

Fire safety in social housing

London Fire Brigade fire rescue exercise

Key information

Publication type: Current investigation

Publication status: Adopted

Publication date: Wednesday 3 June 2026

Contents

[Meeting aims and objectives \(Terms of Reference\)](#)

[Key issues](#)

[Key questions](#)

Meeting aims and objectives (Terms of Reference)

This one-off meeting will scrutinise fire safety in London's social housing, with a particular focus on how London Fire Brigade (LFB) and social housing providers are working in partnership to keep residents safe. The meeting will examine how effectively LFB is discharging its fire safety responsibility in relation to social housing in London and assess the scale of fire safety issues that Londoners in social housing are experiencing.

Key issues

- LFB is responsible for enforcing the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in common parts of residential buildings, including social housing. The Fire Safety Order states that the person or organisation in control of a premises is the 'responsible person' for fire safety, for social housing this would either be a Housing Association or local authority.
- With over 800,000 premises in scope, LFB has said that it operates a "risk-based inspection programme", when carrying out its enforcement actions including inspections, audits and Home Fire Safety Visits, focusing on higher-risk buildings and residents.

- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found in 2023 that LFB did not “adequately prioritise Home Fire Safety Visits on the basis of risk” and lacked a consistent system for assessing risk levels among those already identified as most at risk from fire. In its subsequent inspection in 2024, HMICFRS reported that LFB had made improvements to its Home Safety Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs).
- Fire risk assessments (FRAs) are a key part of the safety measures and are required in almost all social housing blocks. Data published in March 2026 found that FRAs had been undertaken on 99.5 per cent of relevant buildings. However concerns remain about the delays in completing remedial work identified by the assessments, with 11.4 per cent of all assessed buildings found to have an external wall system related life critical fire safety defect.
- Landlords in the social housing sector are facing “mounting fire safety pressures”, with outstanding remedial actions and data management issues. The Regulator of Social Housing has found several councils and Housing Associations in London to have thousands of overdue fire safety actions. Most recent examples include City of London Corporation which found over 1,000 overdue fire safety remedial actions,⁸ and London Borough of Islington which was found to have serious failings in how it is delivering the outcomes of the Safety and Quality Standard.

Key questions

- How effectively is LFB discharging its responsibilities in relation to fire safety audits and inspections in social housing?
- How well is LFB collaborating with relevant partners to identify and respond to fire safety failings in social housing?
- What are the main fire safety risks and defects arising in London's social housing?
- What are the key barriers facing Housing Associations and local authorities in addressing these and overcoming the backlog of remedial actions?
- How effective are current fire safety regulations for residents in London’s social housing?