

Person-centred fire risk assessment

A building fire risk assessment required by the Fire Safety Order is **NOT** a person-centred fire risk assessment, but, in sheltered and extra care housing, consideration needs to be given to, at least, generic resident characteristics.

It should be confirmed that, where necessary, there are arrangements for person-centred fire risk assessments by others. In supported housing with a simultaneous evacuation strategy, characteristics of residents need to be taken into account to ensure that, if residents cannot evacuate themselves, sufficient assistance to evacuate is available without the need for intervention by the fire and rescue service.

The person-centred approach, based on a person-centred fire risk assessment, relates to the safety of residents who are at high risk from fire in their own accommodation; as such, this risk assessment and measures identified by it are outside the scope of the Fire Safety Order, but are strongly recommended as good practice.

This approach is appropriate for high risk residents in sheltered and extra care housing. In supported housing, where the number of residents in each property is usually small, a person-centred fire risk assessment can easily be carried out for every resident.

A person-centred fire risk assessment should consider the propensity of the resident to contribute to the likelihood of fire or fire development, the mental capacity of the resident to recognise and respond appropriately to fire alarm signals or signs of fire, and the ability of the resident to escape in the event of fire.

The outcome of the person-centred fire risk assessment should comprise a person-centred approach for the most vulnerable residents, for whom the minimum measures recommended in the “Fire Safety in Specialised Housing” Guide might not be appropriate. Additional measures may comprise measures to prevent fire, measures to protect residents if fire occurs (i.e. portable misting systems) and enhanced engagement with residents, with input from the fire and rescue service. In the case of the most serious risk, there should be referral of the resident to Adult Social Care.

The appropriate person to carry out a person-centred fire risk assessment will depend on the circumstances of the housing and support provision. It may be carried out by sheltered housing scheme managers, care providers or any other party who regularly engages with the resident



Checklist for Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessment

Name of resident			
Full address			
Date	DD / MM / YYYY	Form completed by	

1. Does the individual have an increased fire risk?

- Yes** If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No** Skip to next question
- Smoking – with signs of unsafe use of smoking/vaping materials (e.g. smoking in bed).
 - Use of emollient creams that are petroleum or paraffin based.
 - Air pressure mattress or oxygen cylinders are used.
 - Unsafe use of portable heaters (e.g. placed too close to materials that could catch fire).
 - Unsafe cooking practices (e.g. cooking left unattended).
 - Overloaded electrical sockets/adaptors or extension leads.
 - Faulty or damaged wiring.
 - Electric blankets used.
 - Previous fires or near misses, burns or scorch marks on carpets and furniture.
 - Unsafe candle/tea light use (e.g. left too close to curtains or other items that could catch fire or within easy reach of children or pets).
 - Other (please specify): _____

2. Would the individual be less able to react to an alarm or fire?

- Yes** If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No** Skip to next question
- Mental health issues (e.g. dementia, anxiety or depression).
 - Cognitive or decision making difficulties.
 - Alcohol dependency or misuse of drugs.
 - Sensory impairments (e.g. hard of hearing or sight loss).
 - Other (please specify): _____

3. Does the individual have a reduced ability to escape?

- Yes** If yes, tick all the fire risk factors they exhibit
- No** Skip to next question
- Have restricted mobility, are frail or have a history of falls.
 - Are blind or have impaired vision.
 - Lacks capacity to understand what to do in the event of a fire.
 - Is a hoarder, or there are cluttered or blocked escape routes.
 - Are bed or chair-bound.
 - Internal doors are left open at night.
 - Would be unable to unlock front door to escape.
 - Other (please specify): _____

4. Are there any smoke or heat alarms fitted within the individual's home?

Yes If yes, please specify which rooms have them fitted:

No

5. Has a carbon monoxide alarm been fitted anywhere that gas or solid fuels are used?

Yes If yes, please specify which rooms have them fitted:

No

What to do next

If there are any questions in sections 1–3 that have been answered 'Yes', or you have identified that there are no smoke or heat alarms fitted, or they are broken or poorly sited, this suggests there is a risk from fire. Immediate actions are required to ensure agreed safety measures are in place:

If you are a family member or an informal carer contact Cornwall Fire, Rescue and Community Safety Service to arrange for a free home fire safety check visit:

Tel: 0800 3581 999

Email: fire@cornwall.gov.uk

Web: www.cornwall.gov.uk/hfsc

In addition, extra support and advice can be sought from Adult Social Care teams and your housing provider or landlord where serious risk has been identified.

If you are employed by a company or organisation: Return this checklist to your manager for a full Person-Centred Risk Assessment to be conducted where necessary.

- Inform the resident or other family members of the risks identified, if you are certain they will understand.
- If a care plan exists, all actions taken should be noted in that plan.
- Ensure appropriate partnership referrals are made as required.

Fire safety in the home

What happens during a home fire safety visit? Firefighters or trained staff will visit the home and offer advice based on individual needs, this includes information on how to **prevent** fires, the importance of smoke alarms to **detect** a fire and having **escape** plans in the event of a fire. They will also fit smoke alarms if required.

A 'Fire Safety in the Home' booklet is available from Cornwall Fire, Rescue and Community Safety Service and can be downloaded from our website. Some basic fire safety advice has also been provided below.

Prevention

- It is safer not to smoke; but anyone who does should try to smoke outside and always make sure cigarettes are put out properly.
- Never smoke in bed, or anywhere else, if there's a chance of falling asleep.
- Use fire-safe ashtrays and fire-retardant bedding, nightwear and throws.
- Ensure paraffin based emollient creams are replaced with non-flammable alternatives.
- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat-resistant holders. Keep these items or any other type of naked flame well away from curtains, furniture and clothes.
- Sit at least one metre away from heaters and keep them well away from anything that can catch alight.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Close all doors at night as this helps to prevent fire and smoke spreading.
- Switch off and unplug electrical items such as TVs and avoid charging devices like mobile phones whilst asleep.

Early warning and detection of a fire is essential

- As a minimum, fit at least one smoke alarm on every level of the home and in any room where a fire could start. The ideal position for these are usually in rooms that are used the most, in hallways and anywhere electrical equipment is left switched on.
- Fitting multiple linked smoke alarms, that all activate together, is the best way to be alerted in the event of a fire. For some, the provision of a Telecare monitoring system may also be beneficial. Specialist alarms can be fitted for people who may have a delayed response to escape – for example; strobe light and vibrating pad alarms for the deaf or hard of hearing. Remember to test all alarms monthly.

Escape

- Make sure escape routes are kept clear of anything that may slow down or block exit routes.
- Ensure security gates can be easily opened from the inside without the need for a key. Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.
- Mobility aids and any methods of calling for help should always be kept close to hand (e.g. mobile phone, link alarm/pendant).