



**Barrhead Housing Association
Limited**

SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC 036265



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

Fire Safety in and around your home

Following on from the tragic fire at Grenfell Town in London, all housing associations in Scotland including Barrhead Housing Association received communications from the Scottish Government. They asked landlords to not just to look at high rise properties (of which we have none) but that we also identify any potential risks to the safety of tenants in and around or stock.

We issued all residents with a Fire Safety Leaflet in the summer which gives some really important and helpful information from the Fire and Rescue services about prevention. This leaflet is available for download on our website.

We have spent considerable time going round our areas and have now identified a number of potential risks that we need to tackle to ensure you and your neighbours are safe in your home.

The main areas of concern that we picked up on whilst out and about throughout our stock mainly related to the amount of personal items that are being left within a common area.

This includes display cabinets and personal items; vases with plastic flowers; rugs; plastic hanging baskets; prams and bikes; bags of rubbish; mobility scooters; and flammable materials that are being stored in close cupboards.

In some instances we also found that common area evacuation routes were being completely blocked.

We have discussed our findings with The Scottish Fire Service who have confirmed to us that any items placed in landings/entranceways not only has the potential to be set on fire but can essentially block your means of escape out of the building. They are therefore recommending that all personal belongings kept in a common area are removed.

We appreciate that people want to make and keep their surroundings nice and that this practice has been getting done for a number of years. However, I'm sure you will agree that the tragic events at Grenfell have made us all think about the hazards which surround us all on a daily basis.

Due to this mounting pressure from the Scottish Government and also based on advice from the Fire Service, the Association find itself in the position that we have no option but to implement a zero tolerance approach in dealing with a range of fire safety issues which include:

- **removing all personal items within a close;**
- **ensuring prams/bikes etc. are not kept on landings or at the entrance of the front/back close;**
- **residents will no longer have access to communal cupboards.**

In the coming months we will be contacting residents on an area by area basis to discuss exactly what this means for you and your particular area.

If we can, we will provide assistance to help you remove/dispose of your items and where possible we will look at alternative storage solutions.

We are sure you agree that whilst our action may seem drastic, we feel that this approach can only reduce the risk of a fire and ultimately save lives. For those residents who do not work with us, we will take direct and firm action against you. This may result in a direct breach of the conditions of your Tenancy Agreement which could lead to court action against you.

How you can help?

Meantime, here are some things you can do to minimise the risk of fire:

- Not leaving any waste on landings or in communal areas as it can be set on fire.
- Reporting any issues to the office in confidence on 0141 881 0638.
- Keeping communal areas clear of any obstacles, such as plants, bikes, prams and mobility scooters, so people can leave buildings safely in the event of a fire.
- Maintaining your smoke alarms and test them weekly – never remove them or cover them up.
- Not propping or wedging open doors in communal areas – closed doors will slow the spread of fire and smoke.
- Not leaving mopeds, motorcycles or other machinery that has a petrol tank in your flat or communal area.
- Not removing internal doors or their closers inside your home.
- Making a fire action plan so everyone in your home knows how to escape.
- Keeping exits from your home clear.
- Making sure everyone can easily find door and window keys.

- Taking extra care in the kitchen and never leave young children alone in there.
- Not overloading electrical sockets – one plug for one socket.
- Taking special care when you are tired or have been drinking.
- Not leaving the TV on standby – always turn it off and unplug.
- Not storing bikes in communal areas as they could seriously hamper evacuation.

If you feel you would like further information about this leaflet or advice about fire safety then feel free to arrange a Home Fire Safety Visit from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. As part of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's commitment to building a safer Scotland they offer everyone in Scotland a free home fire safety visit giving fire safety advice tailored to your home. They can also fit smoke alarms free of charge if your home requires them.

Get in touch with Fire Scotland, it's so easy to arrange:

- Call **0800 0731 999**
- Or for Barrhead Fire Station its **0141 876 0053**
- Text "FIRE" to **80800** from your mobile phone
- Complete their online form found at <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/>

The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire.



Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your stair? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common stair could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole stair. Items left in a common stair are often deliberately set on fire.

Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact the Association on 0141 881 0638

If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can

For free home fire safety advice
CALL 0800 0731 999
 or visit our website at
www.firescotland.gov.uk



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