



## Flat fire door inspection Frequently asked questions

### What's our legal duty?

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 makes it a legal duty for landlords to ensure that fire doors and escape doors are correctly installed and adequately maintained to ensure they're fit for purpose.

### What is a fire door inspection?

A fire door inspection simply means that we check all fire doors to ensure they are safe, compliant, and effective in protecting you and the building against smoke and flames in the event of a fire.

Any slight alteration to the door or its surroundings can affect its performance and therefore safety. The inspections are carried out by a competent person / qualified engineer to identify any defects to the fire door that need to be repaired or replaced.

### Why are you inspecting my flat entrance door?

Flat entrance doors in a building are required to be fire safety doors and are intended to:

- stop a fire inside a flat spreading to the communal parts which would prevent residents from escaping via the corridor or staircase to a place of safety
- contain a fire in the communal area of a block of flats which may spread into a flat, where residents may be sheltering until the fire service arrives. As most of our buildings operate a "stay put policy" it's especially important that all flat entrance doors are able to prevent a fire spreading throughout the building.

### What does the flat entrance door inspection involve?

The inspector will check a range of things, including whether each door:

- Has the correct fire rating for its location
- Is fitted properly, without the type of gaps that can damage the building's compartmentation (*Compartmentation means the building's ability to contain flames, smoke or toxic gases at the area of the start of a fire. Compartmentation allows time for the fire brigade to arrive and for the safe evacuation of a building.*)
- Is not damaged in a way that would impair its performance in the event of a fire
- Has the right hardware and closers, and that they function correctly
- Has the right intumescent strips (*An intumescent strip is chemically designed to expand when exposed to extreme heat. Strips are usually placed around door frames. Once a fire breaks out in a room, the heat causes the strip to expand and seal the gap around the frame to contain the fire.*)

The inspection will take up to 20 minutes to complete. The inspector will need to access both sides of the door.

The inspector will also be fitting an asset tag to the outside of the flat entrance door.

On completion of inspection, the inspector will provide us with a detailed report describing each door's condition and highlighting any defects and the necessary work required to be compliant.

### **What's an asset tag?**

An asset tag is a small white disc with a bar code which will be fitted to the outside of the flat entrance door. The asset tag will enable us to record and access maintenance and inspection information about the door to ensure it remains compliant. This will be fitted to all flat entrance doors at no cost.

### **I'm a Leaseholder / Shared Owner, will you be inspecting my flat entrance door?**

Yes, our inspectors will be checking all flat entrance doors. The Housing Act 2004 requires leaseholders to reduce the risk from fire within the home (particularly relevant where a property is sub-let).

### **Who's paying for the flat door inspection?**

We'll be paying for the flat door inspection.

### **I'm Leaseholder / Shared Owner, if my flat entrance door is defective will I be provided with a copy of the inspection?**

Yes, we will provide Leaseholders with the outcome of the inspection.

### **I'm a Leaseholder, if my flat entrance door is defective will I have to pay for the work or a replacement flat entrance door?**

If we're carrying out work to flat entrance doors or need to replace the doors, we may need to carry out a Section 20 consultation depending on the total cost of repair or door replacement for your building.

A Section 20 notice (S20) is a notice to tell you that we intend to carry out work or provide a service that leaseholders will have to pay some money towards. We must serve a S20 to any leaseholder who will be affected by the work or receive the service.

### **I'm a Shared Owner, if my flat entrance door is defective will I have to pay for the work or a replacement flat entrance door?**

Shared Owners may be responsible for repairs/replacement of their front door subject to the terms of their lease.

## **My property still has the original door from when it was built, or I inherited it from the previous owner**

The legal requirements and fire safety standards have changed over time, this means that a door installed when the building was constructed may no longer meet the necessary fire safety standards. It may be necessary therefore to upgrade some elements or replace your door entirely to ensure the flat entrance door meets current safety standards.

Some doors may be considered acceptable if they are solid timber of at least 44mm thickness with a suitable self-closing device.

PVC doors are not considered to offer adequate fire protection and will generally require replacement.

## **Who's carrying out the Inspection?**

We have appointed Harmony Fire who are industry professionals, to carry out the flat door inspections.

## **When will you be carrying out the door inspection?**

The fire door inspections will commence in January 2021.

Harmony's Resident Liaison Office, Maddi Pitman, will be sending each customer a letter asking to book a fire door inspection. Maddi Pitman will also send out letters when it's time to book the subsequent repairs.

Harmony Fire inspectors will always carry a Harmony ID card.

If you are concerned about the identity of the caller, please contact our Customer Experience Team on 0800 652 0898.

## **What coronavirus precautions are in place for the inspection?**

**If you have Covid-19 symptoms and an inspection due, please inform Harmony Fire immediately.**

Harmony Fire inspectors will be observing the government's current coronavirus guidelines.

The inspectors have been supplied with the correct PPE. The inspectors will be wearing a facemask and using hand sanitiser before and after the inspection. You will need to remain in your home at least 2 meters away from the door during the inspection.

Harmony will sanitise all surfaces before and after their inspection.