

# Home fire safety guide

## *Know what to do in a fire*

### **Plan your escape**

Fires happen when you least expect them and you will only have a short time to take action.

- Think of how you would get out if your normal way out is blocked.
- Keep the escape routes clear of rubbish, or bulky items at all times.
- Tell everyone in your home where the door and window keys are kept.

### **Working smoke alarms save lives!**

- If you live in a Housing for Women property and do not have a smoke alarm, please contact our Repairs team on 020 7501 6120 - Remember to test all of your alarms monthly.

### **Smoking**

It is safer to not to smoke but if you do always make sure your cigarettes are put right out and disposed of properly.

- Use deep, heavy ashtrays that are less likely to tip over.
- Never throw cigarette butts from a balcony, they could start a fire elsewhere.
- Never smoke in bed or anywhere else if you think you might fall asleep.
- Don't leave lit pipes or cigarettes unattended or sat on the edge of an ashtray.
- Empty ashtrays carefully and never use a waste bin that could catch fire. Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.

### **Heating and electrics**

- Sit at least three feet away from heaters - sitting too close could set light to your clothes or chair.
- Never put a heater near clothes or furnishings.
- Don't overload electrical sockets - keep to one plug per socket.

### **Take extra care in the kitchen**

- Fit a heat alarm and test it monthly.
- Don't cook if you are tired or have been drinking alcohol
- Never leave cooking unattended.

If the pan does catch fire:

- Don't try to move it or throw water on to it - it will make it worse. Turn off the heat if you can do so safely.
- If any doubt, leave the room, close the door, shout to warn others to get out and call 999.

### **Stay safe when you go to bed**

- Close all the doors as this helps to prevent fire spreading.
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like the fridge.
- Check your cooker, heaters and candles are off.
- Keep door and window keys where everyone you live with can find them.

### **Escaping from fire in your home**

- If your smoke alarm goes off, never assume it is a false alarm, follow your escape plan and get out.
- Shout 'FIRE' to warn others and don't stop to pick up valuables.
- Check closed doors with the back of your hand. Do not open the door if it feels warm - the fire may be on the other side.
- Smoke can kill, get down as low as possible where the air will be clearer.
- If your escape is blocked by fire it may be safer to stay put until the fire brigade arrives.
- Close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help, dial 999 and wait to be rescued.

### **If you live in a purpose built maisonette or block of flats**

If your flat or maisonette is being affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear:

- Get everyone out, close the door and walk as calmly as possible out of the building.
- Do not use the lift.
- Call 999, give your address, the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

If there is fire or smoke inside your or maisonette and your escape route is NOT clear:

- It may be safer to stay in your flat or maisonette until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help, call 999, give your address including the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

If there is a fire in another part of the building:

- Purpose-built maisonettes or blocks of flats are built to give you some protection from fire. You are usually safer staying put and calling 999. Tell the fire brigade where you are and the best way to reach you.
- If you are in the common part of the building, leave and call 999.