



Housing High-Rise Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy

2024 to 2026

Version 1 September 2024

 Housing, Care and Wellbeing



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**



Brighton & Hove City Council is responsible for ensuring that we have a resident engagement strategy in line with the Building Safety Act 2022. The following strategy shows how we will engage with residents on matters of building safety for our high-rise buildings.

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This strategy should be read alongside our existing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy, which can be found on our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/tenant-and-leaseholder-engagement-strategy

Welcome

Welcome to the first Brighton & Hove City Council High Rise Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy. As a council we have new responsibilities under the Building Safety Act 2022, and we have produced this document to explain the extra ways we will be communicating and engaging with you on how we will improve the safety of your homes.

We want to make sure our residents feel safe and up to date on the work we will be doing over the coming years and are aware of how to report an issue. We want you to know what to do if an incident happens, be aware of your responsibilities in and around your home, plus tell us if we are not listening or getting things right. We will actively encourage more

residents to get involved in different ways, make information easy to understand and report back our actions in response to your feedback. Along with our regular performance reports, we will provide updates on the monitoring of this strategy.

We are committed to making the changes our residents want and need to your housing service. I'll look forward to meeting residents across the city, hearing your views on how we can do even more to keep our buildings and communities safe.

Councillor Gill Williams

Cabinet Member for Housing and New Homes

Introduction

Welcome to the first Brighton & Hove City Council, High-Rise Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy, developed in line with the Building Safety Act 2022. Our commitment to the health and safety of our residents and those who visit and work in your homes is our key priority. This strategy compliments the council's approach to put residents at the heart of all we do and engage with residents as outlined in the Brighton & Hove City Council Plan, which can be found on our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/brighton-hove-city-council-plan-2023-2027.

Following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, extensive reviews, recommendations, and legislation have emphasised the need for better communication and engagement about safety with our residents. We want to make sure that our residents are safe and feel safe where they live. The Building Safety Regulator launched a campaign for residents of high-rise buildings in February 2024, following this:

- High-rise building residents have more rights and protections than ever before.
- Residents can now check if their high-rise building is registered.
- The Building Safety Regulator is there to drive forward safety standards across the built environment. The Building Safety Act 2022 is at the centre of building safety reforms in England.

The new regulator is asking all those living in high-rise buildings in England to be aware of how new building safety laws affect them.

We want to be inclusive, listen to, and make it easy for residents to request information, raise concerns and escalate complaints in relation to building safety. This strategy is produced with residents in mind and explains our approach to ensure all residents are aware of our key building safety messages, know how they can raise building safety issues with us and be involved in decision making.

Purpose

The Building Safety Act 2022 introduced a new regulatory system for the management of building safety in 'higher risk buildings'. Higher risk buildings are defined as buildings which are at least 18 metres high, or 7 or more storeys and which contain at least 2 flats.

The most significant of the new requirements on landlords was the creation of the new accountable person role. The council have nominated the Head of Housing Investment & Asset Management - as the Principal Accountable Person, who has the following specific responsibilities:

- To implement a single Residents' Engagement Strategy for the whole building (to be agreed in cooperation with the other accountable persons and residents living in the building).
- To establish and operate a system for the investigation of residents' complaints.
- To be responsible for applying for registration and certification for the whole building, including bringing together a single safety case report.
- To be responsible for displaying information about the most recent building assessment certificate, compliance notices and details of those responsible for managing building safety for the building.
- Where a special measures order has been made, ensuring that no building assessment certificate relating to the building is displayed in the building.
- To take the lead responsibility for coordinating safety information for the building, keeping everything updated and ensuring it is accurate and accessible.
- Establish and operate a system for mandatory occurrence reporting.

For the first time, it is a statutory requirement for a Building Safety Act High-Rise Resident Engagement Strategy to be in place. The purpose of this strategy is to provide clear guidance on how we will engage, inform, and involve residents over the age of 16,



and anyone who owns a residential unit, in building safety decisions.

we will communicate and how residents can be involved in decisions about the safety of their homes.

This strategy outlines our aims and how we will ensure these are met, the ways in which

Our aims

The aims of this strategy are clearly set out under the Building Safety Act 2022. The table below gives details of what the strategy must achieve and how we will do this.

Under the Building Safety Act, this strategy must include information on the following:	How will we do this?
Residents feel safe in the buildings in which they live.	Page 8 – Roles & Responsibilities
Residents know how to easily report any problems about their home or any part of the building which may impact on their or their neighbour’s safety.	Page 12 – Building Safety Complaint Procedure
Residents know what to do in the event of an incident in the block where they live.	Page 9 – Information to be provided to residents
Residents have a clear understanding of our responsibilities as a landlord, and their responsibilities to ensure their homes remain safe.	Page 8 – Roles & Responsibilities
Residents are aware of the ways in which they can get involved and influence building safety and the services to high-rise buildings we give.	Page 10 - How we will communicate
Residents know what we are doing in response to their feedback.	Page 12 – Building Safety Complaint Procedure
Effectively communicate in a way that residents themselves find accessible and easy to understand.	Page 10 - How we will communicate
Residents know how to make a complaint if they feel their concerns are not being listened to.	Page 12 – Building Safety Complaint Procedure
Residents know how the effectiveness of the strategy will be monitored and measured.	Page 11 - Monitoring and Review

Roles and responsibilities

Housing

The Principle Accountable Person (appendix 3) has overall responsibility for ensuring building safety risks are being managed appropriately and that statutory obligations are met.

We are committed to making sure that you and your family are safe in our high-rise properties, to ensure this we will do the following:

- Fully comply with building and fire safety legislation.
- Keep all fire risk assessments for our high-rise blocks up to date and actions completed.
- Keep building safety policies and procedures up to date and review regularly.
- Monitor and report on compliance with fire, gas, electric, asbestos, water and lifts as set out in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM).
- Prioritise enquiries and complaints relating to building safety.

Residents

Everyone that lives in or visits your home has a part to play in keeping the building safe. This means meeting all the obligations set out in tenancy agreements and leases.

A resident is anyone over 16 years of age who lives in or owns a residential unit. They should help their accountable person to keep their building safe from building safety risks. These are the spread of fire or structural failure. This applies to those who are:

- leaseholders.
- social housing tenants
- private renters
- non-residential owners of a residential unit

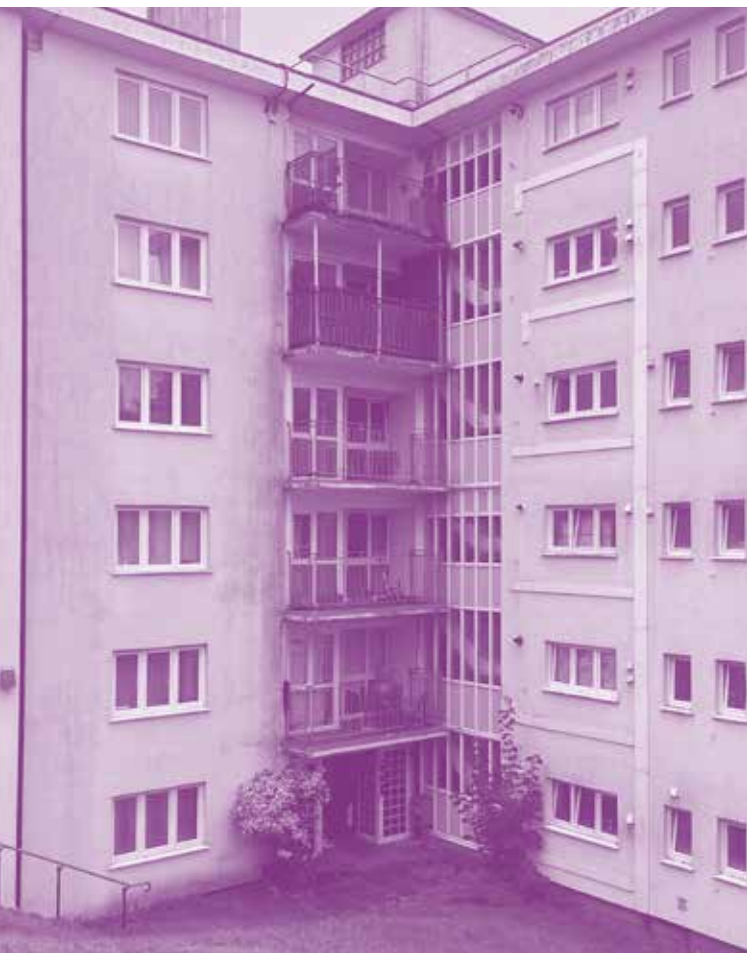
Your behaviours and actions can affect the safety of the building and you may be breaking the law if you do not behave in a responsible way. This means you must:

- Not act in a way that creates a safety risk of a building safety risk materialising.
- Not interfere with or damage a 'relevant safety item' (this is defined as anything forming common parts that is intended to improve building safety).
- Comply with an accountable person's request for information that is reasonably required to enable them to perform their duties.
- Comply with an accountable person's request to provide access where health and safety is concerned.

Refurbishment or building work in your home might be permitted within the terms of your lease or tenancy agreement.

If you wish to carry out any alterations or improvements in your home, you must seek permission from the council before you start any work. Please contact the Housing Customer Services Team if you need more information.

You should notify housing of any planned work in your residence before it begins.



Understanding our residents

We recognise that everyone accesses information in different ways, and that a 'one-size fits all' approach to engaging with you about important safety matters related to where you live will not work for everyone. We will make sure the information we provide on building safety matters is accessible in a range of ways.

For each high-rise building, we will use our existing housing management system, survey data, and other sources to help us understand whether there are any households or individuals who may be at a greater risk from fire, or who may require information to be provided in specific ways, such as large print, in another language or braille. Our records may not have always captured vulnerabilities and so we would ask you to bring to our attention any extra needs you may have.

We will also use this data to understand what additional barriers some residents face, and how to remove them, so that all residents feel and are safer. Any information will be collected in line with current General Data Protection Legislation (GDPR), a copy of our Housing Service Privacy Notice can be found on the council website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/about-website/service-privacy-notice/housing-service-privacy-notice.

Information to be provided to residents

To increase our residents' knowledge, understanding and recollection of fire safety measures in their homes, we will use a wide range of consultation methods. Residents will also be signposted to additional information available from the Housing Ombudsman and how we are meeting the requirements of the Fire Safety Act 2021.

We will provide you with information about what you should do in the event of an incident in your block. This information can be found on the fire action notices located on each floor of your building and in the entrance way.



We will also write to you once a year with information on what to do in the event of a fire, how you can get a home safety visit from East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and any new information from incidents that may have happened.

In respect of building safety, examples, of the information we may provide are:

- Changes in legislation that require the council to put in extra safety measures or change the way we are currently working.
- How the council are performing regarding building safety legislation.
- Any advice from the fire service for your block.
- Any changes to the way we manage building safety for your block such as the storage of e-scooters or e-bikes.
- Where there are new duties on residents requiring them to play a significant part in the safety of their building.
- Any changes we may make following an incident.

This information will be provided to residents with the aim of informing them about the safety of their building and how we comply with mandatory requirements.

This includes providing confirmation that the Principal Accountable Person has been given the power to ensure compliance with both the council's and residents' obligations. They, or their representative, may require access to residents' homes to fulfil their duties relating to building safety or to determine whether a residents' duty has been met.

How we will communicate

The following are some of the methods we will use to ask you for your opinions, provide feedback and communicate information on any changes from your feedback:

- Resident meetings.
- Letters and leaflets; these can be produced in different languages, large print and in, some cases braille, on request.
- Building safety information provided at sign up to all new tenants.
- Information on fire and building safety on our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/fire-safety-in-flats
- Area Panel meetings.
- Drop-in sessions held at your block, making use of the community room where possible.
- Individual one to one meetings.
- Surveys and door knocking.
- Publishing articles in the Homing In newsletter.

The council also has a new consultation and engagement platform called Your Voice. Your Voice offers better and fairer opportunities for residents to have their say, follow projects they are interested in and be informed about the different phases and decisions a project may go through. We will utilise this for future engagement.

Your Voice can be found at yourvoice.brighton-hove.gov.uk

This strategy also sits alongside our existing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy.

Decisions we will ask you about

From time to time, we will contact you to ask your views on decisions that will affect you about building and fire safety. We will include all residents and anyone who owns a residential unit. We will do this in a range of ways, as outlined in the previous section. A building safety decision is any decision made by an accountable person about the management of the building, the management of building safety risks or any other decision connected to the duties of an accountable person.

We will make it clear, why we are doing this, how the information will be reviewed, and how we will act on your opinions. We will be clear about how much time you have to submit your opinion. Any changes that are made as a result will then be fed back to you in a way that suits your needs.

It may not always be necessary for the council to contact all residents about all work undertaken. We will contact you if you are affected by any such works. For example, we may ask you about the following:

- How any disruptions could be kept to a minimum including what times of the day work could be carried out.
- Any major or planned work to the building you live in.
- When the strategy is issued and when any change to the document is proposed. The accountable person will ensure that all consultation is held open at a minimum for 3 weeks.

We recognise that some decisions will be a higher priority in terms of building safety and, therefore, the time scale for residents to provide their opinions may vary. We will provide residents with a time scale in which you should provide your views, when writing to you about the specific decision

It may not always be practical to consult residents on all matters, for example, where there is an emergency situation which requires an immediate response, emergency repairs or where other statutory authorities (such as East Sussex Fire and Rescue) make recommendations.

In these circumstances, we will always tell you about the action taken. As a minimum we will write to you once a year to update you on information relating to your block. We will also write to you separately about any changes we make to improve the safety of the building.

Any information will be collected in line with current General Data Protection Legislation (GDPR). A copy of our Housing Service Privacy Notice can be found on the council website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/about-website/service-privacy-notice/housing-service-privacy-notice.

Equality

We will always engage with you in line with the duties and obligations placed upon us by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Monitoring and review

It is important to make sure this strategy does what we want it to in terms of purpose and aims. The best way to do this is to regularly monitor and review what we are doing.

We will do this in the following ways:

- Recording how many responses we get when we ask about a building safety decision.
- Reviewing and considering any opinions we receive from residents and owners of residential units about our strategy.
- Regularly assessing the ways in which we encourage involvement from residents in building safety decisions.
- Checking who is engaging and seeing whether any specific groups are under-represented in the responses, for example in different age groups or ethnicity.

We will review this strategy:

- at least every 2 years
- after every consultation of the strategy
- after a mandatory occurrence report
- after the completion of significant material alterations to a building

We will keep a written record of each review including whether or not we make any changes to this strategy. Residents and owners of residential units can make a complaint about the strategy to us. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you can escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator.

We will review this strategy as new legislation is developed and further requirements emerge.

How to report a building safety issue

The health and safety of our residents remains an absolute priority for the council. We are committed to working with you as part of our ongoing response to fire and building safety.

If you notice any structural issues such as cracks in the walls, ceilings or foundations, or defects to safety equipment such as doors, fire equipment or signage please let us know so that we can respond to the issue. Urgent concerns posing risks to health and safety will be promptly addressed, ensuring swift investigation, response, and any necessary actions which may include making a 'Mandatory Occurrence Report'.

If you have a concern about a building safety issue, you can raise this by contacting our Repairs Helpdesk:

- Email repairs.helpdesk@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- Call **01273 294 409**

Building Safety Complaints Procedure

As part of the Building Safety Act 2022, the Principal Accountable Person of a high-rise residential building must establish and operate a complaints system for residents and other users of the building, who want to raise an issue about:

- A building safety risk to a specific building;
- or
- The performance of an accountable person.

We are committed to making sure priority is given to any customer contact or complaints which may have an impact upon building safety and acting quickly regarding any safety concerns. We will make sure that, when this procedure is completed, we publish information about how to raise a safety complaint on our website and in other communication and we will make it as easy as possible for you to do so.

Complaints about building safety will be monitored and reported to the appropriate board within housing to make sure we are looking at all aspects of the complaint and any trends that occur.

We have a 2-stage corporate complaint process, You can find full details on our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/complaints.

If you have been through the complaints process and remain unsatisfied, you can escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator. You can find details at www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-building-safety-regulator

You can also make a complaint directly to the Building Safety Regulator without raising the issue with the council first.

Appendix 1 - Information sources and references

Preparing a resident engagement strategy - www.gov.uk/guidance/preparing-a-resident-engagement-strategy

Equality Act 2010 - www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

Residents and owners of residential units: actions to keep your building safe - www.gov.uk/guidance/residents-and-owners-of-residential-units-actions-to-keep-your-building-safe

Building Safety Act 2022 - www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/section/91/enacted

Operating a complaints system for building safety in a high-rise residential building - www.gov.uk/guidance/operating-a-complaints-system-for-building-safety-in-a-high-rise-residential-building

Safety in high-rise residential buildings: accountable persons - www.gov.uk/guidance/safety-in-high-rise-residential-buildings-accountable-persons

Brighton & Hove City Council plan 2023 to 2027 - www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/brighton-hove-city-council-plan-2023-2027



Appendix 2 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Accountable person (AP)	<p>An accountable person is an organisation or individual who owns or has a legal obligation to repair any common parts of the building.</p> <p>The AP will have a duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent a building safety risk happening, with building safety risk defined as 'spread of fire and/or structural failure.'</p>
Principal accountable person (PAP)	<p>Each of these buildings must have a principal accountable person (PAP) who owns or is legally responsible for the repair of the exterior and structure of the building.</p> <p>This person has overall responsibility for ensuring building safety risks are being managed appropriately and statutory obligations are met.</p>
The Building Safety Act 2022	<p>The Building Safety Act gained Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 and makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections.</p> <p>The act overhauls existing regulations, creating lasting change and makes clear how residential buildings should be constructed, maintained, and made safe.</p>
High-Rise or Risk / HRRB (higher risk residential building)	<p>The Building Safety Act and this strategy applies to buildings with at least two homes that are at least 18 metres in height or have at least seven storeys. These are sometimes referred to as higher risk high-rise residential buildings or higher risk residential buildings (HRRBs)</p>
FRA (fire risk assessment)	<p>Building owners and landlords, are required by law to carry out regular fire risk assessments on residential buildings. These routine checks look for issues that affect the safety of the building and everyone who lives in, works in or visits. If any actions are needed, these are listed and prioritised and the building owner must carry them out.</p>
Homing In	<p>A Brighton & Hove City Council housing newsletter, with news and developments for our council tenants and leaseholders, published four times a year.</p>
The Building Safety Regulator (BSR)	<p>An independent body established by the Building Safety Act, 2022, and is part of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).</p> <p>The BSR will raise building safety and performance standards and oversee a new stringent regime for high-rise residential buildings, as well as overseeing the wider system for regulating safety and performance of all buildings. Increasing the competence of relevant regulators and industry professionals.</p>
Mandatory Occurrence Report	<p>A safety occurrence is something, if not remedied, could cause serious harm to people when the building is in use.</p> <p>It will only be a safety occurrence if it has caused or is likely to cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the death of a significant number of people • serious injury to a significant number of people <p>And relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structural failure of the building • the spread of fire or smoke in the building <p>The only buildings this applies to are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven storeys or at least 18 metres high and • Two residential units or is a hospital or a care home.

Appendix 3 – Roles & Responsibilities



