

PORTMAN MANSIONS MANAGEMENT LIMITED

FIRE SAFETY STRATEGY DOCUMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document describes the fire safety measures at Portman Mansions. The document forms a record of the arrangements for the effective planning, organization, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures that constitute the general fire precautions.
- 1.2 The measures described are designed to prevent the outbreak of fire, and to protect relevant persons (all residents, employees who work in the building, visitors, contractors, anyone else lawfully on the premises, and people in the immediate vicinity of the premises) from fire.
- 1.3 The document describes the fire precautions that are 'designed into' the building, and sets out the relevant responsibilities and management arrangements.
- 1.4 Copies of this document will be made available to all residents, and other interested parties on request. A master copy will be held at the Estate office. This document will be subject to periodic review.
- 1.5 In seeking to provide the safest possible environment, Portman Mansions have set the following specific objectives for fire safety:-
 - To minimise the risk to life from fire within the common areas.
 - To ensure, wherever possible, that all common escape routes are maintained unobstructed and available for use.
 - To maintain the fire escape route as the main stairwell in each block.
 - To maintain fire protection measures within the common areas, which are the responsibility of Portman Mansions, including emergency escape lighting, fire resisting doors, and facilities for the protection of fire-fighters.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Portman Mansions consists of nine semi-interlinked blocks of flats.

Each block has its own independent secure entrance at ground level and a single common access stairway.

Passenger lifts are installed in blocks 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5.

A Porters' reception and the Management Office are located at Flat 4W on Porter Street.

There are 120 residential flats plus Flat 4W and the Gym, which is located on the lower ground floor of Block 10. The flats are privately owned leasehold flats, some of which are sub-let to third parties.

3. FIRE SAFETY LEGISLATION

- 3.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Housing Act 2004 are both applicable to Portman Mansions.
- 3.2 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) applies to the common parts, and to places of work, such as offices, porter reception, plant and boiler rooms etc. The flats are 'Domestic Premises', and so are outside the scope of the FSO. The main duties under the FSO would fall on the Responsible Person, which is Portman Mansions Management Limited for those common areas for which it is responsible.
- 3.3 The Housing Act, which is enforced by the local authority, applies to both the common parts and the individual flats. This includes the internal layout, and means of giving warning in the event of a fire, within the flats. The main duty to comply with the Housing Act within the flats falls on the leaseholders of the individual flats. Portman Mansions Residents Company Limited, as the freeholder, remains responsible for the common areas which it controls.
- 3.4 Under the terms of the lease, the individual leaseholder of each flat is responsible for compliance with the Housing Act 2004, internally within their own flats. The individual leaseholders also own their own flat entrance doors, and are therefore also deemed to be the 'Responsible Person' under the FSO for the maintenance and upkeep of their flat entrance doors, and not Portman Mansions Management Limited.

4. FIRE PREVENTION

Portman Mansions Management Limited intends that all practicable steps be taken to prevent fire. Fire is not inevitable; it is normally the result of poor management practices or carelessness by residents, contractors or others. Everyone at Portman Mansions is therefore responsible for preventing fire. Any defects or occurrences that may affect fire safety should immediately be reported to the Estate Manager or Porters, who are directly employed by the Management Company.

The most common causes of fire are :-

- ***Careless disposal of smokers' materials,***
- ***Electrical faults,***
- ***Arson,***
- ***Careless disposal of combustible waste, refuse and materials within the common stairways.***

Particular attention must be given to avoidance of these hazards. Poor housekeeping also exacerbates the risk of fire. All residents should monitor housekeeping standards, with a view to avoiding situations that create fire hazards.

Smoking Policy

In accordance with legislation, smoking is not permitted anywhere within the common areas of each block. Adherence to this policy significantly reduces the likelihood of fire.

During building inspections, a check is made for any discarded smokers' materials internally and in external areas.

Electrical Safety

Many fires in buildings are caused by electrical faults. In order to avoid such faults, the fixed electrical installation in the common areas of each block is inspected and tested in accordance with BS 7671, at least every five years. This inspection and testing was last carried out in 2015.

All portable electrical appliances used in the common areas are inspected and tested in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for In-Service Inspecting and Testing of Electrical Equipment' published by the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

Leaseholders are responsible for the inspection and testing of their own fixed wiring installations. Guidance under BS 7671 advises that fixed wiring in domestic premises should be tested at least every 10 years.

Security against Arson

One of the most common causes of fire is arson. The potential for arson at Portman Mansions is limited by the secure door entry controls fitted to each entrance to the blocks, CCTV which is monitored, and regular security checks carried out by the Porters.

The secure access controls to each block allow access to residents, their guests and authorised contractors, and prevent unauthorised access by other persons.

Residents should report any suspected breach of security to the Porters.

Contractors

Only approved contractors are permitted to undertake work in the common areas.

All contractors are subject to 'Instructions and Rules for Contractors' issued by Portman Mansions Management Limited.

All contractors are required to report to reception before commencing any works and are subject to on-site management controls and checks.

The Management Company provides information on the fire precautions in the building, including fire procedures and arrangements for evacuation and arrangements for fighting fire, to all Contractors prior to the commencement of any works.

All licensed alterations and works within the flats are subject to the inspection and approval of an independent surveyor appointed by the Management Company.

5. FIRE PROTECTION MEASURES

Evacuation Strategy

Portman Mansions consist of purpose built blocks of flats, constructed in the late 1800s. We understand that the design principles embodied in local regulations applicable at the time of construction in London included compartmentation and fire separation between flats and the enclosure of stairs to form protected escape routes. The occupants of the flats other than those in which a fire occurs should therefore be able to remain in their flats in relative safety until directed otherwise by the fire and rescue service.

Accordingly, if there is a fire, there is no need to evacuate all the flats in a block. We have adopted a 'stay put' strategy.

We have installed a fire detection and alarm system throughout all of the blocks. The system raises an alarm at the Porters Lodge, which is staffed 24/7, to enable the Duty Porter to investigate and to make an early call to the fire and rescue service.

If there is a fire within your flat you should (1) alert others in the flat; (2) leave the building using the common escape route; and (3) raise the alarm using the '**break glass fire alarm**' call point, located by the main entrance doors. Raising the alarm will ensure the Duty Porter is aware of the fire and he can then call the fire and rescue service.

If there is a fire in the common areas, any occupants, staff or contractors in these areas should raise the alarm, leave the building, and call the fire and rescue service.

Staff rooms, boilers rooms, lift motor rooms and certain other areas have an audible and visual fire warning system. In these areas, if there is a fire or if the alarm goes off, then staff and contractors should leave the building, and report to the Estate Office.

Escape Routes

The design of the escape routes is typical of blocks of this age and style.

Each block has a main access stairway entered at ground level which serves all upper floors. The main stairways, which contain the passenger lifts, do not connect

directly with the basement levels. The main stairways are protected escape routes and are enclosed in fire resisting construction. Some flats are entered directly off the main stairway, and other flats are entered via a protected lobby/corridor, itself leading off the main stairway.

The stairways discharge directly to open air from the ground floor entrance lobbies. The locks fitted to the final exits can be opened without a key, facilitating rapid exit.

The main stairways are a protected route, and all doors opening on to the stairways, including flat entrance doors, must be FD30S doors, and be fitted with suitable self-closing devices. The stairways are also fitted with openable windows on the residential floor levels for smoke ventilation.

Emergency Escape Lighting

Emergency escape lighting ensures that the escape routes can be used safely if there is a fire, and the normal lighting circuits fail. The system has been specified in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5266-1¹ and the requirements of BS 5266-7² and BS 5266-8³, or equivalent.

Emergency lighting covers all escape routes including the stairways, corridors, plant and service rooms, and staff areas.

The emergency lights last three hours and are non-maintained and self-contained.

Fire Detection and Alarm System

There is a fire detection and alarm system in each block.

This Category L5 system complies with the recommendations of BS 5839-1. The system provides an audible and/or visual fire signal at the control panel located in the Porter's reception to alert the Duty Porter to a potential fire and allow him to provide an early call to the fire and rescue service and, when appropriate staffing levels permit, to investigate the cause of the alarm. The visual signal would also provide an early warning for staff and contractors working in remote areas, such as lift motor rooms and boiler rooms.

The system does not provide an evacuation signal for the individual flats or for the common areas of the flats, which is consistent with residential blocks of this type with a 'stay put' evacuation strategy.

The systems comprise:-

1 BS 5266-1: 2011. *Emergency lighting - Code of practice for emergency escape lighting of premises.*

2 BS 5266-7: 1999 (BS EN 1838: 1999). *Lighting applications – Emergency lighting.*

3 BS 5266-8: 2004 (BS EN 50172: 2004). *Emergency escape lighting systems.*

- A separate system for each block with a control and indicating panel in the lower ground floor of each block.
- The separate systems are linked by radio, back to a central panel located within the Porters Lodge.
- Heat detectors inside the entrance hall of all flats which open directly onto the main stairways.
- Smoke detectors fitted in the corridors, stairways and certain rooms opening on to the escape routes.
- Heat detectors in the boiler rooms and plant rooms off basement corridors.
- Manual 'break glass' alarm call points located adjacent to final exits and in certain plant and service room areas.

Although outside the scope of the Fire Safety Order, residents are strongly advised to fit smoke alarms in their own flats to provide an early warning of fire.

Fire Extinguishers

There are no fire extinguishers in the common parts, which is consistent with the general approach taken within blocks of flats of this type.

There are appropriate fire extinguishers in plant/service rooms, lift motor and boiler rooms and within service corridors.

Maintenance of Fire Protection Measures

The Management Company is responsible for testing and maintaining fire protection measures. The programme of testing and maintenance includes:-

- Regular inspections by the Duty Porter of all common areas, including escape routes and stairs.
- A monthly test of the emergency escape lighting together with an annual inspection and test by an approved contractor.
- A weekly test of the fire detection and alarm system together with periodic maintenance by an approved contractor.
- Annual maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment by an approved contractor.

In addition, the following preventative maintenance programme applies :-

- The gas fired boilers are subject to annual maintenance by an approved contractor.
- There is an annual inspection and test of the gas installations by specialist contractors.

- The fixed electrical wiring in the common areas is subject to a 5 year inspection and test by an approved contractor, in accordance with the IET Regulations.
- The passenger lifts are subject to regular and annual maintenance carried out by an approved contractor, as well as an annual engineering test conducted by a specialist engineer.

6. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Specialist fire consultants have assessed fire risk for each block.
- 6.2 The fire risk assessment will be reviewed whenever there is reason to consider that it is no longer valid, or if a fire occurs.

7. RECORDS

- 7.1 A copy of the Fire Risk Assessment report is held at the Estate Office.
- 7.2 Records of all testing, inspections and maintenance of the fire protection equipment and systems are maintained and are held on site.
- 7.3 The record of fire safety arrangements in the form of a fire strategy document is held on site and is subject to periodic review.

8. BASIC FIRE SAFETY ADVICE TO RESIDENTS

Protecting yourself and your Household.

The fundamental way to protect your home and family from fire is with a working smoke alarm.

A smoke alarm can provide an early warning of a fire and allow you to make your escape, but only if it is working. Statistics say you are more than twice as likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke alarm.

- Fit smoke alarms in your flat. If your home is not already provided with smoke alarms, fit one in your entrance hallway.
- Test your smoke alarms regularly.
- Never disconnect or take the batteries out of your smoke alarm.

- For even better protection, and particularly if you have to pass through your lounge to reach your front entrance door, fit a smoke alarm in your lounge and fit a heat alarm in your kitchen.
- Make sure your smoke and heat alarms meet British and European standards. If you fit more than one, link them together so that they all sound the alarm.
- Ideally, get an electrician to fit mains-powered devices, and buy models that have a standby power supply in case of mains failure.

You can prevent fire from happening by taking a few simple steps.

- Don't leave cooking unattended, and avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone with cooking on the hob.
- Be especially vigilant when cooking with oil. Don't overfill chip pans and **NEVER** throw water on a chip pan fire.
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly; use a proper ashtray and don't smoke in bed.
- Don't overload electrical sockets, and avoid the use of cube adaptors.
- Turn off appliances when not in use. Don't even leave them on standby.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach and sight of children.
- Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – such as curtains. Children should not be left alone with lit candles.

Keep safe and plan your escape.

- Your flat is in a building designed to be fire-resisting. A fire should not therefore spread from one flat to another, and you should be safe to stay in your own flat if there is a fire elsewhere in the block.
- That said, you should, if it is safe to do so, make your way out of the block if your flat subsequently becomes affected by smoke or heat, or if told to leave by the fire and rescue service.
- The building has a common fire detection and alarm system, the purpose of which is to raise the alarm at the Porter's reception to allow them to call the fire and rescue service. The system has not been designed to sound an alarm in your flat or within the staircases or corridors.

- Your stairway is designed to be safe for escape throughout the course of a fire. If you leave your flat you must ensure that your flat entrance door is closed to prevent a fire from affecting the staircase.
- Your flat entrance door has been fitted with a self-closing device to ensure the door remains closed at all times. You should never hold your entrance door open, or disconnect or otherwise disable the self-closing device to prevent it operating.
- Always use the main stairway to descend to ground level if it is safe to do so. **DO NOT use the lift.**
- If your flat has an access in to the service stairway, and you are unable to use the main stairway because it is affected by fire and smoke, you should be able to use the service stairway to exit the building. If you decide to use this route, make sure the door to your flat is closed, and make your way out of the building as quickly as possible.
- If you are in the stairway and you notice a fire, leave the building immediately and, if safe to do so, alert other residents in the immediate vicinity on your way out.

Do not leave belongings or rubbish in the main stairway or corridors.

- Non compliance could affect you and your neighbours if there was to be a fire.
- Subject to the refuse and recycling provisions, refuse should only be placed in the service stairway for collection by the Porters.

Do not put yourself at risk. Do not return to your flat until it is safe to do so, and remember :-

- Test your smoke alarm once a week.
- Keep the exit route from your flat clear so you can escape in an emergency.
- Close doors at night, especially the doors to the lounge and kitchen, to prevent fire spreading.
- Plan your escape NOW. Be prepared and don't wait until an emergency occurs.

If fire breaks out In your flat

- Leave the room where the fire is straight away, then close the door.
- Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave. ***Close the front door of your flat behind you.***
- DO NOT stay behind to put the fire out.

- Raise the alarm by breaking the fire alarm call point (this will alert the Duty Porter who will call the fire and rescue service). You can also call the fire and rescue yourself.
- Wait outside, away from the building.

If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building

- The building is designed to contain a fire in a flat or room where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.
- You should, if it is safe to do so, leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your flat, or if you are told to by the fire and rescue service.
- If you are in any doubt, GET OUT.

To call the fire and rescue service

- Dial 999 or 112.
- When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for 'FIRE'.
- When the fire and rescue service reply, give the address where the fire is; **do not end the call until the fire and rescue service has repeated the address.**