



Dear Sir/Madam

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – COMMON AREAS OF FIRE SAFETY CONCERN

We have produced this letter to provide residential care or nursing care premises with essential information regarding common fire safety concerns identified during audits carried out at similar premises.

Unfortunately, these sorts of concerns are very common. This letter includes information on action that can be taken to address these concerns in order to reduce the risk. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

What can you do to reduce the risks?

- Ensure that a Fire Risk Assessment is undertaken for the premises.
- Provide realistic practical training for all of your staff.
- Ensure that the largest fire compartment can be safely evacuated with the minimum number of staff, within the evacuation timescale.
- Provide realistic practical training using your chosen evacuation aids for all of your staff.
- Ensure that all evacuation routes are kept clear at all times.
- Ensure that the fire alarm system is functioning correctly and is regularly tested and maintained.
- Ensure that emergency lighting is functioning correctly and is regularly tested and maintained.
- Ensure that all fire doors are tested and maintained including any hold open or electronic locking devices, any damage identified should be rectified without delay.
- Ensure that the integrity of any compartmentation included in the design of your premises is checked and confirmed on a routine basis. Any damage identified should be rectified without delay.
- Provide advice to staff and residents to ensure that the manufacturer's instructions are followed if charging mobility scooters and that they are unplugged once they have finished charging. Avoid storing or charging mobility scooters on escape routes or in communal areas. More information can be found on our website - [Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service - E-Bikes and Scooters](#).

If you own or manage a commercial premises, such as a care home, then you must comply with fire legislation set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Part of this legislation requires the responsible person to carry out a fire risk assessment to identify the hazards and consider who may be at risk. You will then be able to decide whether the risks identified are acceptable or whether you need to take steps to reduce or control them. Staff should be made aware of the findings of the fire risk assessment.

All of the above areas must be addressed as part of your fire risk assessment including the associated hazards. Action must be taken to ensure that adequate control measures have been implemented to manage those risks and reduce the risk from fire.

If you chose to appoint a third-party Fire Risk Assessor to carry out the assessment on your behalf, then you must take steps to ensure that the Fire Risk Assessor is competent. You can view advice on choosing a competent Risk Assessor on the Fire Protection section of our website [Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service - Fire Risk Assessment](#).

If you need further advice, please consult the HM Government Guide to Fire Safety Risk Assessment in Residential Care Premises which provides more comprehensive guidance on how to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These publications can be obtained from the Fire Protection, Free Templates and Tools section of our website - [Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service - Free templates and tools](#).

If you have any queries or questions relating to the letter, then please contact our headquarters fire protection team on 01606 868700 or by email to fireadvice.shq@cheshirefire.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Steve McCormick
Head of Prevention & Protection