

Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy for High-Rise Buildings	
Approved by Director	Issue number 1
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Previous Version N/A	Responsible Officer Head of Asset Management and Sustainability

1.	Aims and Objectives
	<p>The Building Safety Act 2022 introduced a new regulatory regime for the management of building safety in high rise buildings, which includes a requirement for landlords to implement a single residents' engagement strategy for the high-rise buildings.</p> <p>This strategy outlines Hightown's approach to resident engagement in building safety in high-rise residential, with the aim of ensuring Hightown's high rise buildings continue to be safe and secure.</p> <p>This strategy aims to empower residents to play an effective role in building safety, sets out what information is provided to residents and what decisions they will be consulted on, sets out how residents' views will be taken into account and how the effectiveness of the consultation will be measured.</p> <p>Hightown encourages and welcomes resident participation. Hightown engages with residents in line with our corporate plan, which includes the delivery of the Tenant's Charter, which focuses on the following key commitments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote resident engagement in building safety matters. • Ensure residents are aware of building safety information. • Explain how residents' feedback and views will be considered, following engagement. • Explain when this strategy will be reviewed. • Ensure residents understand their responsibilities in making sure their homes remain safe. • Inform residents of how to become involved in building safety matters and how to raise a building safety concern, or a complaint if they feel their concerns are not being listened to.

	By achieving these key objectives, residents should be empowered to play an effective role in ensuring their building is and continues to be safe.
2.	<p>Definitions and Scope</p> <p>A high-rise building is defined as a building over 18 meters in height or with seven or more stories, containing at least two residential properties. Hightown currently has three high-rise buildings which fall within the scope of this strategy; Kestrel Court in Hemel Hempstead, Hosking Court in Hemel Hempstead, and Maylands View in Hemel Hempstead.</p> <p>The Building Safety Act 2022 requires landlords to have an "Accountable Person" role, with the following specific responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement a Resident Engagement Strategy for the whole building • To establish and operate a system for the investigation for residents' complaints • To be responsible for applying for Registration and Certification of each building, including the Building Safety Case report • Be responsible for displaying information about the most recent building assessment certificate <p>This strategy focuses on resident safety through engagement to involve and empower residents in keeping their homes and buildings safe. The strategy was produced in advance of the pending resident survey, to gauge opinion and feedback</p> <p>This strategy explains Hightown's approach to high-rise building safety and how residents involved with discussions on building safety matters and are engaged to play an active role in keeping their homes and buildings safe and secure.</p>
3.	<p>Hightown's approach to resident safety</p> <p>Hightown will adopt a three-stage strategic approach as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and communicate: Communicate with our residents in high-rise buildings in ways that meets their needs. Keeping residents up to date and well informed, ensuring residents' voices are heard and acted upon. • Involve: Involve and empower residents to play a key role in helping keep their homes and building safe. As part of this we will make sure that residents are aware of their responsibilities. • Evaluate: Continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement opportunities and participation so that we can continue to maintain and strengthen our relationship with residents. <p>Hightown is committed to providing the highest levels of safety in its buildings, working in partnership with its residents to ensure they have up to date information to ensure their safety.</p> <p>Hightown is committed to continuing to ensuring residents' homes and buildings are safe, also improving the look and feel of internal and communal areas through our major works programme of improvements and replacements. Creating bright and modern spaces to welcome visitors, both in communal areas, all the way to residents' front doors.</p>

Hightown has adopted a co-ordinated approach through Housing and Asset Management in managing this, ensuring there is consistency across the Association through clear accountabilities and responsibilities.

Hightown will:

- Comply with building safety and fire safety legislation
- Seek to meet obligations in advance of statutory requirements where possible, always promoting a culture of safety.
- Produce Building Safety Cases and Resident Engagement Plans for all high-risk buildings, as well as Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for residents who may not be able to evacuate safely without assistance.
- Keep fire risk assessments blocks up to date and publicly available including, intrusive surveys as required.
- Continue to maintain 100% gas safety certification.
- Regularly review building safety policies and procedures.
- Monitor and report on compliance with fire, gas, water, electric, asbestos and lifts, with periodic internal audit.
- Prioritise customer complaints which may have a building safety implication via a separate complaints procedure in relation to high-rise builds.

Hightown will use a range of appropriate and tailored communication methods and tools, adapted to meet our residents' needs, to share key messages with them. Our communication tools include:

- Direct mail, text message and email.
- Personal contact for vulnerable people, where written material may not be appropriate.
- The Hightown website
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter).
- The residents' newsletters, Community Chronicles and Bricks and Mortar, and other site-specific newsletters.
- Property Services Team and Housing Team scheme and home visits.
- Noticeboards and digital screens in high-rise buildings.
- An annual building safety newsletter.
- High-rise Living events for updates on works to the building.

In addition, Hightown will adopt a range of mechanisms, through which residents will be able to provide feedback including:

- Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) surveys
- Transactional satisfaction surveys
- Compliments, Complaints and Feedback scheme
- Inviting residents living in high-rise blocks to join quarterly inspections

In line with the above Hightown will continue to consult with residents to better understand their communication requirements and preferences, including what information they want to receive, in what way and how often. This information will be used to tailor our approach to future communication with our residents, by carrying out the following;

Asset Management/Tenant Services

- Using feedback mechanisms including correspondence, complaints and satisfaction surveys to listen to the views of the residents, making sure that we act and improve our services accordingly.
- Providing easy to understand, transparent and accessible information.
- Building on our insight to better understand individual support needs and to deliver involvement opportunities that are open and accessible for everyone.
- Continuing to work closely with residents' groups and Tenant and Residents Associations to provide inclusive opportunities for residents to make a difference in their community, acting as ambassadors for high-rise builds.
- Sharing important updates and information as appropriate with residents clearly and transparently, using the insight information gathered that includes any specific needs. This information will include:
 - The safety of the building.
 - Relevant maintenance and improvement updates.
 - Fire prevention – What to do in the event of a fire and how to report it.
 - Keeping communal areas clear and safe.
 - Making sure that when undertaking major works in high-rise buildings, that all relevant health and safety aspects are continued to be given the highest priority and that residents are aware of any safety issues that relate to the work concerned.
- Publicising and promoting everyone's roles and responsibilities in maintaining the safety of our buildings, including staff, partners and residents and contractors.
- Publicising and promoting upcoming scheduled inspections of high-rise buildings
- Promoting and recruiting Block Champions across all high-rise buildings.

Asset Management

- Carrying out quarterly visits to high rise builds focusing on building safety.
- Carrying out annual Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs).
- Undertaking quarterly inspections of communal fire doors.
- Engaging an external specialist to complete annual FRAs.
- Engaging an external specialist to complete annual flat front door inspections.
- Promoting and enforcing, where necessary, compliance with safety measures in communal areas.
- Keeping Councillors and Members of Parliament informed of relevant matters concerning high-rise buildings within their wards / constituencies, responding to enquiries promptly and in detail.
- Updating Secure Information Boxes (SIB) on a quarterly basis, or as required.

Tenant Services

- Providing residents with safety information at tenancy sign up. Establishing if a PEEP is required.
- Actively communicating with our residents on an annual basis to establish any changes in resident needs, that may affect/impact their ability to evacuate their building. Passing this information onto the relevant staff Housing Officer to update PEEPS and PSI to update the SIB.

	<p>Hightowns High-Rise Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy will be reviewed biennially, or earlier should relevant legislation be published.</p> <p>To ensure continued face to face residential engagement, Hightown will include high rise building as a focus of the existing Residents Voice and Scrutiny Panel, which meets on a quarterly basis, in order to discuss concerns and Hightown actions.</p> <p>Hightown will form a steering group on high rise buildings who will meeting quarterly, consisting the Director of Housing, Head of Housing, Head of Home Ownership and Commercial, Building Safety Lead Manager and Head of Asset Management and Sustainability. Other staff will be invited where applicable to ensure continued promotion of resident safety in high-rise buildings</p> <p>Resident Responsibilities</p> <p>The Building Safety Act has introduced duties on residents requiring them to play a part in the safety of their building.</p> <p>These obligations apply to any resident of a residential unit in an occupied higher-risk building who is aged 16 or over, and any owner of a residential unit in such a building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents must not act in a way that creates a significant risk of a building safety risk materialising • Must not interfere with a relevant safety item • Must complaint with a request, made by the appropriate accountable person, for information that is reasonable required for them to perform their duties under the Act <p>We will inform residents of both their and Hightown's obligations under the legislation.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Complaints</p>
	<p>At Hightown we strive to ensure the comfort, safety, and satisfaction of all our residents. We understand that from time to time, issues may arise that require attention or resolution. This complaints policy outlines the procedure for residents to register and resolve their concerns effectively and efficiently. Hightown has defined a dedicated Complaints Policy for High-Rise Builds.</p> <p>This policy applies to all residents in Hightown high-rise builds (7 stories or at least 18 meters high) and covers complaints related to any aspect of living within the high-rise building, including but not limited to maintenance, safety, facilities, noise disturbances, unneighborly disputes, or any other relevant matter.</p> <p>Definitions of 'high-rise' related complaints are as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and Repairs: Issues related to the upkeep and repair of common areas, facilities, and individual units. • Safety and Security: Concerns regarding building security, emergency procedures, and safety hazards. • Facilities and Amenities: Problems with the functionality, cleanliness, or availability of building amenities such as gyms, pools, and communal spaces. • Noise Disturbances: Complaints about excessive noise from neighbors, construction activities, or building equipment. • Neighborly Disputes: Conflicts between residents regarding behavior, property boundaries, or shared resources.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Management Services: Grievances regarding the responsiveness, professionalism, or effectiveness of the building management team, or Property Services Team <p>Hightowns approach to handling complaints on High-Rise Builds is set out on Hightown's website https://www.hightown.org.uk/contact-us/compliments-complaints-and-feedback This can also be provided on request.</p>
5.	Legal/Regulatory Background
	<p>This strategy seeks to build on current practices and culture, to meet the changing demands on public sector housing, in response to new regulation and legislation following the Grenfell tragedy, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Safety Act (2022) • Fire Safety Act (2021) • Regulatory Reform Order (2005) • Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (August 2023 update) • PAS 9880:2022 • Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 • The Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards 2024
6.	<p>Other considerations: Resident Involvement Equality Impact (see Equality Impact Assessment Procedure) Financial Implications Environmental/Sustainability impact Risk Primary Authority Partner Health and Safety Consultant</p>
7.	<p>Policy/document References: PEEPs Strategy Allocations and Lettings Policy Complaints Policy Dealing with Correspondence and Complaints Procedure Compensation Policy Responding to MP and Councilor Enquiries Procedure Complaints Policy for High Rise Builds</p>