We have 216 lifts that undertake circa 21 million movements per year. Each lift is independently inspected every six months. We have a dedicated inhouse team of lift engineers supporting our contractors who provide 24/7 cover. All our lifts are fitted with automated alerts providing real time monitoring of performance and faults.

## **2.5 Asbestos**

- 2.5.1 We remain at 100% compliance for re-inspections to non-domestic areas. The Asbestos Management Plan and Asbestos Policy have been fully reviewed and changes made to reflect current arrangements.

## **2.6 Fire**

- 2.6.1 There were 23 reported fires between April and March of this financial year. Sadly, there was one fatality this year following an accident in the property. All fires are investigated by our fire team to enable learning.
- 2.6.2 Assessing fire risks (FRA) in the communal areas of buildings is undertaken cyclically based on risk. The FRA looks at fire detection, means of escape, active and passive firefighting measures etc.
- 2.6.3 Any actions from this assessment are categorised, allocated, programmed, and tracked. We have 100% of up-to-date FRAs in place. As of end of March 2025, there were 910 fire risk actions generated from the routine assessment of our buildings. Teams continue to receive weekly reports with fortnightly meetings to review progress and resource requirements.
- 2.6.4 There are no overdue Priority 1 actions. There are 81 medium and 102 low risk actions that are outside target and are the focus of the relevant teams to complete. There is no risk to residents posed by these outstanding actions.
- 2.6.5 One fire this year (our third of this type) was from an e-bike being charged on a communal balcony. London Fire Brigade attended and extinguished the fire. Fires from Lithium-ion batteries (commonly used for e-bikes) are becoming increasingly frequent. There have been several fatalities (three in London in 2023). Battery failure can be triggered by overcharging, releasing a toxic and explosive gas. Batteries (which are made up of many cells) are difficult to extinguish and may reignite hours later. They need to be safely removed.
- 2.6.6 We have been working closely with the London Fire Brigade on a number of issues both locally and nationally. This has included our Making Every Contact Count training course, which is available to all Council staff and being shared widely by the London Fire Brigade. H&F and the London Fire Brigade work closely together on Person Centred Fire Risk Assessments, concierge training and communications on the risks of lithium batteries. As a result of

this, we have installed signage in our lifts and on lift lobby screens prohibiting persons from taking e-bikes/e-scooters in our lifts.

### **3. Keeping Residents Informed on Safety Compliance**

- 3.1 As part of our continued process to improve safety in our buildings we have been regularly communicating with residents in a variety of ways. Our Housing newsletter in November 2024 published health and safety updates to residents on performance with a front-page article. December's newsletter had a dedicated article with the London Fire Brigade's Borough Commander, where she highlighted concerns about Lithium-Ion batteries, which is part of our drive to continually raise awareness on this potentially fatal hazard. We will continue to communicate this key risk with residents on a regular basis, with an annual reminder in our housing newsletter.
- 3.2 Hammersmith and Fulham co-produced a fire safety booklet with tenants to inform residents about useful fire safety information, practical ways to prevent fires and how H&F will continue to support residents. This booklet was co-produced with H&F's Fire, Building Safety and Repairs Working Group and circulated to all tenants and leaseholders, as well as being available on the H&F website.
- 3.3 Safety posters about the big six (gas, electric, lifts, fire, water and asbestos) were distributed to all notice boards across housing estates raising awareness and providing performance information. We have also introduced signs in our buildings highlighting H&F's policy which bans the transport of e-bikes / e-scooters in our lifts. The number of fires from lithium-ion batteries continues to rise with three fatalities in London in 2023. H&F have had three battery fires in our housing stock in the last two years.
- 3.4 Following the Grenfell tragedy, Hammersmith and Fulham established a Fire Safety Plus Programme. This programme is about doing more than is required to keep our residents safe. We continue to routinely work with the residents safety group and recently shared a presentation at the housing representative forum on fire safety reminding residents to report any concerns. We also highlighted our free services to provide Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans to those who need them and to complete an electrical safety check of their tumble dryers, and fridges.

### **4 Building Safety Regulator Update**

- 4.1 In response to the Building Safety Regulator's (BSR) request, we have submitted the relevant information for 26 of our 49 Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs): this is part of the formal certification process.
- 4.2 We have started to receive feedback from the Building Safety Regulator, post submission of requested information for 26 higher risk buildings averaging at around 25 questions per block, many of these being similar in nature. Some more complex structural questions, for example regarding the chemical makeup of the concrete require testing, which we have commissioned, are more involved. We are ensuring that the right information is provided promptly and have also been going through reports yet to be submitted to ensure that these elements are covered.

4.3 We have not yet been issued our 3 months' notice on the remaining 23 buildings but expect to have this within the next 6 months. All documentation for the remaining buildings is prepared and ready to go.

4.4 We have yet to receive certification of any building and meeting with London Councils confirm that this is a similar position to other London Councils.

## **5 Safety Enhancement Works across the Housing Stock**

5.1 Housing continues to deliver on the administration's commitment to enhance safety for its residents. H&F is investing circa £1.4 million per week in its current housing stock which includes health and safety measures.

5.2 We have:

- (i) Upgraded over 6,000 front entrance fire doors sets to date and are programming another 2,800.
- (ii) Rolled out a programme of installing sprinklers in our higher risk buildings with 5 tower blocks completed (600 homes) and a further five blocks in progress (380 homes) with more to come.
- (iii) We have introduced evacuation alert systems to 9 blocks with another 5 planned. The alert system allows the London Fire Brigade to change the evacuation strategy from stay put to a phased evacuation in an emergency.
- (iv) We have installed five new wet risers (firefighting systems) in five tower blocks and renewed it in three other tower blocks.
- (v) In 2024/2025 we installed 1,300 new fuse boxes and upgraded over 6,000 fire detectors.

## **6 Audits in Housing Compliance**

6.1 The auditor, Mazars, has given satisfactory assurance to Members, the Chief Executive and other officers that the controls relied upon at the time of the asbestos and electrical audit were suitably designed, consistently applied and effective in their application. In addition, the audit of water safety management gave substantial assurance.

6.2 These three independent audits for the year provide additional assurance and transparency that department is delivering a high quality and safe service.

6.3 The Mechanical and Electrical team is third party accredited under the quality management system ISO9001, which is independently inspected. We will be rolling this out further across other safety areas including fire and asbestos.

6.4 The Fire Safety Works team is third party accredited under the Bluesky scheme for door installation, maintenance and inspection.

## **7 Temporary Accommodation Compliance**

- 7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households. H&F's Temporary Accommodation (TA) portfolio increased to 1,571 in March 2025 up approximately one third from April 2023.
- 7.2 The 450 private leased accommodation (PSL) properties are procured directly from private landlords and are managed by the in-house TA Team. As per terms of the PSL lease it is the responsibility of the landlord to maintain valid health and safety compliance certificates prior to the expiry of the current certificate. In an event that the private landlord does not act in a timely manner the TA service will commission the works and recharge the landlord.
- 7.3 The 550 private licenced accommodations (PLAs) have been procured from TA providers, such as managing agents and Housing Associations. As per terms of the licence agreement, health and safety compliance sits with the managing agents, however the Council has a duty of care in placing homeless households so collate and verify all health and safety certificates.
- 7.4 Health and Safety for hostels and Temporary on Licence properties are managed by the Council's contractors and certificates are uploaded on our Council system.
- 7.5 Health and safety compliance performance is satisfactory in temporary accommodation.

## **8 Housing and Health Safety Rating System Management in Housing**

- 8.1 Under the Housing and Health Safety Rating System (HHSRS) there are 29 types of hazard defined from falls to damp and mould. Where a hazard is identified it is categorised as either a Category 1 (urgent and must be resolved straightaway) or Category 2 (dependent on scale it defines works are needed but not in the immediate future).
- 8.2 H&F commissioned a stock condition survey of its properties, which first phase concluded in July 2024. Access to over 11,000 properties was gained. Where hazards were identified they were logged and if a Category 1 it was referred to the same day for resolution. Between June 2023 and July 2024 103 Category 1 hazards were identified and remedied.
- 8.3 As part of the stock condition survey, we monitored the condition of structural and freestanding walls and balconies. We have commissioned further surveys by a structural engineer with 110 completed to date. No urgent risks have been identified.
- 8.4 Housing has a dedicated damp and mould team supported by specialist surveyors responding to reported issues within the timescales set out under Awaab's law which comes into law from 1 September 2025. Our Damp and Mould Service has been in existence for the past 18 months and is ensuring we act accordingly to Awaab's Law.

## **9.Conclusion**

- 9.1 Housing Safety Compliance performance remains consistent and at a good level across the housing services portfolio. The volume of checks, validation and assurance remains high.
- 9.2 The Council continues to invest heavily in enhancing safety and is committed to embedding the recommendations and learning from the Grenfell Inquiry.